

*Economic Community  
of West African States*



*Communauté Economique  
des Etats de l'Afrique de l'Ouest*

## **WEST AFRICAN POWER POOL (WAPP)** **SYSTEME D'ECHANGES D'ENERGIE ELECTRIQUE OUEST AFRICAIN**

**Solar Development in Sub-Saharan Africa Program Phase 1 (Sahel)  
SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA SOLAR PARKS DEVELOPMENT PROJECT (RSP) Phase 1  
Assistance to West Africa Power Pool (WAPP)  
(P162580)**

### **GRIEVANCE MECHANISM**

***This document has been prepared in English and French. The English version is authoritative.***

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## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

<b>ECOWAS</b>	Economic Community of West African States
<b>ESIA</b>	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Study
<b>ESMF</b>	Environmental and Social Management Framework
<b>ESMP</b>	Environmental and Social Management Plan
<b>ESS</b>	Environmental and Social Standards
<b>GPN</b>	The World Bank's Good Practice Note (GPN) on "Addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) in Investment Project Financing involving Major Civil Works"
<b>GM</b>	Grievance Mechanism
<b>IDA/AID</b>	International Development Agency
<b>IPP/PIE</b>	Independent Power Producer/ Producteur Independent d'Electricité
<b>JIC</b>	Joint Implementation Committee
<b>NGO</b>	Non-Governmental Organization
<b>PPP</b>	Public-Private Partnership
<b>RAP</b>	Resettlement Action Plan
<b>RSP</b>	Regional Solar Park
<b>SEA/SH</b>	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Sexual Harassment
<b>SoP</b>	Series of Projects
<b>ToR</b>	Terms of Reference
<b>WAPP</b>	West African Power Pool
<b>WB</b>	World Bank

## DEFINITION OF CONCEPTS AND TERMINOLOGY

The definitions below can be helpful for understanding the Grievance Mechanism.<sup>1</sup>

**Complaint or Grievance:** Complaints or grievances are an expression of dissatisfaction or discontent stemming from a real or perceived impact of a company's business activities. Complaints can range from commonly occurring, relatively minor problems to more entrenched or serious ones that have the potential to become a source of significant resentment. When people present a complaint to the company, they generally expect to receive a specific response or resolution. The terms complaint and grievance are used interchangeably in this document, without presuming differences in scale, complexity or seriousness.

**Claim:** An expression of dissatisfaction that explicitly or implicitly includes a request for action by a complainant. This more or less explicitly requested action, can be a reparation for damage suffered and/or a corrective action. In the context of the Regional Solar Park (RSP) project, a claim is any contention by a stakeholder about the said project in relation to the damage caused during the implementation of the activities with a view to restoring the right and/or repairing it.

**Complaint:** A complaint or grievance is defined as an expression of dissatisfaction with the level or quality of an action or inaction, directly or indirectly expressing dissatisfaction to an individual or group of people with the implementation of a project. Grievances are directly related to project activities. Beneficiaries and other stakeholders, mainly affected people, have the right to complain if agreed standards and/or agreements are not respected or in case of a negative impact of the project interventions. Any complaint received requires a response. The structure that receives it has the duty to respond to the complainant(s) within a known time frame. Collection tools and a typology of complaints are defined and managed by the responsible structure. A complaint is also an expression of dissatisfaction that relates to the actions of the project or on the part of an individual, a group of individuals or an organization that is detrimental to the project and that directly or indirectly causes anguish to the beneficiary(ies).

**Concern:** Concerns are questions, requests for information, or general perceptions unrelated to a specific impact or incident. If not addressed to the satisfaction of the complainant, concerns may become complaints. Although concerns do not have to be registered as a formal complaint, they should be noted in an appropriate management system so that emerging trends can be identified and addressed before they escalate.

**Conflict/Dispute:** This is the observation of opposition between two or more people or entities who have differing ideas or opinions and where the expectations of some are often at odds with the expectations of others. Conflict is charged with emotions such as anger, frustration, fear, sadness, resentment, disgust. Sometimes it can be made of aggression and violence.

**Closed Complaint:** A complaint that has been received and for which no further action is required (for which the proposed solutions have been implemented).

**Entreaties:** Requests in terms of wishes expressed by the populations affected by the project. Although not constituting complaints, grievances should be treated with particular care.

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<sup>1</sup> See the **World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (2018)**

<https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/837721522762050108-0290022018/original/ESFFramework.pdf> and see **The World Bank's Good Practice Note: "Addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) in Investment Project Financing Involving Major Civil Works"** (second Edition, 2020), <https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/741681582580194727-0290022020/original/ESFGoodPracticeNoteonGBVinMajorCivilWorksv2.pdf>

**Feedback:** Feedback is a comment or concern that can be positive or negative but does not require a formal response. It provides useful insights into how the PGM is perceived by stakeholders or how it is being implemented. Comments of this nature can be addressed informally during program monitoring visits.

**Gender-based violence:** It is any act of a nature to cause harm or physical, sexual or psychological suffering to women and/or men, including threats through such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of freedom.

**Grievances:** These are requests expressed by the populations affected by the project. Although they do not constitute complaints, they should be treated with particular attention.

**Grievance Mechanism:** An organized and institutionalized process through which project stakeholders can submit their requests, complaints as defined above in relation to the project. It is also a method of preventing, collecting and processing requests and complaints in order to anticipate conflicts or respond to conflicts in a systematic manner. This includes investigation techniques and tools, stakeholders and their roles in the collection and processing of requests and complaints, as well as rules and procedures adapted to the context.

The grievance mechanism is expected to address concerns promptly and effectively, in a transparent manner that is culturally appropriate and readily accessible to all project-affected parties, at no cost and without retribution. The mechanism, process or procedure will not prevent access to judicial or administrative remedies. The Borrower will inform the project-affected parties about the grievance process in the course of its community engagement activities and will make publicly available a record documenting the responses to all grievances received; and (b) Handling of grievances will be done in a culturally appropriate manner and be discreet, objective, sensitive and responsive to the needs and concerns of the project-affected parties. The mechanism will also allow for anonymous complaints to be raised and addressed.

**Grievance Mechanism Channels, and Procedures:** (a) Different ways in which users can submit their grievances, which may include submissions in person, by phone, text message, mail, e-mail or via a web site; (b) A log where grievances are registered in writing and maintained as a database; (c) Publicly advertised procedures, setting out the length of time users can expect to wait for acknowledgement, response and resolution of their grievances; (d) Transparency about the grievance procedure, governing structure and decision makers; and (e) An appeals process (including the national judiciary) to which unsatisfied grievances may be referred when resolution of grievance has not been achieved.

**Plug and play :** which means "connect and play" or "plug and use", is a technology that allows operating systems that incorporate it to quickly and automatically recognize compatible devices as soon as they are plugged in, without rebooting the computer.

**Project worker** refers to: (a) people employed or engaged directly by the Borrower (including the project proponent and the project implementing agencies) to work specifically in relation to the project (direct workers); (b) people employed or engaged through third parties to perform work related to core functions of the project, regardless of the location (contracted workers); (c) people employed or engaged by the Borrower's primary suppliers (primary supply workers); and (d) people employed or engaged in providing community labor (community workers). This includes full-time, part-time, temporary, seasonal and migrant workers. Migrant workers are workers who have migrated from one country to another or from one part of the country to another for purposes of employment

**Rape:** According to the penal code of the many countries Republic and in particular in its article 87 - Rape consists in imposing by fraud or violence sexual relations on another person against his will. Any perpetrator or accomplice of rape will be punished by five to ten years of imprisonment. The sentence

may be increased to 20 years if the perpetrators have forced the victim to have sexual relations more than once or if the violence has caused pregnancy, illness or incapacity to work for more than six weeks. The same will apply if the victim was under 14 years of age. The World Bank's Good Practice Note on "Addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) in Investment Project Financing Involving Major Civil Works » (see note 1 below) defines rape as physically forced or otherwise coerced penetration—even if slight—of the vagina, anus or mouth with a penis or other body part. It also includes penetration of the vagina or anus with an object. Rape includes marital rape and anal rape/sodomy. The attempt to do so is known as attempted rape. Rape of a person by two or more perpetrators is known as gang rape.<sup>2</sup>

**Request:** Need for information, wish, apprehension, concern expressed in relation to the project. If such request yields unsatisfactory results, it may likely escalate into a complaint.

**Resolved Complaint:** A complaint that has been resolved and for which the complainant is satisfied with the outcome

**Retroactivity or timely feedback:** This is an expression of concern, positive or negative, that provides useful insights into stakeholders' perceptions of the implementation of project activities. It reflects stakeholders' requests or demands for clarification, verification, or expressions of concern regarding the implementation of activities that affect them. It is a tool for stakeholder participation that makes it possible to measure the level of compliance with the execution of agreed measures.

**Sexual abuse:** actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions (See UN Glossary on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse 2017<sup>3</sup>).

This is an action of a sexual nature that hurts or is likely to hurt, physically or emotionally, involving a partner. It is also an act of physical mistreatment for sexual purposes and/or involving injury to the genital area of a person under duress.

**Sexual exploitation:** This is a form of violence used for sexual and commercial purposes. It includes participation in prostitution, distribution, possession and production of pornography, sexual slavery, or sex tourism, etc.

**Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) Response and Prevention Action Plan :** A document which outlines how the project will put in place the necessary protocols and mechanisms to address SEA/SH risks; and how to address any SEA/SH allegations that may arise. This is the new name for the GBV Action Plan, as used in the original (2018) version of this note. The SEA/SH Prevention and Response Action Plan should include an Accountability and Response Framework, which details how allegations of SEA/SH will be handled (investigation procedures) and disciplinary action for violation of the Code of Conduct (CoC) by workers.

**Sexual harassment:** Any unwelcome sexual advances, request for sexual favors, and other verbal or physical conduct of a sexual nature.

**Stakeholder** refers to individuals or groups who: (a) are affected or likely to be affected by the project (project-affected parties); and (b) may have an interest in the project (other interested parties).

**Stakeholder engagement** is an inclusive process conducted throughout the project life cycle. Where properly designed and implemented, it supports the development of strong, constructive and

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<sup>2</sup> Ibid, p.

<sup>3</sup> United Nations (2017). Glossary on Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Second Edition.

[https://hr.un.org/sites/hr.un.org/files/SEA%20Glossary%20%20%5BSecond%20Edition%20-%202017%5D%20-%20English\\_0.pdf](https://hr.un.org/sites/hr.un.org/files/SEA%20Glossary%20%20%5BSecond%20Edition%20-%202017%5D%20-%20English_0.pdf)



responsive relationships that are important for successful management of a project's environmental and social risks. Stakeholder engagement is most effective when initiated at an early stage of the project development process, and is an integral part of early project decisions and the assessment, management and monitoring of the project's environmental and social risks and impacts.

**Survivor-centered Approach :** The survivor-centered approach is based on a set of principles and skills designed to guide professionals—regardless of their role—in their engagement with survivors (predominantly women and girls but also men and boys) who have experienced sexual or other forms of violence. The survivorcentered approach aims to create a supportive environment in which the survivor's interests are respected and prioritized, and in which the survivor is treated with dignity and respect. The approach helps to promote the survivor's recovery and ability to identify and express needs and wishes, as well as to reinforce the survivor's capacity to make decisions about possible interventions. (see GPN)

**Violence against Children :** Violence against children includes all forms of violence against people under 18 years old. For infants and younger children, violence mainly involves child maltreatment (i.e. physical, sexual and emotional abuse and neglect) at the hands of parents and other authority figures. Boys and girls are at equal risk of physical and emotional abuse and neglect, and girls are at greater risk of sexual abuse. As children reach adolescence, peer violence and intimate partner violence, in addition to child maltreatment, become highly prevalent.<sup>4</sup> This violence has a lifelong impact on health and well-being. Target 16.2 of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development states, "End child abuse, exploitation and trafficking, and all forms of violence and torture against children."

**Violence against women/girls:** According to the GPN, Article 1 of the 1993 UN Declaration on the Elimination of Violence against Women defines violence against women as any act of gender-based violence that results in, or is likely to result in, physical, sexual or psychological harm or suffering to women, including threats of such acts, coercion or arbitrary deprivation of liberty, whether occurring in public or in private life. Article 2 of the Convention further states that violence against women shall be understood to encompass, but not be limited to, the following: (a) physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring in the family, including battering, sexual abuse of female children in the household, dowry-related violence, marital rape, female genital mutilation and other traditional practices harmful to women, non-spousal violence and violence related to exploitation; (b) physical, sexual and psychological violence occurring within the general community, including rape, sexual abuse, sexual harassment and intimidation at work, in educational institutions and elsewhere, trafficking in women and forced sex work; (c) physical, sexual and psychological violence perpetrated or condoned by the State, wherever it occurs. The term violence against women and girls is also used.

**Vulnerable Groups:** People who by virtue of gender, age, ethnicity, religion, language, livelihood, physical or mental disability, sexual orientation and gender identity, or other economic or social factors may be more adversely affected by a project or receive equitable access to project benefits.

**Request:** Need for information, wish, apprehension, concern expressed in relation to the project. If such request yields unsatisfactory results, it may likely escalate into a complaint.

**Stakeholder** refers to individuals or groups who: (a) are affected or likely to be affected by the project (project-affected parties); and (b) may have an interest in the project (other interested parties).

**Resolved Complaint:** A complaint that has been resolved and for which the complainant is satisfied with the outcome.

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<sup>4</sup> See World Health Organization, "Violence Against Children" [https://www.who.int/health-topics/violence-against-children#tab=tab\\_1](https://www.who.int/health-topics/violence-against-children#tab=tab_1) (accessed July 23, 2021)

## 1. BACKGROUND RATIONALE FOR REGIONAL PHOTOVOLTAIC SOLAR PARKS PROJECTS

### 1.1 The West African Power Pool

The West African Power Pool (WAPP) was created by the highest decision-making authority of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS), the Authority of Heads of State and Government of Member States.

In order to facilitate optimal trade and marketing of electricity among Member States, it has developed and approved an ECOWAS Master Plan for the period 2019-2023 which features seventy-five (75) priority projects for a total estimated investment cost of USD 36.39 billion involving, among others, the construction of approximately 23,000 km of power transmission lines and the implementation of a total generation capacity of about 15.49 GW, including 3.15 GW of intermittent renewable energy generation (solar and wind) to be deployed mainly in countries such as Mali, Burkina Faso, Niger, The Gambia, Nigeria, Benin, Togo, Ghana and Côte d'Ivoire.



**Figure 1: The new ECOWAS Master Plan for Regional Development of Power Generation and Transmission Infrastructure**

This increase in the share of renewable energy resources in the energy mix is in line current international trends and is part of a concerted effort to reduce the environmental impact of energy generation while increasing its reliability and sustainability. Renewable energy is also a key item point in the COP21 decisions.

For the implementation of this plan, the World Bank has provided a grant to the WAPP General Secretariat under the **Solar Development in Sub-Saharan Africa, Project 1 Technical Assistance to WAPP (P162580)** for the preparation of regional solar power generation projects and technical study activities to facilitate the integration of Renewable Energy.

This assistance is intended to support the establishment of an enabling framework to accelerate the deployment of large-scale solar power plants in the WAPP region through the identification of technical bottlenecks, the preparation of Regional Solar Parks and the sharing of knowledge among countries in the region. Thus, at the request of the authorities of the nine countries earmarked for the first phase and as a priority project under the WAPP Master Plan, the WAPP General Secretariat plans to develop large-scale regional solar power plants within these countries.

## 1.2 The "Plug & Play" Solar Park Concept

The "Plug & Play" Solar Park Concept has been developed in countries like (e.g. India) to ensure controlled and less costly development of solar generation in participating countries. For the moment, the countries concerned are Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, Gambia and a little later Ivory Coast, Benin, Togo, etc. The feasibility study identifies a site based on criteria such as:

- (i) Capacity of the connection substation(s) and the grid to absorb the electricity produced by the solar park;
- (ii) Solar radiation;
- (iii) Availability of land to enable the development of a large-scale project to increase economies of scale; and
- (iv) Access to sites.

The government shall ensure the availability of land, secure the necessary permits prior to the signing of Power Purchase Agreement ("PPA") and prepare the evacuation of infrastructure and transmission lines between the Park and the connection substation. The resultant reduction in regulatory barriers, the development of an organized auction system with a bankable PPA and access by Independent Power Producers ("IPP") to the land and infrastructure of the Solar Park shall allow for a significant reduction in power purchase cost.

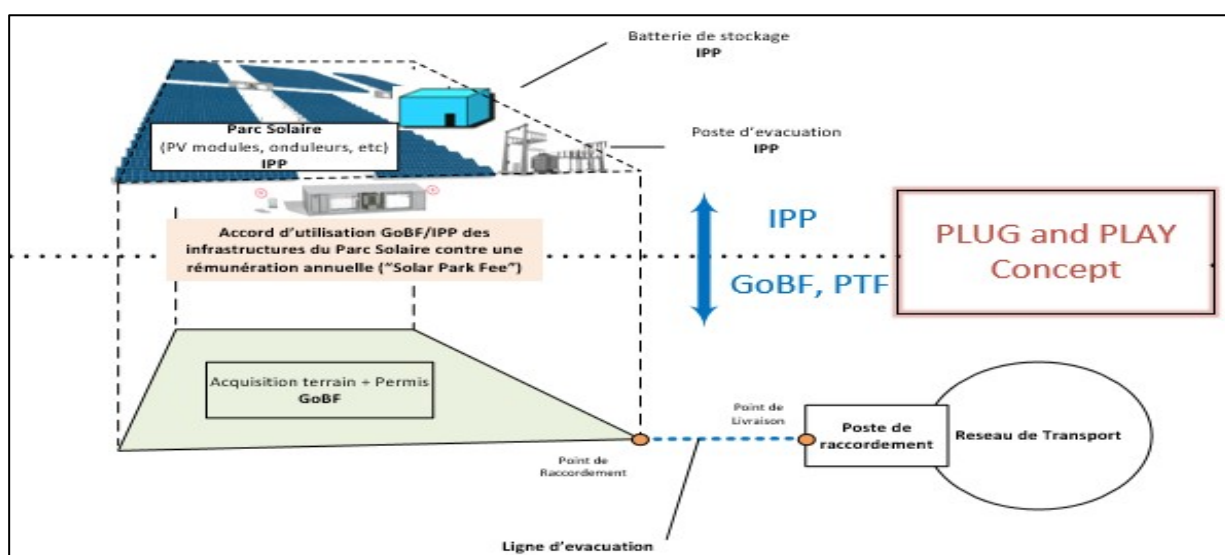


Figure 2: Diagram of the "Plug and Play" concept

## 1.3 Overall & Specific Objectives of the Series of Projects (SoP)

### 1.3.1. Overall Objective of the SoP

The main objective of the series of solar projects is to ensure a steady, reliable and affordable electricity supply to the populations of ECOWAS Member States in the medium to long term.

### 1.3.2. Specific Objectives

The specific objectives of the series of regional solar parks are as follows:

- Fast-track the deployment of large-scale solar power plants in the WAPP region;
- Prepare solar parks and identify technical bottlenecks;
- Share knowledge among countries within the region.

## 2. BACKGROUND ON GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

In order to support the implementation of the various activities to ensure the achievement of the objectives of the series of regional solar park projects, the development and implementation of a complaints management mechanism have proved to be mandatory, unavoidable and constitute means for a better management of the project, a citizen management, a mobilization and participation of the project stakeholders.

### 2.1 What is a Grievance Mechanism (GM)?

The Grievance Mechanism (GM) is a system for resolving complaints or grievances related directly or indirectly to project activities. It is also a project instrument that aims to give stakeholders the right to report all project-related shortcomings, the right to denounce any kind of human rights violation or detrimental event to the project and to request redress or cessation of the detrimental event.

The overall objective of this mechanism is to support the implementation of the series of regional solar projects designed according to the same concept, to allow the populations in general and the local residents in particular, who are the direct beneficiaries of the project, to denounce the shortcomings in the execution of the project. It is a tool that will facilitate good management of the project between the various actors in the implementation of the project, by generating strong support and civic engagement on their part.

During the preparation, implementation (construction and operation) and decommissioning of project activities, such as regional solar projects, can be a source of complaints and conflicts between stakeholders and those affected by the project may have questions, concerns or complaints. that can arise at all stages of the project: preparation, construction, operation and decommissioning.

It is the responsibility of WAPP to establish a grievance mechanism, process or procedure to receive concerns and complaints from project-affected parties in relation to the project, particularly with regard to environmental and social issues, and to facilitate timely and responsive dispute resolution. The grievance mechanism will be proportionate to the potential risks and impacts of the project. Project-affected parties may file complaints about a Bank-financed project with the project-level grievance mechanism or , the relevant local project level grievance mechanism. The goal is to ensure projects can adequately resolve and address grievance at the project level which is essential for project sustainability, transparency, legitimacy and effective risk mitigation.

As part of the development of the series of solar farm projects, The West African Power Pool (WAPP) General Secretariat is required to establish a grievance mechanism, process or procedure to receive concerns and complaints from parties affected by the project, particularly with respect to environmental and social issues, and to facilitate the timely and appropriate resolution of disputes. The recourse mechanism shall be proportionate to the potential risks and impacts of the project. Parties affected by a project may file complaints about a Bank-financed project with the project-level grievance redress mechanism or the local project-level grievance redress mechanism. The objective is to ensure that projects are able to adequately resolve and address grievances to avoid escalation to, or the World Bank's Grievance Redress Service (GRS) or Inspection Panel.

The Grievance Mechanism (GM) is established at project design and will be maintained throughout the project life cycle. The aim is to establish a timely, fair, and effective grievance and redress system for any project-related complaints. The aim of the Grievance Mechanism is to avoid numerous recourse to the judicial system and to always seek an amicable solution, while preserving the interests of the

complainants and the interests of the plaintiffs and the promoter and thus limit the risks and costs inevitably associated with legal actions.

### **2.1.1 Benefits of a well-functioning of the Grievance Mechanism (GM)**

A well designed GM can provide a variety of benefits such as reduced corruption, improved service delivery, improved overall project effectiveness (projects are more responsive, accountable and more effective in achieving development outcomes). GMs are important because they act as an early warning mechanism that can help teams protect both a project's funds and its reputation.

A well-functioning Grievance Mechanism (GM) is rooted in meaningful consultation of stakeholders and project affected parties:

- Allows stakeholders to express their views on projects risks and impacts and mitigation measures – encourages stakeholder feedback
- Allows Governments/companies to consider and respond to stakeholder input
- Begins early in project planning to gather views and inform project design
- Encourages stakeholder feedback – to inform project design and engagement by stakeholders in the identification and mitigation of environmental and social risks and impacts
- Continues on an ongoing basis, as risks and impacts arise
- Is based on the prior disclosure and disclosure of information in a way that allows meaningful consultations
- Is culturally appropriate, accessible and understandable to stakeholders
- Supports active and inclusive engagement with project-affected parties
- Is free of external manipulation, interference, coercion, discrimination, and intimidation
- Is documented and disclosed by the Government/companies

### **2.1.2 Key Characteristics of Effective GMs**

- Have simple grievance procedures that are well known to potential users
- Are easy to access offering different grievance submission channels
- Secure participation of complainants without fear of intimidation or retribution
- Record and monitor the grievance status or resolution systematically
- Publicly advertise procedures, setting out the length of time users can expect to wait for acknowledgement, response, and resolution of their grievances
- Provide transparency about the grievance procedure, governing structure, and decision makers
- Generate timely responses to all GM users
- Produce periodic reports on a few key performance indicators
- Have professional and technically competent GM focal points who are trusted and recognized by communities
- Have an appeal process to which unsatisfied grievances may be referred/ appealed when resolution of grievance has not been achieved
- Generate insights for improving project performance
- Facilitate trust in the project with stakeholders

### 2.1.3 Affected parties could also have questions and feedback about the project

The environmental and social impacts which could generate complaints include: mobilization of land to constitute sites for the solar power plants, production of dust, noise and vibration nuisance, degradation of the living environment, landscape, production and accumulation of site construction waste, occupation of basic living spaces for businesses, loss of various assets, loss and/or disruption of sources income or means of subsistence, restriction on the use of land or other resources for neighboring communities, etc.

The social impacts which could generate complaints include: mobilization of land which will lead to the loss of land, restriction on access to and use of land or other resources for neighboring communities, concerns over social cohesion resulting from labor influx, impacts on livelihoods, temporary occupation of resettlement areas, implementation of the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), disruption of socio-economic activities, disruption of traffic, disruption of access to houses adjacent to construction sites, risk of accidents, conflicts related to the conduct of personnel on construction sites, security risks, traffic and road safety, gender-based violence (GBV), violence against children (VAC), among others.

It was then envisaged in the context of the series of regional solar projects designed according to the same concept to develop a model Grievance Mechanism document so that complaints received are promptly investigated.

The Grievance Mechanism is a valuable operational tool in the management of project implementation complaints mainly during the implementation of environmental and social measures, during the process for resettlement of affected populations and the implementation of environmental and social management measures before and during construction works. The GM covers all complaints and grievances, both verbal and written, brought by an individual or a group of individuals against the project and applies to all complaints that are not in the judicial process. It meets environmental and social requirements by integrating national procedures on the one hand and procedures from technical and financial partners, in particular the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and the «World Bank's Good Practice Note on Addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) in Investment Project Financing involving Major Civil Works» and others..

Given that this GM is specific to the Solar Parks Program, it should be emphasized that it will also be the obligation of WAPP to ensure the development and design of an inclusive, accessible, effective and functional grievance mechanism for activities financed by the program in accordance with the ESS10 of World Bank ESF.

## 2.2 Fundamental principles of Grievance Mechanism

Funders such as international financial institutions such as the World Bank, require that a Grievance Mechanism be established for all projects they finance, proportional to risk, to ensure all stakeholders are able to effectively communicate with the project and address questions and file grievances against the project. These principles are in line with international development organizations (see chapter 3) and international financial institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank for non-judicial grievance mechanisms. These are criteria which shall subsequently serve as conceptual bases for the definition of performance indicators for the mechanism's monitoring and evaluation system.

### ***Principles of effectiveness of the Grievance Mechanism***

Sustainable and effective grievance mechanisms are rooted in six principles: Fairness; objectiveness and independence; simplicity and accessibility; responsiveness and efficiency; speed and proportionality; and participation and social inclusion. Projects require an inclusive and responsive grievance mechanism, accessible to all project-affected parties, and proportionate to project risks and impacts to ensure project sustainability and achieving project development outcomes.

People who wish to lodge a complaint or raise a concern and submit grievances will do so only if they are certain that the complaints and grievances will be dealt with effectively and in a speedy, fair, impartial, inclusive manner, free of fear from reprisals or retaliation and of cost to the user.

To ensure that a complaints system is efficient, inclusive, accessible reliable and operational, a few basic principles must be observed:

- **Legitimacy**, which implies the confidence of the stakeholders to whom the GM applies with regard to the procedures to be put in place for a fair resolution of grievances. This trust results from the consideration of the concerns of the various stakeholders in the proposal of the bodies involved in the PGM.
- **Accessibility**, which consists of providing appropriate assistance to those who face particular barriers in accessing the mechanism. To address this concern, there was a consultation with all stakeholders with a particular focus on the vulnerable. In its implementation phase, it will involve traditional chieftainship, NGOs, and community-based organizations to enable all to file complaints.
- **Predictability**, which requires the establishment of a clear and known procedure with a timetable for each step and a precise description of the process and available outcomes and means of monitoring implementation. This mechanism will be sufficiently publicized to facilitate ownership by stakeholders.
- **Fairness** means ensuring that aggrieved parties have reasonable access to sources of information, advice and expertise necessary to engage in a fair, respectful and informed grievance procedure. This resolution mechanism takes into account the necessary mechanisms to avoid imbalance and to correct any sense of unfairness in order to make the solutions sustainable.
- **Transparency**, which implies that the stakeholders are sufficiently informed about the procedure to follow to access the mechanism. To this end, the mechanism establishes an obligation to communicate on its functioning and to inform complainants systematically after their complaint has been processed.
- **Compatibility** with rights that ensures that outcomes and remedies are consistent with nationally and/or internationally recognized human rights law. This mechanism will promote the resolution of complaints in a fair manner based on informed decisions and cannot replace or prejudice the rights of the complainant to pursue other judicial or extrajudicial remedies.
- **A source of continuous learning** by building on relevant actions to learn lessons to improve the mechanism and prevent future claims and harms. Under this mechanism, regular analysis of the frequency, patterns and causes of complaints, complaint resolution strategies and procedures, and the effectiveness of those strategies and procedures will help improve the mechanism and prevent future harm.
- **Engagement and dialogue** that requires consultation and buy-in from the stakeholders for whom the GM is intended. In the case of this GM, consultation with all stakeholders was undertaken to gain their buy-in. Ongoing dialogue will be maintained in the implementation of the GM.

- **Confidentiality** that ensures the safety and protection of those making a complaint and those affected by it. This requires limiting the number of people who have access to sensitive information.
- **Objectivity Quality of someone**, a mind, a group making a judgment without involving personal preferences: Conducting debates, complaints with objectivity. Quality of what is consistent with reality, of a judgment that accurately describes the facts.
- **Simplicity**, is the property, condition, or quality of being simple, natural, and uncombined. It often denotes beauty, purity, clarity.
- **Efficiency** which is the capacity, of a person, a group or a system, to reach its ends, its objectives (or those which one fixed to him). To be effective is to produce the expected results within the expected timeframe and to achieve the set objectives, which can be defined in terms of quantity, but also quality, speed, costs, profitability, etc.
- **Speed**, which is the property of an animate being or of something that moves at a high rate of speed. Characteristic of what is accomplished in a very short time: Speed of a decision. Characteristic of someone who acts promptly: To react quickly. Quality of a track, pool, etc., that allows for quality performance.
- **Participation** which is an action of taking part in something, part taken in something; Action of paying one's share; contribution.
- **Social inclusion**: He reserved the concept of social integration for relationships between social systems. Social inclusion is considered the opposite of social exclusion. It involves the economic, social, cultural and political sectors of society.
- **Responsibility** is the obligation to repair the damage resulting either from the non-performance of a contract (contractual responsibility) or from the violation of the general duty not to cause any damage to others by one's own act, or of the things in one's care, or by the act of the persons for whom one is responsible ( . Liability is the obligation to repair the damage resulting either from the non-performance of a contract or from the violation of the general duty not to cause any damage to others by one's own act, or of things in one's care, or of persons for whom one is responsible.
- **Justice**: this is a fundamental philosophical, legal and moral principle: according to this principle, human actions must be approved or rejected according to their merit in terms of morality, law, virtue or any other standard of judgment of behavior.
- **Confidentiality**: always Respect the confidentiality of the survivor and his/her family. If the survivor gives her/his informed consent, share only relevant information with others for the purpose of helping the survivor, such as referring for services. Confidentiality and anonymity of the alleged aggressor's identity must also be respected. All identifying personal information (name, address, etc.) must be withheld in the reporting, compilation and sharing of data.
- **Non-discrimination**: Any adult or child, regardless of sex, has the right to receive care and support under the same conditions. SEA/SH survivors must receive equal and impartial treatment, regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
- **Respect**: All actions taken will be guided by respect for the wishes, choices, rights, and dignity of the survivor.
- **Security**: Always ensure the safety of the survivor. Remember that s/he may be frightened and need assurance that s/he is safe. In all types of cases, ensure that s/he is not placed at risk of further harm by the alleged aggressor. If necessary and with survivor informed consent, ask for assistance from police, elders, community leaders or others who can provide security. Maintain awareness of safety and security of people who are helping the survivor, such as family, friends, counselors and health care workers.



### 3. INTERNATIONAL AND NATIONAL STANDARDS ON GRIEVANCE MECHANISMS AND PRINCIPLES FOR THEIR DEVELOPMENT

#### 3.1 Relevant International Standards and Good Practices

Large-scale project development must consider citizen engagement, voice and inclusion in project design. As such, ensuring the project has a functional and accessible mechanism to address grievances, concerns and complaints of local communities in managing the social risks is essential for the environmental and social performance and sustainability of a project. This enables project teams to respond to the claims of the affected people, and to deal with the adverse impacts that may lead to conflicting situations, resulting in the temporary or prolonged interruption of project activities. This consideration is in line with international standards and good practices in the management of requests/claims and complaints which include those from international development financial institutions and international professional associations:

- World Bank's Environmental Social Framework (ESF)<sup>5</sup>, Environmental and Social Standard 10 (ESS 10) – Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure (and associated Guidance Note for Borrowers)<sup>6</sup>
- The African Development Bank (AfDB), Involuntary Resettlement Policy, § 4.1.6 and 4.1.1<sup>7</sup>
- The Asian Development Bank (ADB), §22 and 60<sup>8</sup>
- The Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights, 29 thru 31<sup>9</sup>
- The Equator Principles (EP 6)<sup>10</sup>
- The International Finance Corporation (IFC): Performance Standards 1, 2, and 5
- The International Petroleum Industry Environmental Conservation Association<sup>11</sup> (IPIECA)

These various international standards and good practices address the objectives, scope, principles and characteristics of a grievance mechanism. In general, they stipulate that the mechanism should be culturally appropriate and accessible to affected communities. It should be transparent, impartial and proportionate to the level of project risks and impacts and commensurate with the impacts of the indemnification, compensation and resettlement process. It should ensure the participation of affected persons through consultation, communication and stakeholder engagement, throughout the development, construction and operation phases of the project. It should receive and process project-related requests/claims and complaints from affected and concerned individuals and/or groups in a

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<sup>5</sup> See the ESF and ESS10 (pp-97-101) <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/383011492423734099/pdf/The-World-Bank-Environmental-and-Social-Framework.pdf>. See also, The World Bank's Approach to Grievance Redress in Projects <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/20119>

<sup>6</sup> See World Bank's ESF (2018) <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/476161530217390609/ESF-Guidance-Note-10-Stakeholder-Engagement-and-Information-Disclosure-English.pdf>.

<sup>7</sup> See African Development Bank (AfDB) Safeguards and Sustainability Series, vol. 1 (2013) and vol. 3 [https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/SSS\\_-\\_IESIA\\_Volume\\_3\\_-\\_En.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Publications/SSS_-_IESIA_Volume_3_-_En.pdf)  
[https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Policy-Documents/December\\_2013\\_-\\_AfDB%E2%80%99S\\_Integrated\\_Safeguards\\_System\\_-\\_Policy\\_Statement\\_and\\_Operational\\_Safeguards.pdf](https://www.afdb.org/fileadmin/uploads/afdb/Documents/Policy-Documents/December_2013_-_AfDB%E2%80%99S_Integrated_Safeguards_System_-_Policy_Statement_and_Operational_Safeguards.pdf)

<sup>8</sup> See Asian Development Bank (2009) <https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/institutional-document/32056/safeguard-policy-statement-june2009.pdf>

<sup>9</sup> UN Guiding Principles on Businesses and Human Rights (would equally apply to other non-state actors like NGOs) [https://www.ohchr.org/documents/publications/guidingprinciplesbusinesshr\\_en.pdf](https://www.ohchr.org/documents/publications/guidingprinciplesbusinesshr_en.pdf)

<sup>10</sup> See Equator Principles (2020) <https://equator-principles.com/wp-content/uploads/2021/02/The-Equator-Principles-July-2020.pdf>

<sup>11</sup> IPIECA maintains that "in any country wherever companies do business, engaging with communities in the vicinity of their operations and responding to their concerns is essential to their sustainability whilst ensuring respect for human rights".

timely manner, without exposing them to reprisals. The mechanism should be a non-judicial remedy, while allowing for administrative and/or judicial recourse where appropriate.

The design and implementation of the GM for the regional solar park series of projects (SoP) will be guided by these international standards and good practices, in particular the IFC and World Bank methodological guidelines (see Table 1). The approaches of IPIECA, the Asian Development Bank and the Harvard Kennedy School will also be consulted, particularly with regard to definition of performance indicators for the mechanism.

### 3.2 Overview of Performance Standards on Environmental and Social Sustainability, 2012

IFC's Sustainability Framework articulates the Corporation's strategic commitment to sustainable development and is an integral part of IFC's approach to risk management. The Sustainability Framework comprises IFC's Policy and Performance Standards on Environmental and Social Sustainability, and IFC's Access to Information Policy. The Policy on Environmental and Social Sustainability describes IFC's commitments, roles, and responsibilities related to environmental and social sustainability. IFC's Access to Information Policy reflects IFC's commitment to transparency and good governance on its operations and outlines the Corporation's institutional disclosure obligations regarding its investment and advisory services. The Performance Standards are directed towards clients, providing guidance on how to identify risks and impacts, and are designed to help avoid, mitigate, and manage risks and impacts as a way of doing business in a sustainable way, including stakeholder engagement and disclosure obligations of the client in relation to project-level activities. In the case of its direct investments (including project and corporate finance provided through financial intermediaries), IFC requires its clients to apply the Performance Standards to manage environmental and social risks and impacts so that development opportunities are enhanced. IFC uses the Sustainability Framework along with other strategies, policies, and initiatives to direct the business activities of the Corporation in order to achieve its overall development objectives. The Performance Standards may also be applied by other financial institutions.

### 3.3 The World Bank's Approach to Grievance Redress in Projects, 2014

The World Bank is committed to enhancing opportunities for grievance redress, collaborative problem solving, and alternative dispute resolution on the projects it supports. Grievance redress mechanisms (GRMs) can be an effective tool for early identification, assessment, and resolution of complaints on projects. The World Bank Executive Board and senior management are supporting more effective approaches to problem solving to help strengthen the Bank's performance and development outcomes. This note presents the World Bank's recommended approach to strengthening grievance capacity in Bank-supported projects.

The approach presents three interlinked steps: (i) a risk-based assessment of potential grievances, disputes, or conflicts that may arise during project preparation and implementation; (ii) identification of the client's existing capacity for grievance redress; and (iii) an action plan that identifies priority areas for strengthening grievance capacity, or if necessary, establishing new mechanisms at the project level.

### 3.4 World Bank (WB) Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), ESS 10 – Stakeholder Engagement

This ESS recognizes the importance of open and transparent engagement between the Borrower and project stakeholders as an essential element of good international practice. Effective stakeholder

engagement can improve the environmental and social sustainability of projects, enhance project acceptance, and make a significant contribution to successful project design and implementation. 2. Stakeholder engagement is an inclusive process conducted throughout the project life cycle. Where properly designed and implemented, it supports the development of strong, constructive and responsive relationships that are important for successful management of a project's environmental and social risks. Stakeholder engagement is most effective when initiated at an early stage of the project development process and is an integral part of early project decisions and the assessment, management and monitoring of the project's environmental and social risks and impacts. 3. This ESS must be read in conjunction with ESS1. Requirements regarding engagement with workers are found in ESS2. Special provisions on emergency preparedness and response are covered in ESS2 and ESS4. In the case of projects involving involuntary resettlement, Indigenous Peoples or cultural heritage, the Borrower will also apply the special disclosure and consultation requirements set out in ESS5, ESS7 and ESS8. Objectives

- To establish a systematic approach to stakeholder engagement that will help Borrowers identify stakeholders and build and maintain a constructive relationship with them, in particular project-affected parties.
- To assess the level of stakeholder interest and support for the project and to enable stakeholders' views to be taken into account in project design and environmental and social performance.
- To promote and provide means for effective and inclusive engagement with project-affected parties throughout the project life cycle on issues that could potentially affect them.
- To ensure that appropriate project information on environmental and social risks and impacts is disclosed to stakeholders in a timely, understandable, accessible and appropriate manner and format.

**Table 1: Selected International GM Standards and Good Practices**

International institutions	Operational Policies	Policy summary
<b>International Finance Corporation (IFC)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• PS 1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts, paras. 25-36<sup>12</sup></li> <li>• PS 5: Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement</li> </ul>	<p>IFC Performance Standard 1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts in paragraph 35 stipulates the establishment of a culturally appropriate grievance mechanism.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishes the requirement and need for a grievance mechanism as from the development phase of the project.</li> <li>• Describes: its objective its scope, characteristics and operational process</li> <li>• The Client provides affected communities with information on the mechanism as part of the stakeholder engagement process.</li> </ul>
	PS 2: Labor and Working Conditions, para 20	Requires the development of a grievance mechanism for workers. It should not substitute for grievance mechanisms provided through collective agreements.
<b>World Bank (WB) Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), ESS 10 –</b>		The ESS10 specifies requirements for the borrower to develop modalities and procedures for resolving conflicts that may arise during project preparation and implementation, including during the implementation of

<sup>12</sup> See pp. 7-9 [https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/24e6bfc3-5de3-444d-be9b-226188c95454/PS\\_English\\_2012\\_Full-Documents.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=jkV-X6h](https://www.ifc.org/wps/wcm/connect/24e6bfc3-5de3-444d-be9b-226188c95454/PS_English_2012_Full-Documents.pdf?MOD=AJPERES&CVID=jkV-X6h)

<b>Stakeholder Engagement<sup>13</sup></b>		<p>the resettlement plan. The grievance management (GM) mechanism:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- must be an effective tool for early identification, assessment, and resolution of project complaints.</li> <li>- must demonstrate opportunities for grievance redress, collaborative problem solving, and alternative conflict resolution on projects,</li> <li>- should identify existing stakeholder capacity for grievance resolution and an action plan identifying priority areas for strengthening grievance resolution capacity.</li> </ul>
<b>World Bank (WB) Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), ESS 2, Labor and Working Conditions<sup>14</sup></b>		<p>The ESS2 Standard defines the requirements in relation to worker health and safety as follows:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To promote safety and health at work.</li> <li>• To promote the fair treatment, non-discrimination, and equal opportunity of project workers.</li> <li>• To protect project workers, including vulnerable workers such as women, persons with disabilities, children (of working age, in accordance with this ESS) and migrant workers, contracted workers, community workers, and primary supply workers, as appropriate.</li> <li>• To prevent the use of all forms of forced labor and child labor.<sup>1</sup></li> <li>• To support the principles of freedom of association and collective bargaining of project workers in a manner consistent with national law.</li> <li>• To provide project workers with accessible means to raise workplace concerns</li> </ul>

**Table 2: Overview of Methodological Guidelines for GM Development**

Organizations	Methodological guidelines	Summary
World Bank	Good practice with higher standard that further clarifications on Grievance Mechanism (ESS10 et ESS2).	<p>Recommends earlier identification, assessment, and resolution of project complaints, opportunities for grievance redress, collaborative problem solving, and alternative conflict resolution on projects.</p> <p>Identifies existing stakeholder capacity for grievance resolution and an action plan identifying priority areas for strengthening grievance resolution capacity</p>
International Finance Corporation (IFC)	Good practice: Note on Managing Complaints from Project Affected Populations	Recommends identification of actual and potential conflicts at the earliest stages of environmental and social impact the assessments and

<sup>13</sup> See notes supra at 1.

<sup>14</sup> See WB ESS2 Guidance Note for Borrowers <https://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/149761530216793411/ESF-Guidance-Note-2-Labor-and-Working-Conditions-English.pdf>

		compensation/indemnification measures, to prevent and manage these conflicts.
IPIECA	Good Practice Survey on Operational Level Grievance Mechanisms	Defines the criteria for the effectiveness of an operational level grievance mechanism: legitimacy, accessibility, predictability, impartiality, transparency, compliance with rights, a source of education, based on dialogue. - Establishes a correlation between some elements of good practice identified and the effectiveness criteria (Example: Having a verification process to ensure the proper functioning of the grievance mechanism)
Harvard Kennedy School	Rights-Compatible Grievance Mechanisms. A Guidance Tool for Companies and Their Stakeholders P3-4	Gives a detailed explanation of the efficiency criteria (Equity, Predictability, Accessibility,) set out here as principles Defines the guidance points for designing effective rights-compatible grievance mechanisms at the operational level Presents the key performance indicators for the monitoring and evaluation of the mechanism (e.g. a high percentage of cases are resolved without recourse to a third party neutral; Over time, the number of grievances of the same or similar nature decreases)

### 3.5 National Standards for Handling Requests and Complaints and Engage Citizens for Feedback

In most of the West African countries involved in the Regional Solar Park (RSP) project, there is not yet a national policy and standard that clearly defines the requirements and modalities for a complaint management mechanism. Although most constitutions recognize a citizen's right to property, grievance mechanisms are intended to address grievances that arise during the preparation, construction, operation and decommissioning phases. The Action Plan may have environmental and social impacts, which could be a potential source of complaints and grievances.

Indeed, the project's Request and Complaint Management Mechanism is an operational process that aims to collect, process and amicably resolve requests and complaints related to the project. Particular emphasis will be placed on the identification, compensation/compensation, resettlement of affected persons and livelihood restoration operations.

In addition, the influx of labor would have a range of impacts, including on working conditions, health, safety, gender-based violence (GBV), conflict, etc. These risks must be assessed as part of the environmental and social assessment and managed in accordance with the General Labor Procedures and other environmental and social management documents. All relevant measures will be reflected in the bidding and contract documents. A specific redress mechanism for project workers shall be established for each project. This mechanism is separate from the project's Complaint Management Mechanism.

In practice, the States are in favor of applying international standards and good practices in this area, and advocate seeking an amicable compromise in the event of grievances or disputes. To this end, the major projects carried out in these countries (Burkina Faso, Mali, Niger, The Gambia, Côte d'Ivoire, Bénin, Togo, etc.) have adhered to these principles and have set up grievance mechanisms. These were consulted during the preparation of this document.

## 4. PRESENTATION OF GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

### 4.1 Purpose of the Grievance Mechanism

**The purpose of the Grievance Mechanism** is to ensure ownership by and participation of communities and other stakeholders in achieving the sustainable development goals of the Regional Solar Parks (RSP) projects in ECOWAS Member States. However, in line with World Bank guidelines, this program's GM document must in turn trigger the development of the various grievance redress mechanisms in social safeguards documents during preparation of each of the activities to be carried out under the program.

The Grievance Mechanism (GM) is a system for receiving, investigating, processing in a transparent, fair and effective manner and redressing grievances arising from the implementation of project activities. It is an instrument that gives stakeholders the right to report abuses, shortcomings, damages, violations of rights or past agreements and to seek resolution or cessation of the wrongful act.

Multiple names are used to refer to this same mechanism, namely: complaints or grievance resolution mechanism or system; complaints, appeals and mediation mechanism; grievance and dispute settlement mechanism; claims and complaints handling mechanism, appeals and complaints management mechanism, etc.

The establishment of a grievance mechanism in project management:

- Demonstrates the project's commitment to addressing community concerns, thereby strengthening its relationship with stakeholders;
- Promotes early identification and resolution of concerns, thereby leading to better management of operational-level impacts while preventing any possible harm;
- Rectifies unintentional errors,
- Reduces the likelihood of complaints escalating into litigation, disputes, safety incidents or regulatory issues that may lead to project delays or work interruptions;
- Enhances compliance with international standards and external expectations;
- Ensures accountability to stakeholders and justification of compliance with grant agreement commitments and policies provided therein,
- Facilitates the acquisition of a learning culture through which trends and patterns can be analyzed with a view to continuous performance improvement.
- Creates a trusting environment free from abuse.

### 4.2 Objectives of the Grievance Mechanism

The overall objective of the grievance mechanism is to address complaints and grievances arising from the implementation of project activities in a fair, effective, transparent and participatory manner, with a view to facilitating effective implementation.

The specific objectives of establishing a grievance mechanism are as follows:

- Establish an appropriate institutional framework for the management of complaints and conflicts/disputes;
- Define the remit of the grievance bodies;
- Describe the complaints and disputes management process;

- Develop an effective and participatory complaints management (registration, processing and resolution) mechanism that takes into account the views and concerns of all stakeholders and specify clear operational and capacity building arrangements for stakeholders involved in the GM of the regional solar parks SoP;
- Set up a monitoring, evaluation and control system for the effective handling of complaints.

#### 4.3 Benefits of setting up a Grievance Mechanism

The benefits of a grievance mechanism include:

- Recognition of the dignity and rights of project beneficiaries, including their rights to freely express their opinions and concerns;
- Accountability of partner organizations for commitments and promises made to the communities and other stakeholders they support;
- Improving project impact and effectiveness. This means, for example, identifying and addressing problems or risks quickly; protecting staff by providing them with an investigation and response process; providing a mechanism for continuous learning and improvement; and building a reputation as an organization that takes the time to 'listen'.
- Taking into account the frustrations of beneficiaries as expressed in the relevant complaints form and integrating related resolutions in the conduct of the Project;
- Building and strengthening trust between the various stakeholders involved in a Project (Project Management Unit, beneficiaries, and intermediate stakeholders) by informing the public about activities to be carried out under the project;
- Preventing fraud and corruption;
- Promoting transparency, accountability, probity, integrity and responsibility of PMU members;
- Facilitating and encouraging the involvement of all of the various stakeholders (and especially the beneficiaries) in the implementation of the Project;
- Anticipating, identifying and devising solutions to problems before they worsen and have a detrimental impact on the achievement of Project objectives.
- Strengthening partnership with stakeholders by promoting fairness and transparency in the environmental management of projects;
- Encouraging the expression of honest complaints in order to draw lessons to capitalize on for current and future interventions;
- Providing accessible, timely, effective and culturally appropriate opportunities for persons or communities affected or likely to be affected by project activities to air their grievances in relation to the commitments made under the WAPP regional photovoltaic solar plant projects;
- Identifying, proposing and implementing fair and appropriate solutions in response to complaints.

#### 4.4 Typology of stakeholders

The stakeholders of the RSP project comprise:

- stakeholders affected by the RSP project (direct stakeholders)

- stakeholders interested in the RSP project (indirect stakeholders)
- stakeholder institutions (including those responsible for project implementation)

#### 4.4.1 Stakeholders Affected or Disadvantaged by the Project

This section includes affected stakeholders (natural and legal persons) and disadvantaged or vulnerable stakeholders in terms of their living conditions.

The stakeholders likely to be directly affected by the project may consist of affected and disadvantaged persons. These may include:

- persons or communities expected to suffer loss of assets and/or means of livelihood or sources of income, restrictions on access to resources at the time project implementation;
- direct and indirect workers of contracting and subcontracting companies. Direct workers are project employees (assigned technicians and/or recruited staff) with formal contracts. Indirect workers are employees of project partner companies and subcontracted companies, etc.;
- job seekers seeking employment, including from projected affected communities
- vulnerable persons who may be disproportionately impacted by the project or excluded from receiving inclusive project benefits

These stakeholders include:

- Physically and/or economically displaced persons (natural or legal);
- Villages in the vicinity of the Project likely to be positively affected by certain Project benefits and negatively affected by the environmental and social impacts of the construction and operation phases;
- Migrants, refugees and internally displaced persons attracted by the Project or who are already in the project area, in the hope of obtaining employment before commencement of works;
- Local populations residing near the work sites whose cultural heritage could be affected by the Project;
- People from nearby villages who can provide labor
- Women and others who have customary and/or legal restrictions on access to compensation benefits and access to land
- Informal workers on land who may be economically displaced, including women
- Illiterate persons, elderly and persons with disabilities who have barriers to accessing project information and consultation This may include women and others who may not be able to participate in consultations due to time and location of consultations.
- Groups whose livelihoods are vulnerable and/or tied to cultural practices such as pastoralists

#### 4.4.2 Stakeholders interested in the Project (indirect stakeholders)

These essentially comprise the following stakeholders:

- The Ministries in charge of Energy of the countries concerned by the RSP project;
- Stakeholders from all the ministries and agencies involved in the implementation of the project through the steering committees, i.e. the Ministries in charge of Decentralization, the Ministries of Economy and Finance, the Ministries in charge of Labor and Social Affairs, the Ministries in charge of Public Health, etc.;



- The national electricity companies of the project eligible countries within the sub-region, focal points or the RSP project implementing agency;
- The RSP project studies and management operational units in the countries covered;
- Project Management Units (PMUs) in the various countries concerned;
- Technical agencies and deconcentrated technical services of target ministries including agents and resource persons of the local authorities;
- Customary and religious authorities, (traditional chiefs and clerics), NGOs/ development associations that will provide social intermediation, etc.;
- The project's contracting companies and subcontractors;
- The project's technical and financial partners;
- Focal points from ministries playing a role in project monitoring and guidance;
- Structure in charge of expropriation and decentralized services playing a role in the expropriation and compensation procedures, or in the environmental monitoring of the Project;
- Various state or parastatal bodies playing a role in the management of workers, social protection (health insurance, pension);
- Trade unions and chambers of commerce and industry, at the central and local levels;
- Management bodies for classified forests and other protected areas;
- NGOs whose area of interest is environmental and/or social safeguards;
- Media organizations/Press ;
- The security forces and other NGOs responsible for keeping areas secure from conflict and/or assist with security in project sites that are prone to violence/conflict.

#### 4.5 Vulnerable peoples or groups

It is particularly important to identify people and groups who may have more difficulty participating and those who may be unequally or disproportionately affected by the Project, due to their vulnerable situation. These include:

- women and young people without identity documents and likely to be excluded from the unique identification system on terms of marginalization;
- people living with a disability /impairment as well as those living with so-called chronic diseases;
- the elderly, particularly those living in rural areas;
- refugees and internally displaced persons (relevant in countries such as Burkina Faso, Niger, Mali, etc.) and those in conflict prone areas;
- people in extremely precarious situations and/or with specific difficulties (adult orphans, destitute people living alone, widows, people who are homeless or living on the street, etc.);
- people belonging to "disadvantaged" minority groups such as minority communities in numbers or with a specific way of life such as traditional pastoralist communities, and women and children who are heads of households;
- landless workers;
- people working in the informal sector;
- illiterate people;

**Table 3: Stakeholders - Institutions**

Institution	Responsibility/Role
Ministerial departments that concern the RSP	Areas of departmental activity
Ministries in charge of Energy of the States concerned by the RSP project.	Ministries responsible for the RSP project. They can intervene in the management of the project.
Ministries in charge of the Environment of ECOWAS Member States eligible for the RSP project.	Environmental and social supervision role, monitoring the proper implementation of the environmental and social plan resulting from the ESIA .
Ministries in charge of Labor, Employment, Social Affairs and Protection of Women and Children	Ensures compliance with the labor procedure, including non-discrimination of work, ensures the protection of health and safety of workers, fight against child labor, protection of the disabled person and women against all kinds of violence, etc. They can intervene in the management of the project.
Ministries of Economy and Finance (MEF) of ECOWAS Member States eligible for the RSP project.	Actively participate in the proper compensation of PAPs through the release of financial resources.
Ministries of Agriculture of ECOWAS Member States eligible for the RSP project.	Intervene in the evaluation of the precise costs of compensation for crops.
Ministries of Justice of ECOWAS Member States eligible for the RSP project.	Can intervene in the resettlement / compensation procedure in case of complaints.
Ministries of Health and Labor of ECOWAS Member States eligible for the RSP project.	Intervene in the treatment and/or monitoring of epidemic cases and awareness-raising activities against STIs and HIV/AIDS
Decentralized communities /Territorial administration hosting the RSP project.	Participate in the identification of related achievements and monitoring of the ESMP and RAP / Assist in the resolution of problems with their territorial jurisdictions
Local structures (regional, prefectural, etc.) in charge of environmental monitoring).	Responsible for monitoring the implementation of the ESMP.
Works contracting firms.	Firms responsible for road development works and consequently the implementation of a great many ESMP measures.
Research/Engineering Bureau in charge of control and supervision.	Intervenes in the implementation of the ESMP and RAP.
Health of workers and the communities).	Shall intervene in screening and treatment of STIs, HIV/AIDS, Ebola malaria and Coronavirus. Their capacities need to be strengthened.
Traditional Representatives(Village Development Committees and as well as women's groups, elder groups	Shall intervene in the procedures for displacement of sacred sites affected by the project/Can intervene in the amicable settlement of disputes/conflicts except for SEA/SH related issues
Village Development Committees	Can intervene in the information, sensitization and assistance of populations
social groups such as women's groups, elders' groups, youth committees, etc.	Can intervene in the information, sensitization and assistance of populations

Religious leaders (imams and priests).	Can intervene in the information and sensitization of populations in places of worship
Civil Society Organizations (Regional, Prefectural, Cantonal Development Committees, Village Development Committees, Neighborhood Development Committees) and all interested NGOs in urban centers	Can intervene in awareness-raising activities aimed at the youth on issues such as STIs / AIDS, EBOLA fever, the COVID-19 coronavirus, family planning, female genital mutilation, Ebola and malaria, road safety and environment safeguards. While, reforestation could be implemented by local NGOs.
Media organizations/Press organs (local radio stations)	Intervene in the dissemination of information on the project, sensitization of the populations on health, road safety and environmental safeguard issues.
Town criers	Responsible for informing inhabitants at the market squares, crossroads, etc.

**Table 4: Analysis of strengths and weaknesses in traditional/community level complaints management**

Structure	Strengths	Weaknesses	Recommendations
Traditional chieftaincy village / district, Canton / DDC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong direct links with the community members</li> <li>Strong conciliation and reconciliation capacities</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Loss of influence in the face of modern justice;</li> <li>Limited capacity to document complaints management and enforce decisions (orality)</li> <li>Perceived bias and potential for reinforcing exclusion, discrimination and disadvantage to vulnerable members</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inform and sensitize the populations on the importance of respecting the local complaints management;</li> <li>Strengthen the capacities of local actors to manage complaints (ensuring impartiality, fairness, no coercion or retaliation, etc.)</li> </ul>
Communes / Municipalities / Prefects / Citizen's office	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Have police force to assist in case of conflict;</li> <li>Acceptable complaint management documentation capacities (existence of archives)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>More binding complaints resolution practices,</li> <li>Limited capacity for effective complaints management</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capacity building for effective complaints management</li> </ul>

#### 4.6 Categorization of complaints that may occur in this project

Based on the experience of large projects, it is possible to identify the various potential complaints and to categorize them. These complaints can be related to resettlement issues such as eligibility criteria

for beneficiaries; responsibilities of stakeholders, contractor violations, impacts of project activities; risks and impacts of the project; access to project benefits, etc.. Complaints related to gender-based violence, sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (GBV/SEA/SH) will be managed separately.

The table below shows the different source categories of complaints and the motives for complaints).

**Table 5: Categorization of non-SEA/ SH complaints**

Categories of complaints	Descriptions and events
<b>Category 1: Project management (including communication/consultation, procurement/corruption, accountability and transparency).</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- withholding of information;</li> <li>- lack of communication;</li> <li>- disinformation ;</li> <li>- weak / non-involvement of sectoral stakeholders;</li> <li>- non-involvement (exclusion) of beneficiary communities and discrimination against project affected individuals and groups ;</li> <li>- lack of implementation of appropriate measures to involve communities in the project area of influence;</li> <li>- non-compliance with the clauses of local agreements and conventions in the implementation of the RAP;</li> <li>- mismanagement of resources, misappropriation;</li> <li>- non-compliance with project procedures and implementation manuals;</li> <li>- conflicts of interest;</li> <li>- disagreements about places and types of activity;</li> <li>- lack of accountability;</li> <li>- lack of liability;</li> <li>- corruption;</li> <li>- poor management of project funds;</li> <li>- poor profit sharing;</li> <li>- lack of benefit sharing;</li> <li>- political interference;</li> <li>- abuse of authorities and powers;</li> <li>- non-consensual choice of stakeholder representatives;</li> <li>- lack of representativeness and credibility of DDCs and CSOs;</li> <li>- contestation of the use of project material;</li> <li>- leadership conflict in drafting texts;</li> <li>- leadership conflict in the implementation of certain project activities;</li> <li>- poor stakeholder involvement;</li> <li>- acquisition of inappropriate and unsuitable materials;</li> <li>- insufficient information/training of stakeholders in the fraud alert system;</li> <li>- difficulties in accessing information;</li> <li>- contestation of the choice of sites and beneficiaries by the population;</li> <li>- mismanagement of allocated / disbursed resources;</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- contestation of the choice of training / workshops beneficiaries;</li> <li>- Contestation of data collection sites;</li> <li>- choice of stakeholders to be consulted;</li> <li>- choice of the location of the project components.</li> </ul>
<b>Category 2: Resettlement (physical and/or economic displacement, land acquisition)</b>  <b>Complaints involving lack of adherence from agreed actions in RAPs .</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- expropriation</li> <li>- claim of plots</li> <li>- restriction of access and use of land / property</li> <li>- restriction of access to resources in protected areas</li> <li>- misappropriation of project related assets including direct or indirect project benefits by the chiefs or members of the DDC</li> <li>- buying of consciences (i.e. corruption, exerting pressure and influence, clientelism, bribery, favoritism, etc.)</li> <li>- abuse of authority</li> <li>- favoring members of one's family or one's ethnic group in the sharing of project assets</li> <li>- Exclusion of women and other vulnerable groups in accessing land rights, compensation benefits</li> </ul>
<b>Category 3: Exclusion risks</b>  <b>The complaint relates to the perception by a community or a person that they were unfairly excluded from participating in the project</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Exclusion of women, the elderly, the youth, people with disabilities,</li> <li>- Discrimination against those with or recovered from COVID-19 or having HIV / AIDS from project activities</li> <li>- Discrimination against traditional communities and communities practicing vulnerable and traditional livelihoods</li> <li>- Desecration / destruction of cultural and religious sites;</li> <li>- Contestation of the authority of traditional chiefs</li> <li>- Depravity of morals</li> <li>- Unsatisfactory support measures;</li> <li>- Unequitable sharing of the project benefits</li> <li>- abuse of power in project implementation</li> <li>- Disproportionate impacts on vulnerable and disadvantaged groups and individuals</li> </ul>
<b>Category 4: Grievances related to labor including labor working conditions, procurement/hiring practices, unfair labor practices, illegal labor practices (such as forced labor and child labor), and Occupational Health and Safety</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- accidents at work</li> <li>- recruitment of local labor</li> <li>- recruitment of female labor</li> <li>- working by minors and children</li> <li>- non-compliance with labor standards</li> <li>- Sexual exploitation and abuse/Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) in the workplace</li> <li>- unsatisfactory pay or late pay</li> <li>- work volume and time</li> <li>- workers' indebtedness to food retailers</li> <li>- refusal of workers' payment by companies</li> <li>- Quality of plants/machinery on construction sites</li> <li>- Theft of project supplies</li> <li>- Lack of protective and safety equipment and safe working conditions</li> </ul>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Lack of securing the project area to protect community members and vulnerable groups like children and persons with disabilities</li> </ul>
<b>Category 5: Project related social risks and impacts</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- restriction of access to households, places of residence, shops, infrastructure and social equipment)</li> <li>- restriction of access to construction sites</li> <li>- traffic disruption, traffic and road safety</li> <li>- Labor influx impacts</li> <li>- Disruption of socio-economic activities;</li> <li>- noise pollution and various other nuisances;</li> <li>- destruction of work equipment by disgruntled workers</li> <li>- SEA/SH and VAC risks</li> <li>- Security risks resulting from projects operating in a conflict prone area</li> <li>- Conflict risks</li> <li>- Other risks and impacts identified in ESIA's not properly managed, monitored or addressed by contractors and project team</li> </ul>
<b>Category 6: Requests for information by the community and other questions</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>- Information about recruiting local labor</li> <li>- Information about the project</li> </ul> <p>Information about the Grievance Mechanism</p>

## 5. ROLES AND RESPONSABILITIES

### 5.1 The Complaints Resolution Committee

The Committee will be responsible for receiving and resolving complaints in a fair, objective, accountable, efficient, and timely manner in all phases of the project life cycle.

The major responsibilities of the GM Complaints Management Mechanism, with the help of the various committees, the Youth Committee, the Women's Committee, the Village Development Committee, and the local authorities, are as follows:

- Develop and publicize the grievance management procedures.
- Organize the receipt, review, investigation and follow-up of grievances
- Adjudicate grievances
- Monitor and evaluate the implementation of agreements reached through the grievance mechanism.

### 5.2 Community Liaison officers (CLOs)

The Regional Solar Project (RSP) PMU will designate one Environmental Safeguard Officer and one Social Safeguard Officer as Community Liaison Officers (CLOs). Their contact information will be published and communicated through public announcements and information sharing about the project (radio, mosques, community meetings, etc.), in order to raise awareness among stakeholders during project implementation and to respond to any grievances or complaints that may arise. The CLOs will serve as a point of contact to convey grievances from project-affected people, construction workers, residents, and community members to the GM. The CLOs will be responsible for ensuring that the GM's recommendations are implemented and for instructing the ISP PMU during the implementation of the ESMP, as well as the contractors to make necessary adjustments to their work. The contractor will be required to take action to address grievances.

In addition to the Community Liaison Officer, the project will make grievance forms available in each village (NGO, Village Chief, or VDC) as an accessible place to file a grievance. At least at the end of each month or every two weeks, the community liaison officers will collect the completed forms for submission to the GM.

For those who are illiterate, the village chief's secretary or VDC representative will assist the liaisons (the social and environmental safeguards specialists) or the VDC where the person resides to write and submit complaints. To ensure confidentiality, the project will apply the World Bank codes of conduct that will be completed by project staff prior to the start of civil works. The project will issue a code of conduct form to be completed by project staff, the VDC, the youth committee, the women's committee, and liaison officers based on the World Bank codes of conduct. The PMU safeguard team will closely monitor the application of the codes of conduct by the contractor and the project.

### 5.3 The Contractor

During implementation, contractors, their staff, and all project-related workers must be in compliance with the World Bank's environmental, social, health and safety (ESHS), and occupational health and safety (OHS) standards in the workplace and conduct with affected communities. The implementation of a code of conduct will ensure that the project meets its ESHS and OHS objectives, as well as prevent and/or mitigate GBV risks, including SEA/SH and CAV. The project and contractors are responsible for ensuring that the code of conduct is signed, behaviors are monitored, and individuals working on the project adopt it. Contractors are responsible for:

- Raising awareness of ESHS and OHS expectations on the project.

- Creating a clear system for receiving, responding to, and sanctioning HSE and CAV incidents in accordance with the GM.

#### 5.4 Individual Code of Conduct

For any project, contractors are required to establish a Code of Conduct for its worker personnel that is binding on all persons working on the project, including managers, contractors, and PSR project staff. The code of conduct will be explained and posted at the work sites, and workers and affected communities will be sensitized prior to the start of work and throughout project implementation. Awareness campaigns on the GM and the code of conduct will be conducted every six months for the affected community and every month for the workers. These campaigns will be monitored to ensure compliance. Each new worker will receive training on the GM and Code of Conduct before starting work. The Contractor's Liaison will work closely with the Project Liaison Officers with the project community to bring all complaints to the Complaint Management Committee.

For issues related to SEA/SH complaints and VAC-related claims, please see the Response Protocol in Annex 15

The main objectives of the GM are to

- Record, classify, and prioritize grievances based on the severity and urgency of the issue, and to provide timely, fair, and accountable resolution of grievances at the project level.
- Resolve grievances through consultation with all stakeholders (and inform stakeholders of solutions, obtain their views on the outcome, and ensure they understand possible next steps to take if they are not satisfied with the outcome).
- Refer unresolved cases to the appropriate authority.
- Regularly analyze grievances to assess whether there are systemic problems in the project that should be addressed to mitigate the same types of reported problems.

The GM operates within the existing legal, cultural, and community context in the countries, hence the need to also take into consideration the World Bank's procedures and recommendations for handling complaints.

Table 6: GMs Indicative approximate timeframes for the complaints

Stage	Process	Duration
	The Aggrieved Party (AP) will take his/her grievance to the project or construction site supervisor (CSS)/Contractor Liaison Officer who will endeavor to resolve it immediately. Where AP is not satisfied, the CSS or CLO will refer the AP to the Project's Contact Person (PCP). For complaints that were satisfactorily resolved by the CSS/CLO, he/she will inform the PCP and the PCP will log the grievance and the actions that were taken.	Anytime
2	On receipt of the complaint, the Project PCP will endeavor to resolve it immediately. If unsuccessful, he/she then notifies PCU Project Coordinator	after logging grievance
3	The PCU Project Coordinator will endeavor to address and resolve the complaint by submitting it to the GRC and inform the aggrieved party after the Grievance Redress Committee has taken a decision regarding his/her complaint. If it is a land-related issue, the Project Coordinator and the GRC	



	will advise the Permanent Secretary, to engage the Ministry of Land and Local Government.	
4	If the matter remains unresolved, or complainant is not satisfied with the outcome at the project level (GRC), the PCU Project Coordinator or Project Permanent Secretary, will then refer the matter to the National Steering Committee (NSC) for a resolution.	7 days
5	If it remains unresolved or the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome proposed by the NSC, he/she is free to refer the matter to physical planning or the Ministry of Local Government and lands if it is a land matter.	Anytime
6	If it is a land related issue, the Project Permanent Secretary may seek the assistance of the Physical Planning MD and Permanent Secretary of Ministry of Lands and Local Government.	Immediately after stage 3
7	If the issue remains unresolved, then the ultimate step will be for the Courts to deliberate on. Any such decisions are final.	Anytime

**For management and resolution of cases regarding SEA/SH and VAC, please see the Annex 15.**

## 6. INSTITUTIONAL MECHANISM FOR HANDLING COMPLAINTS

### 6.1 Institutional mechanism for handling complaints unrelated to SEA/SH

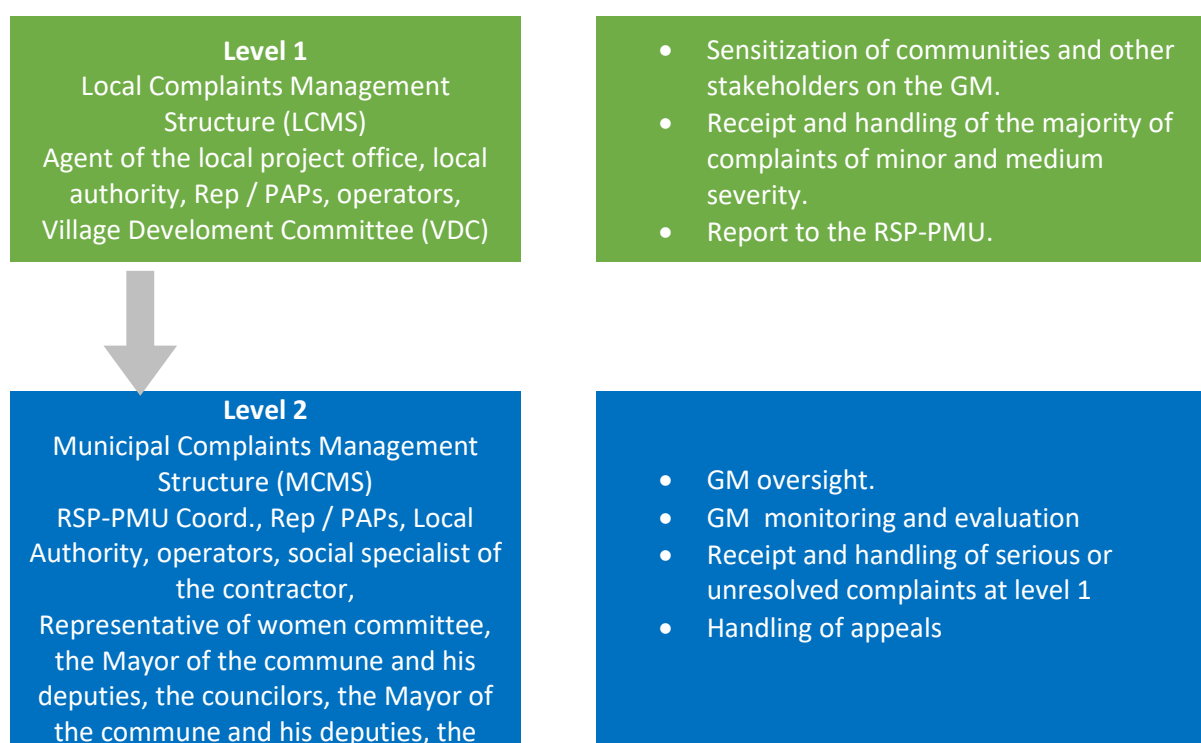
The aim is to define the institutional mechanism for managing complaints which will be set up at the **Local, Municipal and National** levels. The RSP Grievance Mechanism comprises the following different structures or bodies

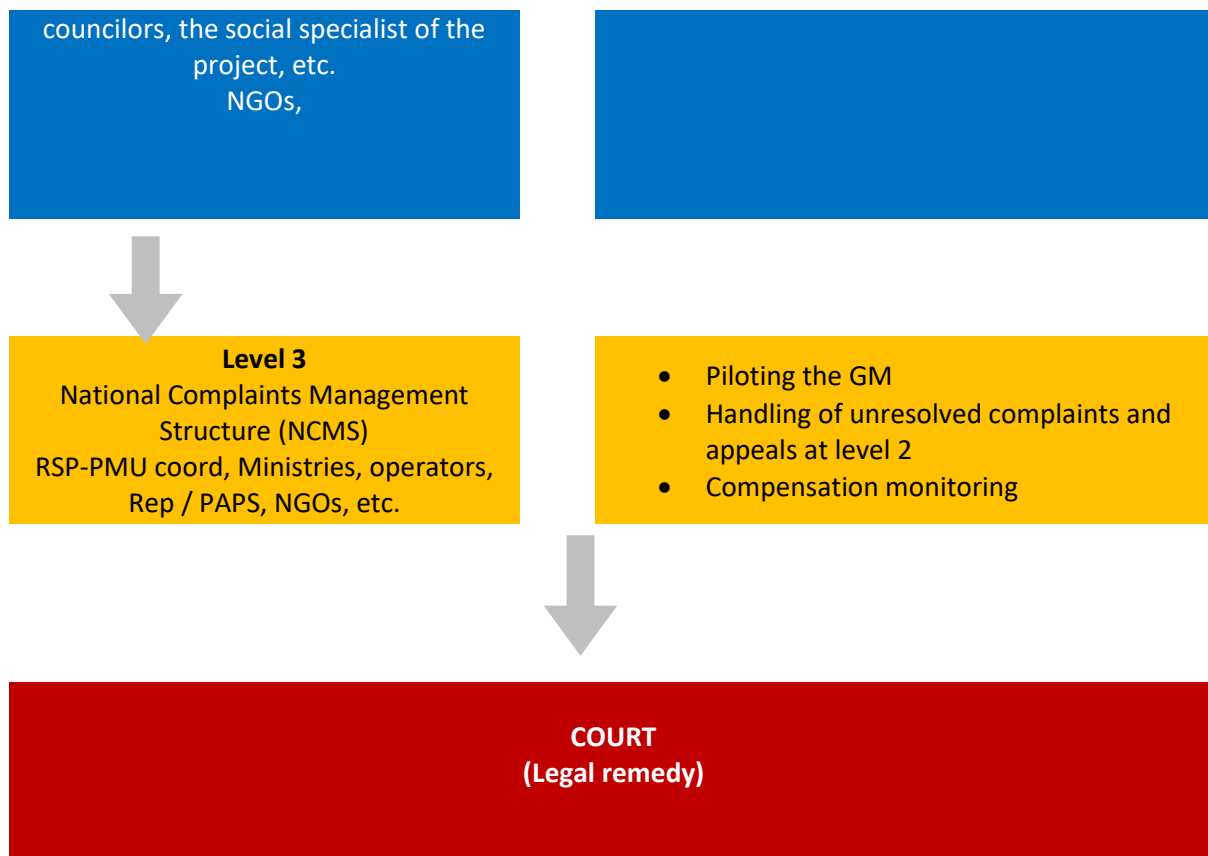
These complaints management structure establishment activities include:

- Establishment of the local structure (LCMS), Level 1 in the villages concerned by the RSP;
- Establishment of the municipal (or prefectural) structure (MCMS), Level 2 in the municipalities or prefectures;
- Establishment of the national structure (NCMS), Level 3 for the country at large.

This GM will only be able to play its desired role if the structures for handling complaints are formally put in place and their capacities strengthened in terms of their roles and responsibilities. Stakeholders, mainly project beneficiaries, are sensitized and informed about the existence of the GM, its content, the roles and responsibilities of the committees, the modalities and tools for filing and handling complaints, etc.

The RSP complaints and appeals management system is structured around three levels of intervention mobilized according to the seriousness of the complaint. These three levels are presented in the following figure and described in more detail below.





**Figure 3: Institutional mechanism for handling complaints**

## 6.2 Community-based Grievance Mechanism)

Local communities have traditional and cultural grievance mechanisms. It is expected that some community-level conflicts can be resolved using these mechanisms, without the involvement of the Project, the contractor(s), and/or government representatives at the local and national level. The extended family, village and/or chiefs may be involved at this level. This may be more appropriate for issues and concerns that are minor. For example, community processes have been used to determine the voluntary donation of land, with communities discussing among themselves to find suitable land for a school and then proposing the sites to the solar park projects for review before final approval. Another example is that if the contractor needs to recruit housekeepers or other human resource needs, they can choose from the resumes collected by the community. We saw during the consultation that in some villages, priority has already been given by the community to families who have donated land for their village school as agreed by them. The community and the contractor will be informed that the principle of non-discrimination and equity, including gender equality, in accordance with labor law of the country, will apply to the selection. In addition, if the company wishes to compensate the community for the use of its sand, gravel, or for the impact of its activity (dust dispersal), these grievances can be resolved at the community level, without the GM, if the community so wishes (See Annex 1, Annex 2a, Annex 2b, Annex 2c).

These structures will constitute local levels of complaint management for people who do not have the means to write or send their complaints or grievances, since they will be in close collaboration with the populations of the project intervention zones. These structures will be set up at sub-project implementation sites or at sites likely to be impacted by the project.

At the local level or the project site level, the responsibilities are summarized as follows: receive handwritten complaints, enter complaints in the register if the complaint is verbal, send these complaints every week to the complaints management structure for processing, receive solutions found to the complaints and disseminate them to the complainants (see annex 3 for GM monitoring table).

If the complaint can be resolved at the level of the local structure, the latter shall simply inform the Local Complaints Management Structure. Otherwise, the responsibility for handling the complaint shall be transferred to the municipal and then national Complaints Management Structures (CMS).

### 6.3 Complaint Resolution Mechanism at the Municipal Level or Project level)

The municipal or communal committee is responsible for receiving unresolved complaints at the local level. It must provide appropriate solutions within ten (10) days from the date of receipt for those within its reach. It shall escalate to the national level those that cannot be resolved locally within three (3) days of attempts to resolve them. The committee shall report quarterly to the SP-IDPU on complaints received and addressed (see Annex1).

When the resolution of the complaint goes beyond the local level, it is referred to the Communal Complaints Management Committee which is composed of the Mayor of the commune and his deputies, the councilors in addition to the resource persons that the Mayor alone can call upon depending on the complaint received for its resolution.

Many project-related grievances during construction are minor and site-specific. Often they revolve around nuisances generated during construction such as noise, dust, vibration, worker conflicts, etc. They can be easily resolved on site. If these types of grievances cannot be resolved on site, they will require the intervention of the Grievance Committee, the area chief, the head of the affected village, the governor's representative and the project (GRC), the affected landowner(s), and, if necessary, the representative of the Ministry of Energy and other ministries who can help resolve the grievance.

Complex or serious grievances, particularly those involving land boundaries, access to property, or misunderstandings between affected communities or households and the project regarding compensation or impact on community life or property, may be brought to the project GM.

Grievances and complaints related to gender-based violence, including sexual and gender-based violence, violence against women, and child labor, by workers, contractors, and/or community members during the construction phase can be addressed through the specific procedures and protocols that have been described above and that will ensure ethical and confidential management and resolution of these complaints. Most grievances cannot be resolved immediately and, on the spot, and in the case of AHE claims, they require specific, independent interventions and processes to protect the safety, anonymity, well-being, and preferences of survivors.

Given the GM's lack of experience with HRET and CCA issues, the women's representative to the GM will be part of the specific review structure for HRET and CCA complaints, which may also include existing GM members. The Women's Gender Committee will also support the training and awareness activities planned under the Sexual Exploitation and Abuse Prevention and Response Action Plan.

- **GM Composition and membership**

Project community liaisons (Environmental and Social Safeguards Officers) who are located within the Regional Solar Project PMU will be designated to receive, review, record, and address project-related complaints. On a monthly basis, the Safeguard Team (Environmental and Social Safeguards Officers) will collect complaints for submission to the GM. The GM will meet at least once a month, depending on the number and type of complaints received. The project's community liaison, VDC, and contractor will convene the PMU Safeguards Team if a complaint is not resolved within one week. After receiving the alert, the PMU safeguard team will visit the field to obtain additional information and resubmit the case to the GM. The complainant will be notified that additional information is being gathered and will be kept informed of the status of the case.

These complaints will be submitted to the Grievance Mechanism.

- **Escalation of Grievances**

If the complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the aggrieved party by the Grievance Escalation Committee, it will then be forwarded by the PMU Project Coordinator of the Solar Parks Project to the National Steering Committee (NSC).

#### 6.4 Composition of the National Complaints Management Structure (NCMS)

In all countries hosting the regional solar park project, namely Burkina Faso, Mali, Gambia, Niger, and many others, complaint mechanism management structures will be established.

Composition of the national complaints management structure (NCMS)

When the resolution of the complaint goes beyond the municipal or prefectural level, the complaint is forwarded to the national complaints management structure, which is composed of certain members of the PSN, including resource persons whom the national PSN coordinator alone can call upon depending on the complaint to be resolved.

This complaint management structure is composed of:

- The Minister in charge of energy or his representative, the National Coordinator of the RSP project; Chairman of the structure
- The Minister in charge of the environment or his representative
- The Minister of Labor and Social Affairs or his representative
- the Social Safeguards Specialist: responsible for recording complaints and drafting the minutes of resolution;
- Communication Specialist
- Environmental Safeguards Specialist
- Finance and Administration Officer
- Resource persons

The national structure is responsible for receiving complaints from the municipal level. It must provide appropriate solutions within ten (10) days of receipt. The structure shall produce quarterly complaint management reports. A complaint logbook and a complaint transmission logbook shall be provided to this committee (and will also be kept in e-format).

#### 6.5 Judicial level Grievance Mechanism

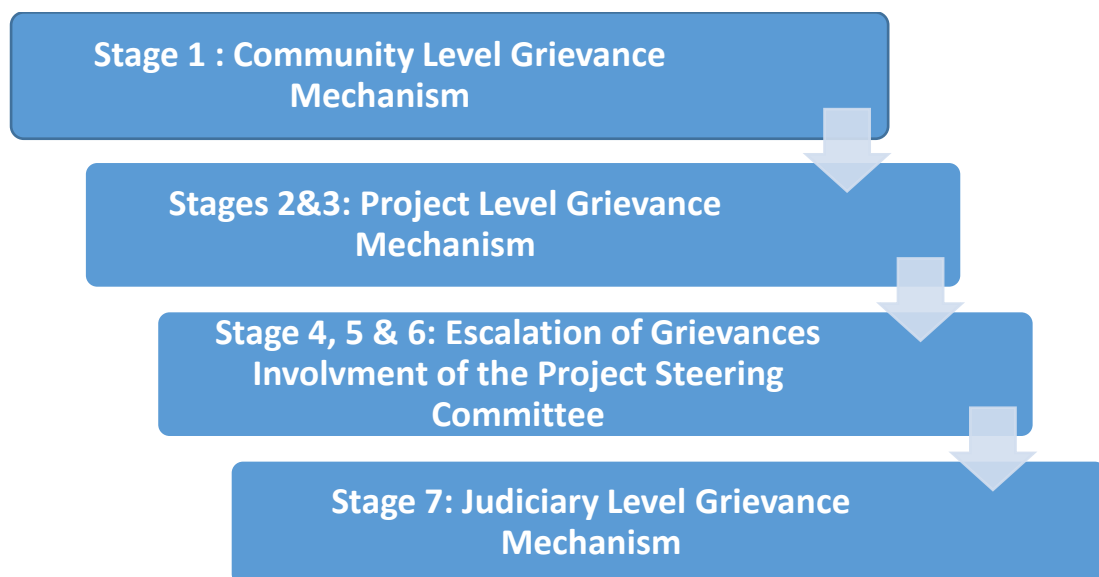
The GM at the project level will not prevent affected persons from accessing the legal system. At any time, the complainant may bring the matter before the appropriate legal or judicial authority, in

accordance with the laws of The Gambia. However, the quality and effectiveness of the legal system must be assessed, as well as issues related to accessibility and cost.

#### 6.6 Material means of handling complaints

GM structures must be provided with the means to take notes, complaint management tools (complaints record book, complaints transmission logbook, filling template, report template). These will be made available to each structure. Training will be organized for committees on how to properly take notes, keep accurate and confidential records, etc.

In addition, GM workers will also be provided with protective equipment to mitigate against COVID-19 transmission (hand washing device, hydroalcoholic gel, masks, advertising posters on barrier gestures, etc.). These will be made available to each committee to prevent the spread and contamination of the virus. Training at this level will also be organized to build capacities for the benefit of the members of GM committees.



**Figure 3: The GM process**

**Table 7 : Indicative approximate timeframes for the complaints processing steps**

No.	Activities	Frequency / Processing Timeframe
1	Registration of complaints/collection of grievances from various uptake stations	Every working day
2	Acknowledgment of complaints to the complainant	1-2 days after receipt of the complaint
3	Eligibility assessment	Every working day
4	Complaint handling without additional investigation	10 working days from date of acknowledgment of receipt
5	In case of additional investigations	Immediately inform the complainant
6	Additional investigation and assessment for a broad and in-depth verification that may require an extension of processing timeframe	15 to 45 working days from date of acknowledgment of receipt
7	Notification of the agreed solution or recourse to a higher body	3-5 days
8	Implementation of the decisions of the complaints procedure	3 working days from the date of notification
9	Identification and investigation of complaint	Two weeks where feasible
10	Referral to a complaints mediation and resolution structure	1 month
11	Referral to the appeal structure	1 month
12	Monitoring, closure and archiving and follow up with complainant to ensure that they are satisfied with how the complainant was handled and if further action/follow up is needed. If further follow up is needed, catalogue in the monitoring log (see Annex 3) and follow up as noted.	1 month

## 7. IMPLEMENTATION OF THE GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

### 7.1 Steps for managing non-SEA/SH complaints

#### ***a. Several steps are followed in the implementation of this procedure.***

Establishment of complaints management committees at various local, communal and national levels

The Complaints Management Mechanism will only be able to fully play its desired role if complaints handling structures are formally set up and their capacities strengthened in terms of roles and responsibilities. Stakeholders, mainly project beneficiaries, are sensitized and informed about the existence of the Complaints Mechanism, its content, the roles and responsibilities of the committees, the modalities and tools for filing and processing complaints, etc.

Sensitive complaints (sexual abuse, fraud, corruption, incidents, etc.) are handled in a confidential, transparent and non-retaliatory manner by the Complaints Committee (if necessary involving other actors), to ensure maximum protection of complainants.

It is anticipated that some of these concerns may include eligibility criteria for project opportunities, loss of livelihood or properties and use of land. The mechanism for grievance redress shall thus include:

- Provision for the establishment of a grievance redress committee
- Multiple grievance uptake locations and multiple channels for receiving grievances to enhance accessibility and inclusion, especially those who are disadvantaged and marginalized
- Fixed service standards for grievance resolution, including adjudication process and management of claims related to Gender-Based Violence (GBV), including Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), Sexual Harassment (SH), and Violence Against Children (VAC)
- Prompt and clear processing guidelines (including reviewing procedures and monitoring system)
- A clear timeframe for responding to grievances
- A reliable, accurate and effective reporting and recording system
- Procedure for assessing the grievance
- Grievance escalation model

#### ***b. Information and awareness***

It is important that the Complaints Mechanism be made accessible through information and sensitization of communities during the life of the project. The success of the Mechanism depends on the importance given to it by the communities concerned. The information and sensitization activity to convince and reassure about the use and existence of the GM is a cardinal activity at this early stage of the process. Information will be communicated specifically to those who cannot read or write, for example through town criers, village leaders, women's groups, elders and youth groups, etc.

All means of communication are used, including town criers, announcements on regional or local radio, the use of elaborate leaflets, posters, signs and billboards, the religious channel (the Imam), and training and awareness-raising by the Project Management Unit (PMU). The company in charge of the works constitutes a channel of information especially before the beginning of the works with the influx of job seekers, most often the local workforce. In this communication with the communities



concerned, emphasis must be placed on the different options for taking charge and the places where complaints can be filed.

In practice, notices and signs will be posted at all sites to provide the public with information about the project and summarize the complaints mechanism process, including contact information for the project contact person, contractor liaison officer, or community liaison officer.

***c. Expression of complaints (see Annexes 2a, 2b and 2c)***

The expression or formulation of the complaint is the responsibility of the person making the complaint. During the sensitization and information process, the communities in all its components, men, women, young widows, widowers, etc., must have the information that they can formulate and present their complaints in any form. Indeed, to avoid the exclusion of the communities by themselves because they are illiterate and do not speak the official language, they must be assured of being able to present their complaints in all possible forms. Thus, they can express their complaints in all possible forms:

- Oral form: by direct or proxy narration, by express hearing, by broadcast on community radio, by intervention in meetings, etc.
- Written form: by letter, by email, by cell phone SMS message, by WhatsApp, by sign, by poster, by leaflet, etc.
- Gestural form: recreational demonstrations, march, strike, etc. (workers).

***d. Places to file complaints***

The complaints mechanism must be accessible to all people through a variety of venues and methods (grievance forms submitted to the project, in person, by phone) or through the contractor or VDC. Complaint forms should be available at these locations. All types of complainants must be free to file a complaint at one or more of the following intake locations:

- the Chief the village or township chief
- the village development committee
- the representative of the women's groups
- the representative of the youth groups
- Municipal Council: all Communes/Municipalities covered by the RSP project;
- the local project office (the social expert or the community liaison officer)
- PMU-RSP: the management unit of the RSP project;
- National environmental agencies;
- Compensation and Indemnification Commissions;
- RSP company monitoring missions;
- the company and all other companies involved in the RSP project
- the social safeguard expert;
- etc.

The various stages of the complaints management process are: receiving complaints, issuing acknowledgement of receipt, verifying the eligibility of a complaint, processing the complaint,

notifying the complainants of the resolution and the decisions taken, resolving and implementing the proposed measures, closing the procedure; and monitoring and documenting the complaints management process.

The focal points who are responsible for the identified complaint sites receive the complaints and forward them to the administrator of the complaint management mechanism who may be the social safeguards specialist or any other designated person.

***e. Receipt of Complaints***

Complaints are filed and received at the designated filing locations. Communities, affected persons, and any stakeholder affected by the projects can access the GMs through several channels made available for filing complaints. Complaint forms can be sent to the local project office by mail.

Each complaint is registered and a receipt of deposit is issued to the complainant or his representative. The registered complaint, whatever its form, is forwarded to the department in charge of complaints management at the PMU. At the request of the complainant, the local PSVR project office can assist him/her in formulating his/her complaint and compiling the file (see annexes 2a, 2b and 2c).

***f. Issuance of the acknowledgement of receipt (Annex 8)***

Following the receipt of the complaint, the complainant must receive an acknowledgement of receipt, confirming the admissibility of the complaint and the registration of his file. This acknowledgement shall be sent by e-mail or by post by the complaints administrator of the local project office or PMU-PSVR within three (3) working days to one (1) week. This acknowledgement should outline the following steps in the complaints and appeals process (see Annex 4).

***g. Registration of Complaints and Availability of Registry (see Annex 3)***

A logbook dedicated to the complaint management mechanism will be available at the local Solar Parks Project (SPP) office. Appendix 3 provides an idea of the format of the register. Such a logbook should be available at the village chief's office, the VDC, the women's group of each affected community will have a complaints logbook, as well as the contractor. The contractor's community liaison officer and the project's trained social safeguards specialist will record the complaints.

The details and nature of the complaint (including categorization of sensitive/urgent, non-sensitive, and all non-HABS related complaints) will be noted, including

- the name of the complainant and contact information if known
- Date the complaint was received
- Corrective action taken in response to the complaint
- the date the response was made available to the community (without identifying personal details) and the complainant
- the resolution
- the complainant's response, whether acceptable or not
- the name of the person who received the complaint and the place/mode of filing the complaint. This information will be included in the PSR Project PMU's progress reports to the World Bank. (See Annex 3 for an example of a grievance log).

The local Complaints Mechanism team, including the PMU Manager, Safeguard Expert, and Social Development Expert, will meet monthly to review all complaints filed.

#### ***h. Complaint handling including investigation and thorough audit (see Annex 5)***

Any complaint that is found to be admissible is subject to a thorough review and analysis. Depending on the seriousness of the complaint, the local project office coordinator will contact the PMU Coordinator.

The local project team including the safeguard expert will then organize a meeting for the Management Mechanism (GM) at the earliest possible time to ensure that the timeline for verification of the claim and responses to the complainants are met.

As a follow-up and monitoring activity, if the identity of the person who submitted a grievance is known. The identity of the grievant shall be recorded the Committee shall notify the grievant within three days of the decision or when a decision is expected. If the grievor is not known, a notice that a grievance on a particular issue has been received will be posted in the community and the Community Liaison Officer (CLO) will notify the community. The date of this posting shall be recorded in the grievance log.

The GM Committee will undertake to finalize decisions within two weeks of the date of receipt and feedback will be given to the complainants who will be notified and record the complainants' comments on the decision. If the complainant is not satisfied, they will be informed of the escalation procedures.

The time frame for analysis and resolution depends on the severity and technical complexity of the complaint and the existing mediation mechanisms. The time frame for responding to the complaint can be as short as 3 to 4 weeks from the date of the acknowledgement of receipt (see Annex 5).

#### ***i. Notification of Resolution to Complainants and Disposition (Annex 9)***

Upon completion of the investigation, a reasonable interim proposal commensurate with the complaint will be developed.

The Complaint Manager will discuss the interim proposal with the complainant rather than unilaterally imposing the verdict. The Complaint Manager will also indicate other avenues of redress available. The complainant will be given the opportunity to accept the proposal, to present an alternative proposal that can be discussed, or to reject the proposal and consider an alternative dispute resolution process. The final agreement should be specific, time-bound, and agreed upon by both parties. If it is not directly applicable, it should include a plan for follow-up. If the complaint is found to have no merit the Complaint Officer shall explain the reasons for this to the complainant and indicate possible avenues of redress.

#### ***j. Choice of Remedies***

If the complaint is not resolved to the satisfaction of the aggrieved party by the Appeal Committee, then it will be forwarded by the Project Coordinator to the National Steering Committee.

If the action taken by the National Steering Committee does not satisfy the complainant, the aggrieved party is free to take his/her grievance to the Gambia's judicial court (district courts or magistrate's court).

#### ***k. Implementation of Decisions and Closure of the Complaint Process (Annex 10)***

The implementation of the proposed solution occurs when all parties involved in the complaint reach an agreement and more importantly, when the complainant is satisfied. If the complainant has no objections, the decision shall be implemented in accordance with the agreed agreements, customs or the law in force within three (03) working days from the date of notification.

The procedure will be closed and the termination of the complaint marked by a ticket if the complainant is satisfied with the solution. At all levels, there is a need to document, record and learn from each case.

### ***I. Closing and Archiving***

Once a resolution of the complaint has been agreed upon or a decision to close the case has been made, the final step will be the resolution, tracking, and archiving and closing of the complaint. The Complaint Administrator is responsible for the resolution and follow-up of the complaint (follow-up plan) by ensuring that the selected solution(s) are implemented.

The Complaint Administrator is also responsible for the archiving of the elements of the file (complaint form, acknowledgement of receipt, investigation reports, complaint settlement agreement, etc.). These documents shall be kept confidential while allowing for the publication of statistics on the number and type of complaints received, the actions taken and the results obtained.

### ***m. Monitoring-Evaluation of the Grievance Mechanism***

Each complaints management structure will have to carry out quarterly evaluation of the implementation of the GM. The results will be incorporated into the quarterly project implementation report. These evaluations should also contribute to improving the performance of the GM and provide useful information for the management of the projects. Questions to be addressed in this assessment include, among others:

- How many complaints were received in total?
- What is the percentage of complaints by complaint category/type?
- What is the current state of processing of complaints received (complaints redirected, processed, under evaluation, actions proposed and validated by the CMS, action implemented, etc.)?
- How are the various resolutions received by the complainants?
- How long on average did it take to process complaints?
- Number of complaints of overall complaints that have received a feedback on their complaints (acknowledgment of receipt, processing etc.)
- Number of unresolved complaints? Number of resolved complaints?

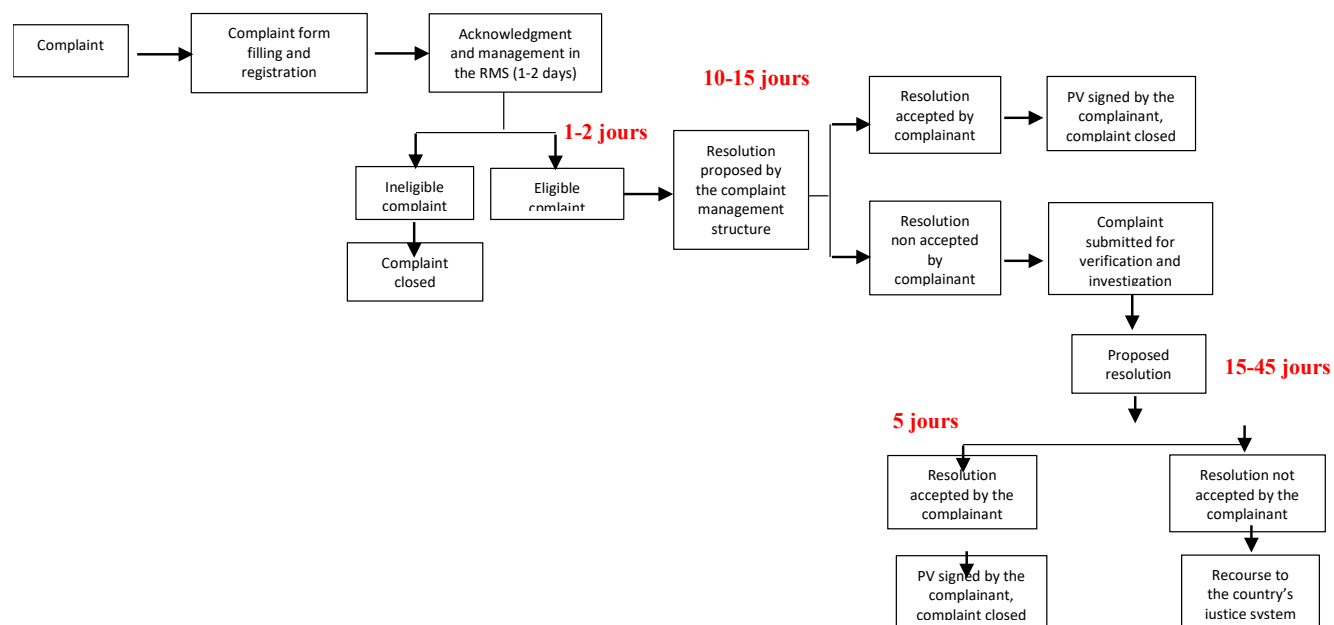
This monitoring system helps to improve the performance of the GM and provides useful information for the effectiveness of the project.

**Table 8 : Recap on steps and responsibilities for the implementation of GMs**

No.	Steps / activities	Responsibility	Support / Collaboration
1	Steering of the Grievance Mechanism (GM)	National Steering Committee Local Complaints Management Structure (LCMS), Social expert	RSP-PMU Coordinator
2	Consideration of the GM in project documents and in the implementation of activities	PMU, Operators/Companies, Donors	Traditional chieftdom, Local authorities Village Development Committee (VDC)

3	Sensitization of communities and stakeholders on the RGM, conflict prevention	PMU, Operators / Companies, Donors	Traditional chiefdom, Local authorities Village Development Committee (VDC)
4	Receipt of complaints	PMU, IPP, Operators, Companies Donors, Village Development Committee (VDC)	Traditional chiefdom, Local authorities
5	Complaints handling	Local Complaints Management Structure (LCMS), VDC, Cantonal or municipal complaints management structure (MCMS), Prefectural or regional complaints management structure (PCMS), operators, RSP-PMU,	Traditional chiefdom, Local authorities
6	Processing of appeals	Ministries of Environment, RSP-PMU	Local authorities, VDC, LCMS, MCMS
7	Compensation	Ministries of Finance	Ministries of Environment, RSP-PMU IPP, operators, companies
8	Monitoring and evaluation	<u>RSP-PMU, Social expert</u>	Operators, companies,

**Figure 5: Diagram of the steps for handling non-SEA/SH complaints**



## 7.2 Procedures for management of SEA/SH related complaints (see Annex 15)

### *Step 1: Intake (see Intake and Registration Form in Annex 15)*

In most countries south of the Sahara, there are laws that protect all children without discrimination. The best interests of the child must be the primary consideration in any matter that affects or concerns a child. Everyone has a duty to report to the police or the social welfare department any case of abuse or violation of a child's rights of which they are aware. It is illegal to sexually abuse or exploit a child in any form, or even to encourage it, to operate a brothel.

A complainant who wishes to file a grievance related to SEA/SH may use any trusted channel available to him or her to file a complaint with the project's GM. The project has identified safe, confidential, and accessible entry points through which survivors will feel safe and comfortable making reports (e.g., telephone (toll-free number, 1212), service provider, community structure, community focal points or regional SEA/SH monitors, etc.). Complainants may also use the contractor's grievance procedures to file SEA/SH complaints, but once filed with the contractor, complaints will be forwarded for verification to the GM operator.

A complaint intake form must be completed by the project GM operator through the various intake channels listed above after obtaining verbal consent from the survivor to process the complaint. The GM operator will, however, need to obtain written consent from the survivor with the assistance of the community focal point to complete the complaint intake form and share the information with the appropriate service providers if necessary. If the complainant has not yet been referred to services, the intake actor should confirm whether the survivor wishes to receive support and, if so, obtain consent to be referred to appropriate care and connect the survivor with locally available providers or arrange for remote support if necessary. At a minimum, medical, psychosocial, and legal support services should be made available, as well as other services if possible (e.g., socioeconomic, security, and legal). Hard copies of intake and verification forms will be stored in a secure locker, while electronic copies will be stored on the GM operator's computer and locked with a password.

If the survivor chooses to be referred to services only and not file a complaint, then the survivor's wishes must be respected; the service provider may then ask if the survivor agrees to share basic case information to help the project track cases that choose not to access the GM (see Appendix Informed Consent). The survivor always retains the right to be referred for services, whether or not there is an established link between the project and the incident in question.

When selected, actors are usually trained on how to receive and refer cases of SEA/SH in accordance with the principles of survivor care, how to apply active listening techniques, and how to transmit complaints to the GM operator in a safe and confidential manner, given that they are illiterate. Any information collected about a survivor or alleged perpetrator should be recorded and kept separate from other grievance documents in a secure, lockable space with strictly limited access.

When a complaint is referred to the national level, the laws and procedures of the country's judicial system will be followed.

The response protocol for handling SEA/SH requests is attached as Annex 15.

### *Step 2: Screening and Processing*

Once the complaint has been formally received by the GM operator, with the informed consent of the survivor, the GM focal point should verify that the complainant has been offered the opportunity to receive services, and if not, ensure that the survivor is referred to the necessary services after obtaining informed consent.

The complaint should then be triaged as a SEA/SH complaint and the verification structure coordinator should be informed that a SEA/SH complaint has been received and should be investigated. The GM focal point should also inform the appropriate PMU focal point, who in turn will inform the World Bank project manager within 24 hours that a SEA/SH complaint has been received. The GM focal point should only share the nature of the case, the age and gender of the complainant (if known), whether there is a link to the project, and whether the survivor has been referred for services. Absolutely no identifying information about the victim or alleged perpetrator should be shared with the PCU or World Bank focal points.

#### *Step 3: Acknowledge receipt*

The GM Focal Point should ensure that the complainant receives a document formally acknowledging receipt of the SEA/SH grievance within three days of filing the complaint. Delivery of the acknowledgement to the complainant will depend on how the complaint was initially received; if, ideally, it was received by a service provider, then any communication with the survivor can be done through the service provider.

#### *Step 4: Verification Process (see Verification Structure Annex 13)*

The verification process for a SEA/SH grievance will be handled by a separate structure established by the GM operator. The verification structure will be in the form of a five-member committee, which will be recruited from within the Project. The team will consist of five members, as follows.

- A representative of the women's committee.
- Region 5 Gender Focal Point
- Gender Focal Point for Entrepreneurs -
- Region's Social Welfare Representative (service provider)
- Contractor's social specialist.

The first three members were selected because they have experience in handling gender-related cases, while the fourth member represents the welfare of men, women and children. The fifth member frequently visits the project communities to monitor the progress of the work on site, as he is the contractor's representative. These members will be specially trained in SEA/SH complaint management and review, the importance of a survivor-centered approach, and the guiding principles of survivor care and SEA/SH data and claims management. If the survivor allows, a representative from a service provider should participate in the audit committee to advocate for the survivor and to ensure that survivor care principles are followed throughout the process.

Once convened by the coordinator, the verification committee will review the information available on the SEA/SH application, the nature of the application, and whether there is a link to the project. The committee will also make recommendations to the alleged perpetrator's employer or manager as to appropriate disciplinary sanctions based on the code of conduct, the type of incident, and appropriate labor laws and regulations. Potential disciplinary sanctions for alleged perpetrators may include, but are not limited to, formal or informal warnings, loss of pay, suspension or termination. The committee must complete the verification process and render its decision within ten calendar days of receiving the complaint.

It should be noted that the purpose of the verification process is only to examine whether there is a link between the project and the reported AEHS incident and to ensure accountability by recommending appropriate disciplinary action. The verification process does not establish the innocence or guilt of the alleged perpetrator, as only the judicial system has that ability and responsibility. Furthermore, all final



decisions regarding discipline rest solely with the employer or manager of the alleged perpetrator; the audit committee can only make recommendations.

- Audit committee members are also selected according to the following principles:
- Competence in their ability to perform the work of the committee.
- Transparency in the selection of committee members based on clearly defined criteria;
- Confidentiality of all parties involved, which must be respected by the committee members; and
- Impartiality of the selected members, who are able to participate and carry out their work without conflict of interest.

#### *Step 5: Monitoring and Evaluation*

Follow-up of SEA/SH complaints will be important to ensure that all complainants are offered appropriate service referrals, that informed consent is obtained in all cases for the filing of grievances and service referrals, and that all grievances are handled in a safe, confidential, and timely manner. Any information provided by the GM operator to the PMU or the World Bank will be limited as noted above in Step 2. The project GM operator must securely and ethically exchange information with service providers to ensure secure and confidential sharing of case data as well as appropriate SEA/SH case closures.

#### *Step 6: Feedback to Stakeholders*

Once the verification process is complete, the outcome of the process should be communicated first to the survivor within 14 calendar days, ideally through the service provider if applicable, to allow the survivor and relevant advocates time to ensure adequate safety planning if necessary. Once the survivor has been notified, the alleged perpetrator may also be notified of the outcome.

If either party disagrees with the outcome, they may appeal the decision of the verification committee via the GM appeal process and must file an appeal within 14 days of receiving the verification outcome.

### **7.3 Steps and Principles for Managing of SEA/SH Complaints**

All complaints should be received in accordance with the following key principles:

#### **Confidentiality**

Complainants and persons affected by a complaint have the right to confidentiality. Anyone with access to sensitive information contained in a complaint must sign a confidentiality agreement drawn up by the Mechanism for this purpose. Records should be kept in a secure location to prevent inadvertent or unauthorized disclosure of information. Information that will be kept for tracking purposes should be anonymized to the extent possible. Confidentiality is a particularly important to mitigate against further harm and reprisals against the survivor and.

#### **1. Does the complaint relate to an allegation of sexual exploitation and abuse?**

Complaints of sexual exploitation and abuse/sexual harassment will be reviewed confidentially by a small panel of the Complaint Committee, including a woman, to determine whether they appear on their face to be made in good faith and whether they involve behavior that meets the definition of SEA/SS. This assessment is necessary because most complaints received by a mechanism do not involve sexual exploitation and abuse; however, this assessment is by no means a fact-finding procedure. The purpose of this step is not to determine the validity of the allegations, but only to establish whether the allegation is one of sexual exploitation and abuse

#### **2. Is the information sufficient to dismiss the complaint?**

If there is not enough information for the complaint to be considered complete (e.g., the alleged offender is not identified in any way, either individually or through the organization to which he or she belongs), the coordinator, who is in charge of the small committee responsible for addressing sexual and other exploitation and abuse issues, is responsible for obtaining more information to complete the complaint file, if possible. The coordinator should work with the organization concerned, if known, to decide what to do with the incomplete complaint. Under no circumstances should the mechanism fail to provide information about a complaint to a known organization or decide, on its own initiative, to reject the complaint.

When the organization concerned is known or can be identified, the coordinator must inform it of the complaint received.

The Mechanism does not conduct reviews or conduct interviews beyond what is necessary for the receipt of complaints or gathering of evidence, unless the organization concerned explicitly requests assistance for a follow-up.

### **3. Which organization is involved?**

To refer a complaint, the coordinator who is in charge of the small committee responsible for addressing sexual, must identify the organization concerned by the investigation. In the first place, it should be the organization for which the alleged offender works or the person against whom the complaint is levelled. The answer to this question can be complicated, however, when dealing with partner organizations and subcontractors, or with organizations that are not members of the Mechanism.

#### **7.4 SEA/SH Complaints management Steps**

In the specific case of the management of complaints related to sexual exploitation and abuse/ sexual harassment (SEA/SH), the grievance procedure is different to ensure that the process is survivor-centred, ethical and confidential. The Mechanism must establish procedures for handling SEA/SH complaints received. This process shall be established and effective prior to project activities and must be overseen by a SEA/SH specialist and/or NGO specializing in SEA/SH.

The only reception and review procedures incumbent on a Mechanism are as follows:

- Receive the initial complaint by a dedicated GM operator who will be trained in handling SEA/SH complaints (this may be an NGO or expert in cases where GBV risks are high or capacity is limited)
- Determine the immediate protection and assistance needs of the victim / complainant,
- Establish the nature of the complaint,
- Identify the organization to which the allegations will be transmitted,
- Notify the complainant that their complaint has been received (if it was not presented in person)
- Refer the survivor to appropriate victim protection services.

Procedures for the receipt and examination of complaints from a Grievance Mechanism, including SEA/SH allegations, should define a set of measures to ensure the process is survivor-centred, ethical and confidential., They should include:

- The essential humanitarian principles that govern relations with beneficiaries for the reception of complaints presented in person;
- The messages that should be conveyed to complainants;
- A clear description of the role and responsibilities of the coordinator in assessing the complaint for referral and;
- A description of the standard procedure for assessing a complaint.

## ***Receipt of complaints - Principles***

All complaints should be received in accordance with the following key principles:

### **Confidentiality**

Complainants and persons affected by a complaint have the right to confidentiality. Anyone with access to sensitive information contained in a complaint must sign a confidentiality agreement drawn up by the Mechanism for this purpose. Records should be kept in a secure location to prevent inadvertent or unauthorized disclosure of information. Information that will be kept for tracking purposes should be anonymized to the extent possible. Confidentiality is a particularly important to mitigate against further harm and reprisals against the survivor and.

### **1. Does the complaint relate to an allegation of sexual exploitation and abuse?**

Complaints of sexual exploitation and abuse/sexual harassment will be assessed by a small panel of the Complaint Committee to determine whether, on the face of it, they appear to have been made in good faith, and whether they relate to behavior that falls within the definition of SEA/SH. This assessment is necessary, as most complaints received by a Mechanism will not relate to sexual exploitation and abuse; but this assessment is by no means a fact-finding procedure. This step is not intended to determine the validity of the allegations, but only to establish whether it is an allegation of sexual exploitation and abuse. The role of the coordinator is to refer any SA/SH complaint to the investigation department of the relevant agency, using a complaint referral form. The coordinator does not carry out an assessment of the merits of the complaint. This is the responsibility of the organization concerned. The coordinator must simply determine whether the complaint involves allegations of SEA/SH, identify the organization concerned and make the referral. The coordinator must refer any case that has been received to the agency concerned, so as not to prejudice the safety of the complainant or compromise the integrity of the Facility.

### **2. Is the information sufficient to dismiss the complaint?**

If there is not enough information for the complaint to be deemed complete (e.g. the alleged offender is not identified in any way, either individually or through the organization to which he/she belongs), the coordinator is responsible for obtaining more information to complete the complaint case file, if possible. The coordinator (who is in charge of the small committee) should work in collaboration with the organization concerned, if known, to decide what to do with the incomplete complaint. Under no circumstances should the Mechanism fail to communicate information about any complaint to a known organization or decide, on its own initiative, to dismiss the complaint.

When the organization concerned is known or can be identified, the coordinator must inform it of the complaint received.

The Mechanism does not conduct reviews or conduct interviews beyond what is necessary for the receipt of complaints or gathering of evidence, unless the organization concerned explicitly requests assistance for a follow-up.

### **3. Which organization is involved?**

To refer a complaint, the coordinator who is the responsible of the small panel Committee must identify the organization concerned by the investigation. In the first place, it should be the organization for which the alleged offender works or the person against whom the complaint is levelled. The answer to this question can be complicated, however, when dealing with partner organizations and subcontractors, or with organizations that are not members of the Mechanism.

## 7.5 Complaints management Steps

All activities to be carried out within the framework of the resolution of complaints and grievances have been established to constitute a plan. This plan will be rolled out in the implementation with a view to enabling the complaints management bodies to effectively fulfill their missions. It contains, among others, the establishment and capacity building of complaints management bodies. The planning of activities made it possible to develop an action plan for handling complaints. In this plan, the objectives of each activity have been indicated as well as the implementation responsibilities including the cost.

A summary plan for the capacity building of complaints management bodies is proposed. (See the table 9 relative to the Complaint management action plan).

## 7.6 Monitoring-Evaluation of the Grievance Mechanism

Each complaints management structure will have to carry out quarterly evaluation of the implementation of the GM. The results will be incorporated into the quarterly project implementation report. These evaluations should also contribute to improving the performance of the GM and provide useful information for the management of the projects. Questions to be addressed in this assessment include, among others:

- How many complaints were received in total?
- What is the percentage of complaints by complaint category/type?
- What is the current state of processing of complaints received (complaints redirected, processed, under evaluation, actions proposed and validated by the CMS, action implemented, etc.)?
- How are the various resolutions received by the complainants?
- How long on average did it take to process complaints?
- Number of complaints of overall complaints that have received a feedback on their complaints (acknowledgment of receipt, processing etc.)
- Number of unresolved complaints? Number of resolved complaints?

This monitoring system helps to improve the performance of the GM and provides useful information for the effectiveness of the project.

The grievance mechanism has a monitoring and evaluation system at three levels corresponding to the different levels of complaint management: local, municipal and national. The RSP's NCMS, through its secretary, the Social Safeguards Specialist, incorporates the GM's activities into its quarterly report to the Bank. The various reports that will be produced should include the details of this evaluation.

**Table 9: Complaints management action plan**

No.	Activities	Objectives	Responsible	Period
1	Steering of the Grievance Mechanism (GM)	Rely on the GM to ensure good management of RSP projects	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Steering Committee</li> <li>RSP-PMU Coordinator</li> <li>Local Complaints Management Structure (LCMS), Social expert</li> </ul>	During all phases of the project
2	Development of the GM in project documents and in the implementation of activities	Integrate the GM system into the RSP project preparation documents	PMU, Operators / Companies,	Start of project preparation
3	Recruitment of a Social Safeguards Expert at the RSP-PMU for full time	Ensure proper conduct of the GM system	National power utilities (sponsors) RSP coordinator; PMU	For 4 years (during the project)
	Recruitment of GBV specialists (not women only consultations need to be undertaken by a woman facilitator)	Ensure proper conduct of the GM system	National power utilities (sponsors) RSP coordinator; PMU	For 4 years (during the project)
4	Constitution and establishment of structures or units for handling complaints	Complaints management structures installed, available, engaged in all villages affected by the RSP project	Social Safeguards expert, RSP Coordinator	Start of project preparation
5	GM structures launch activities	Establish and set up the various complaints management structures at all levels (local, cantonal, communal-municipal, prefectural, regional or national)	National power utilities (sponsors) RSP coordinator; PMU, Operators / Companies,	Start of projects
6	Sensitization of communities and stakeholders on the GM, conflict prevention	<p>Publicize the existence and functioning of GMs</p> <p>To succeed in informing and accustoming communities to the use of the GM system to resolve their grievances and claims</p>	PMU, Operators/Companies,	During all phases of the project

7	Information and sensitization workshops	National GM document validation workshop	Social Safeguards expert, SEA/SH specialist, communication specialist	Continuous activity
8	Capacity building of complaints management and logistics structures	Make the members of structures competent, committed and available  Ensure the quality of complaints handling	RSP Coordinator	Continuous activity
9	Dissemination of the GM Publication in the press, other media and town criers	Ensure that stakeholders are informed and can assert their right to file a complaint as well as the procedures to be followed  Make PAPs use the GM system as a recourse	Communication	Continuous activity
10	Provision of structures with equipment and supplies for meetings of the complaints management structures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide the working resources to the complaints management structures</li> <li>• Ensure the registration and archiving of complaints handling</li> <li>• Ensure the drafting of reports</li> </ul>	Complaints management structures / Safeguards	For 4 years of activities
11	Review of Mechanism and Strategy to ensure that the COVID-19 pandemic issue is taken into account by the structures.	Avoiding the spread of the COVID-19 pandemic	RSP Coordinator	Continuous activity
12	Receipt of complaints	Facilitate community access to the GM system Create several location points for filing and receiving complaints	PMU, IPP, Business Operators, Donors, Village Development Committee (VDC), Local Authorities, traditional chiefdom	During all phases of the project
13	Complaints handling	Make the complaints management structures functional at all levels	Local Complaints Management Structure (LCMS), VDC, Cantonal or municipal complaints management structure (MCMS), Prefectural or regional complaints management structure (PCMS), operators, RSP-PMU,	During all phases of the project

			Local authorities, traditional chiefdom.	
<b>14</b>	Fact-findings and additional & in-depth investigative activities	Verify information thoroughly Collect evidence for specific severe cases	Complaints management structures / Safeguards	During all phases of the project
<b>15</b>	Processing of appeals	Contact hierarchically superior structures to request for handling of complaints	Ministries of Environment, RSP-PMU, Local authorities, VDC, LCMS, MCMS,	During all phases of the project
<b>16</b>	Telephone communications	Receive and manage communicational exchanges	Complaints management structures / Safeguards, RSP / Social Safeguards Coordinator	During all phases of the project
<b>17</b>	Making of suggestion boxes	Suggestion boxes installed	Complaints management structures / Safeguards	Continuous activity
<b>18</b>	GM oversight, monitoring and evaluation mission	Monitoring and evaluation	Regional Solar Parks Project (RSP) Social Safeguards, GBV specialist or the Coordinator of the PIU	Continuous activity
<b>19</b>	Self-assessment workshops for complaints management structures	Assess performance of complaints management structures	Coordinator	

**Table 3: Estimated budget**

No.	Activities	Total cost USD
<b>1.</b>	<b>Finalization of the GM</b>	<b>230 000</b>
	Consideration of the GM in preparation documents of RSP projects	PM
	Recruitment of a Social Safeguards Expert (full time))	100 000
	GBV specialists (not women only consultations need to be undertaken by a woman facilitator	100 000
	Production of signs and posters	10 000
	Constitution and implementation of complaints management structures (CMS)	20 000
<b>2.</b>	<b>Implementation of the GM</b>	<b>90 000</b>
	Establishment of complaints management structures (CMS)	20 000
	Launch activities for complaints management structures	20 000
	Information and sensitization workshops and mass communication	10 000
	Capacity building of complaints management structures	30 000
	Costs for community meetings, and other activities related to SEA/SH and GBV	10 000
<b>3.</b>	<b>Functioning of complaints management structures</b>	<b>85 000</b>
	Publication of complaints management structures (CMS)	10 000
	Provision of complaint management structures with equipment and supplies	5 000
	Receipt and handling of complaints	PM
	Processing of appeals	PM
	Investigations and additional verifications	50 000
	Administrative charges	20 000
<b>4.</b>	<b>Communication actions</b>	<b>57 000</b>
	Telephone communications	5 000
	TV/radio/newspapers, paper, brochure costs, posters, etc. and materials required for submission of grievances	50 000
	Making of suggestion boxes	2 000
<b>5.</b>	<b>Monitoring and evaluation</b>	<b>80 000 \$</b>
	Self-assessment of the performance of complaints management structures	20 000
	Costs of the SEA/SH including costs for a SEA/SH specialist, community meetings, etc.	50 000
	External monitoring of the GM	10 000
	<b>Total USD</b>	<b>542 000</b>

**N.B.** Compensation is considered on a case-by-case basis by the States of the countries concerned.



## CONCLUSION

The Grievance Mechanism will support the implementation and sustainability of the project by providing accessible and inclusive access to the project by project affected people and other stakeholders.

The structures or bodies designated for the management of complaints are responsible for registering and processing complaints. Where necessary, other stakeholders could be involved, in particular for the investigation and resolution of sensitive complaints. For complaints that do not involve additional investigations, the complaint processing timeframe is less than or equal to **ten (10) working days** from receipt of the complaint. For complaints of sensitive nature (corruption, fraud, cases of gender-based violence, etc.), the processing would depend on the complexity of the requisite investigations and the timeframe will not exceed one calendar month.

Finally, since the Grievance Mechanism is a requirement under the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework for World Bank funded projects including the Regional Solar Parks Project.

As this document is limited to the regional solar parks program and pursuant to the guidelines of the World Bank, The African Power Pool (WAPP) shall ensure the development of the various specific grievance mechanisms during the preparation of each of the activities to be carried out within the framework of the Program.

The budget to be secured to ensure the efficient implementation of the Complaint Management Mechanism amounts to **five hundred forty-two thousand (542 000) US dollars**.

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## **ANNEX 1: GM Management Action Plan**

### **1. Guidelines for Implementing the Grievance Mechanism**

The local populations and other interested stakeholders may not be satisfied with a decision taken by the project, the impacts and risks of a project and how they are addressed, lack of benefits, the governance of the project or their representation within the Grievance Mechanism. Regardless of the nature of the grievance, the Regional Solar parks Project (RSP) Coordinator shall ensure that a transparent and fair process is put in place in a timely manner to deal with each complaint.

### **2. Types of Complaints and Conflicts/Disputes to be resolved**

In practice, complaints and conflicts stemming from local populations and interested stakeholders may appear at different stages of the Project:

- during the preparation of sub-projects
- during the implementation of the project
- after the closure of the project

During the preparation of the project, complaints and disputes may relate to:

- the non-involvement of local riparian populations within the project area of influence
- disagreement over the choice of governing bodies
- disagreement over the types of projects to be funded
- disagreement over the choice of the project site
- conflicts of interest stemming from the project stakeholders

During the implementation of the project, complaints and disputes may relate to :

- the choice of beneficiaries: individuals, organizations, communities
- allocation of activity funds, geographic entity
- delay in the implementation or provision of funds
- the feeling of having been wronged in the implementation of the project
- external interference in the award and management of contracts
- cases of conflicts of interest
- fund management
- communication deficit
- political interference

At the end of project implementation, complaints and disputes may relate to, among others:

- non-compliance with contractual clauses in financing
- promises not kept by the implementing agency
- management of project gains/assets
- contradictory perception of the results
- sustainability of results .

To facilitate the key stages of complaint management, the RSP shall perform the following tasks:

- a) produce a written record of all complaints received
- b) encourage immediate and on-site resolution of problems
- c) publicly report on complaints received and action taken in response to each complaint

### **3. Communication and Access to Information**

The RSP project shall ensure easy and culturally appropriate access to information about the project and the use of the mechanism to potential users. This information shall be disseminated on the project website and information channels. Likewise, public meetings, radio medium, posters on project sites and other culturally appropriate means of communication shall be used. The documents and reports shall be produced in French or English depending on the official language of the country and if necessary, translated into the local languages of each territorial entity concerned.

### **4. Complaint Handling Process**

Complaints, which may be of very different nature, should be submitted to a specific body called the Complaints Management Structure at three levels (local, municipal and national).

The processing procedure must be transparent in its claims settlement operations. It shall be implemented in a manner that responds effectively and timely to concerns raised by complainants.

### **5. Organization and Responsibilities /Complaint management committees and level of prioritization**

#### **Local and municipal complaints management structures (at the level of intervention sites):**

These structures shall constitute local levels of complaint management for people who do not have the means to draft or send their complaints or grievances and shall work in close collaboration with the populations in the project intervention areas. These structures shall be set up on the implementation sites of the sub-projects or on sites likely to be impacted by the project.

#### **Communal Complaints Management Committee at (CCGP) prefectorial or regional level**

The communal committee is responsible for receiving unresolved complaints at the local level. It must provide appropriate solutions within ten (10) days from the date of receipt for those within its reach. It shall escalate to the national level those that cannot be resolved locally within three (3) days of attempts to resolve them. The committee shall report quarterly to the SP-IDPU on complaints received and addressed.

When the resolution of the complaint goes beyond the local level, it is referred to the Communal Complaints Management Committee which is composed of the Mayor of the commune and his deputies, the councilors in addition to the resource persons that the Mayor alone can call upon depending on the complaint received for its resolution.

#### **National Complaints Management Committee (CNGP)at the national level**

When the resolution of the complaint goes beyond the communal, prefectural or regional level, the national complaints management committee is called upon. The national committee is responsible for receiving complaints from the communal level. It must provide appropriate solutions within ten (10) days from the date of receipt. The committee must produce quarterly reports on the management of complaints. The committee will be provided with a complaints logbook and a complaints transmission logbook.

### **6. Communication about GM**

The names and contact details of members of the complaints structure shall appear on the website and in the printed brochures of the mechanism. They shall acknowledge receipt of the complaints by sending

a written response to the complainant, in which they shall detail the next steps they will take, including the possible transmission of the case file.

To those who can't read/write the information will be communicated by using of town criers, village chiefs, women's groups, elder's and youth groups, etc.

With regard to responsibilities, the complaints management structure at each level shall ensure the coordination of the complaints handling procedure, collect and examine the available information on the subject of the complaint, draft the responses intended for the complainants, endeavor to resolve the issues that give rise to complaints, centralize and objectively deal with all complaints lodged.

At the project site level, the responsibilities are summarized as follows: receive handwritten complaints, enter complaints in the register if the complaint is verbal, send these complaints every week to the complaints management structure for processing, receive solutions found to the complaints and disseminate them to the complainants (see annex 3 for GM monitoring table)

If the complaint can be resolved at the level of the local structure, the latter shall simply inform the Local Complaints Management Structure. Otherwise, the responsibility for handling the complaint shall be transferred to the municipal and then national Complaints Management Structures (CMS).

## **7. Reporting**

Each Complaints Management Structure shall register all complaints received at its level in an online system accessible to the public, which will allow complaints to be followed up. The system shall track and report (see Annex 3):

- the number of complaints received;
- the number and percentage of complaints that resulted in an agreement;
- the number and percentage of complaints that were resolved;
- the number and percentage of complaints that have gone to mediation;
- the number and percentage of complaints that did not result in an agreement;
- the number and percentage of complaints that did not result in a settlement;
- type and category of complaints received (i.e., relocation related);
- type and category of complaints related to the contractor; i
- type and category of environmental/social impact complaints, etc.

The database shall also flag the most common issues and the geographic areas with the most complaints. The information provided by the database should help the Complaints Management Structure to improve the mechanism and to better understand and deal with the social and environmental impacts of the projects.

## **8. Assessment, Assignment, Recognition**

If the complaint does not fall within the scope of the operational responsibilities of the RSP, but relates to the general policies of the country, under its governance the Complaints Management Structure shall guide the complainant by indicating to the latter the competent bodies that can resolve his/her complaint. If it relates to World Bank policies, the RSP project coordinator at the Bank may be invited by the Complaints Management Structure to attend its meeting to interpret the policy concerned.

## **9. Resolution and Closure**

It must be clear that there is a grievance operator and/or social safeguard focal point for the project who will collect grievances every time. The resolution and closure of the case must take place within 10 days of receipt of the initial complaint by a member of staff. The Complaints Management Structure shall in all cases offer the possibility of resorting to independent mediation or finding another means of resolving the dispute.

Whatever the outcome, all supporting documents for the meetings that will have been necessary to reach the resolution must be recorded in the complaints case file.

## ANNEX 2a:

## Complaints Registration Form

<b>Complaint No:</b>	
<b>Date of issue :</b>	
<b>Last name and first name of the author of the complaint:</b>	
<b>Address (Phone number, E-mail):</b>	
<b>Place of residence of the complainant:</b>	
<b>Component of the project and subject of the complaint:</b>	
<b>Name of the beneficiary municipality of the project:</b>	
<b>Location of the complaint:</b>	
<b>Category of complaint:</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> A: Request for information or clarification <input type="checkbox"/> B: Outside the scope of the project <input type="checkbox"/> C: Selection/exclusion of a person or community <input type="checkbox"/> D: Allegations of corruption, misappropriation, or bias in public procurement. <input type="checkbox"/> E: Environmental and social issues <input type="checkbox"/> F: Other deviation from procedures or incorrect behavior of staff
<b>Full description of the complaint:</b>	
<b>Name of the accused in the complaint:</b>	
<b>Complaint handling :</b>	
<b>Observations:</b>	
<b>Has the complainant received an acknowledgment of receipt of his complaint?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No If so, at what date and time?
<b>Complaint received by (name, signature, date):</b>	

**ANNEX 2b:****Verbal Complaints Registration Form**

Verbal complaint registration form; this form can be used by a project coordinator to collect complaints made verbally by stakeholders, communities during field visits.

<b>Part 1: to be completed with the complainant</b>	
<b>Date:</b> Date the complaint was made	
<b>Personal details:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Name and contact details of the complainant</li><li>• Age - adult or child</li><li>• Gender - male or female</li></ul>	
<b>Project details:</b> Project or program name / reference number	
<b>Nature of the complaint:</b> Brief summary of the complaint	
<b>Complaint Details:</b> Detailed description of the complaint made by the complainant	
<b>Person who failed to receive the complaint:</b> Name and contact details	
<b>Part 2: reserved for the administration / measures taken if necessary</b>	
<b>Outcome following a complaint:</b> Summary of actions taken and results	
<b>Additional comments:</b> For example, monitoring of actions taken to change the policy and procedures used, if any.	

## ANNEX 2c: Template: Minutes of Complaints Management at the Local Level

Date: \_\_\_\_\_  
Traditional chiefdom of \_\_\_\_\_  
Municipality of \_\_\_\_\_ Prefecture of \_\_\_\_\_  
Case File N ° \_\_\_\_\_

### COMPLAINT

Name of complainant: \_\_\_\_\_  
Address: \_\_\_\_\_  
District: \_\_\_\_\_  
Nature of the complaint: \_\_\_\_\_

**DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPLAINT:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

Information received at (location) \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of complainant

### CHIEF'S OBSERVATIONS:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

At (location) \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of the district Chief or the Mayor)

### COMPLAINANT'S RESPONSE:

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

At (location) \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
Signature of complainant

### RESOLUTION

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

At (location) \_\_\_\_\_ date \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of the district Chief or the Mayor)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature of complainant)



### Annex 3: Grievance Monitoring and Tracking Log (for non-SEA/SH Complaints)

Case no.	Date Claim Received	Name of Person Receiving Complaint	Where/how the complaint was received	Name & contact details of complainant (if known)	Type of Claim  Add content of the claim (include all grievances, suggestions, inquiries)  *please note if the complaint was related to the project. If not, note it here and refer complainant to PIU for further	Was Receipt of Complaint Acknowledged to the Complainant? (Y/N – if yes, include date, method of communication & by whom)	Expected Decision Date	Decision Outcome (include names of participants and date of decision)	Was Decision communicated to complainant? Y/N If yes, state when, by whom and via what method of communication	Was the complainant satisfied with the decision? Y/N  State the decision.  If no, explain why and if known, will pursue appeals procedure	Any follow up action (and by whom, by what date)?

**ANNEX 4:****Complaints Response Sheet**

<b>Complaint No.:</b>	
<b>Institution or person concerned by the complaint:</b>	
<b>Date of receipt of the complaint by the Complaints Management Structure concerned:</b>	
<b>Information about the nature of the complaint:</b>	
<b>Action (s) needed to resolve the complaint?</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> No action required <input type="checkbox"/> Action (s) required
<b>Details on the proposed actions</b> <b>(Give an explanation if no action is proposed)</b>	
<b>Date response given to complainant and response of complainant if resolution is acceptable (if not acceptable, indicate if the escalation procedures have been communicated to complainant and record any follow up action required by project team and by when)</b>	
<b>Signature of the representative of the structure or of the person:</b>	
<b>Last name:</b> <b>Title:</b> <b>Phone:</b> <b>Date of Signature:</b>	

**ANNEX 5:****Quarterly Summary Table on Complaints Handling**

Name of commune: Name of focal point: Quarter:	
Number of complaints registered during the period:	
Synthetic summary of the type of complaints:	
Number of complaints handled by the quarter (explanations):	
Number of complaints not handled by the quarter (explanations):	

## **ANNEX 6:                   Template-Meeting Report**

**\*Ask permission if photos can be taken and record response. Do not take photos of women-only focused groups.**

**Date:**

**Venue:**

**Participants: (can attach list separately)**

**Other participants: (Last name, first name, function)**

**Total number (breakdown by gender)**

**Objectives and agenda of the meeting:**

**Item topics and issues raised by the Project:**

**Item topics, concerns and issues raised by participants (identify if there are new risks raised by participants):**

**Actions to be taken from the outcome of the meeting and follow up/feedback to be provided to stakeholders and by when and in which format:**

**Prepared by:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

**ANNEX 7:                   Template-Complaints Form**

**Date:**

**Prepared by:**

**Complainant**

**Last name and first name(s):**

**Place of residence:**

**N° of household:**

**Reason for the complaint (detailed description of the version presented by the complainant):**

**Complaint follow-up (detailed description of the version presented by the complainant)**

**Prepared by:**

**Date:**

**ANNEX 8:****Complaints Acknowledgment Form**

Country (BURKINA FASO)

Société nationale d'électricité (SONABEL)

Project title: 150 MW regional photovoltaic solar parks project in Burkina Faso.

<b>Name of the Complaints Management Structure:</b>	<b>Structure de traitement de plainte</b>	
<b>Locality:</b>	<b>Date of receipt of complaint</b>	<b>DD / MM / YYYY and (time of receipt)</b>

<b>Registration No.:</b>			
<b>Identity of complainant:</b>	<b>Last name and First name: Mr. / Mrs. ....</b>	<b>Place of residence:</b>	
	<b>Ref. ID :</b>	<b>Unique ID number:</b>	<b>Contacts:</b>

**SUBJECT: Acknowledgment of receipt**

Madam/Sir

Further to your formal complaint registered with our services under number No. .... dated DD / MM / YYYY at (time) and relating to the following subject (Omission of census, dispute of property rights with a neighbor, improper recording of assets characteristics, assets valuation claim, etc.)

Description: of the motive for the complaint for a better understanding
---

We acknowledge receipt of your complaint and we will keep you informed of any action taken.

(Possible additional remarks - All useful information).

Yours Sincerely,

For the utility

For reception

Last name and First name of the  
representative

Last and first name

Signature

Signature

**ANNEX 9:****Form for Official Response to a Complaint**

Country (BURKINA FASO)

Société nationale d'électricité (SONABEL)

Name of the Complaints Management Structure:	Structure de traitement de plainte	
Locality:	Date of receipt of complaint	DD / MM / YYYY and (time of receipt)

Registration No.:			
Identity of complainant:	Last name and First name: Mr. / Mrs. ....	Place of residence:	
	Ref. ID :	Unique ID number:	Contacts:

**SUBJECT:**                    **Official Response**

Madam/Sir

Following your formal complaint registered with our services under number No. .... dated DD / MM / YYYY at (time) and relating to the following subject

Description: of the reason for the complaint for a better understanding
---

We hereby inform you that after an investigation encompassing the persons and services concerned by the complaint, the Project Management Unit has reached the following decision:

The complaints management committee proposes the following solution:

Presentation of the solution to the complaint
---

This decision is final for the complaints management committee, but does not deprive you of your right to any action before the competent courts.

Sincerely Yours.

For the utility

For reception

Last name and First name of the  
representative  
Signature

Last and first name  
Signature

**ANNEX 10:****Complaints Closure Form**

Country (\_\_\_\_\_)

)

Project title: \_\_\_\_\_

<b>Name of the Complaints Management Structure:</b>	<b>Structure de traitement de plainte</b>	
<b>Locality:</b>	<b>Date of receipt of complaint</b>	<b>DD / MM / YYYY and (time of receipt)</b>

<b>Registration No.:</b>			
<b>Identity of complainant:</b>	<b>Last name and First name: Mr. / Mrs. ....</b>	<b>Place of residence:</b>	
	<b>Ref. ID :</b>	<b>Unique ID number:</b>	<b>Contacts:</b>

**Subject: Complaints Closure**

Madam/Sir

Further to your formal complaint registered with our services under number No. .... dated DD / MM / YYYY at (time) and relating to the following subject at (time) and relating to the following subject

Description of the reason for the complaint for a better understanding
--

You have been informed that the Complaints Management Committee has made the following decision:

Response to the complaint
---------------------------

**Attestation:**

I, the undersigned, bearing the above described identification, certify that following the implementation of the corrective measures described in response to my request, I consider that the complaint is definitively closed.

**Signature:** \_\_\_\_\_

Venue: \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ DD / MM / YYYY



## ANNEX 11 SURVIVOR CONSENT FORM

We invite you to be interviewed about a case reported to our office concerning you. We assured you that strict confidentiality is essential and MUST be maintained at all times, except when you as the (survivor) or the (caseworker) faces imminent risk to your well-being, safety and security. You are also assured that your anonymity would be maintained wherever possible. All written information about you the (survivor) would be kept locked and secure from others. Safety and Security At all times, your safety as a survivor must remain paramount in to our work.

For confidentiality, your answers will not be associated with your name. Rather, you will be given an identification number on the interviewer's sheet. We will make sure all risk associated to your safety is eliminated or minimize at all cost. You may opt to answer questions that you wish to answer. If you have any concerns or you are dissatisfied with any aspect of this interview you may report the grievances anonymously if desired to the Grievance Mechanism Committee.

If you think you are not comfortable with the location where the interview is proposed to be conducted, please you are free to ask for change of location as we want to ensure that you the (survivor) is not placed at risk of further harm by the aggressor, in all cases.

Freedom to Withdraw or Refuse Participation: I understand I has the right to stop the interview at any time, or to refuse to answer any of the interviewer's questions without prejudice from the interviewer.

Please feel free to ask the interviewer any questions before signing the consent form or at any time during or after the interview.

I understand that in giving my authorization below, I am giving (*Maimuna A. M. Sallah*) permission to share the specific case information from my incident report for the only purpose of accessing the GM

I understand that shared information will be treated with confidentiality and respect, and shared only as needed to provide the service I request. I understand that releasing this information means that a person from the verification committee may come to talk to me.

At any point, I have the right to change my mind about sharing information with the designated agency/focal point listed below.

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Tel : \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent or guardian if the survivor is below 18 \_\_\_\_\_

Furthermore, I understand that in giving my authorization below, I am giving (*Maimuna A. M. Sallah*) permission to share the specific case information from my incident report with the service provider(s) I have indicated, so that I can receive help with safety, health, psychosocial, and/or legal needs.

Name : \_\_\_\_\_

Date : \_\_\_\_\_

Tel : \_\_\_\_\_

Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Signature of parent or guardian if the survivor is below 18: \_\_\_\_\_

## ANNEX 12: Intake Form

SURVIVOR  
CODE

### STANDARD GBV INTAKE-REGISTRATION FORM

#### INSTRUCTIONS

- 1- This form must be filled out by the person providing services to the survivor
- 2- Remind the that all information will be kept confidential, and that they may choose not to answer any of the following questions.

<b>Report Date*</b>	<b>Incident Date*</b>	<b>Staff Code (if available)</b>	<b>Report by Survivor*?</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No
<b>Survivor Information</b>			
<b>Survivor's Age*</b>	<b>Sex of survivor*</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Male	<b>Specific Needs / Vulnerabilities*</b> (check <u>all</u> that apply) <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Physical Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Mental Disability <input type="checkbox"/> Unaccompanied Minor <input type="checkbox"/> Separated Child <input type="checkbox"/> Other Vulnerable Child	
<b>Details of the Incident</b>			
<b>Area*</b>	<b>Sub-Area*</b>	<b>Village / Town</b>	
<b>Type of incident/violence*</b> (Please select <u>only</u> ONE of the below. Refer to the GBVIMS GBV Classification Tool for further clarification.) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Rape</b> (includes gang rape, marital rape) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Sexual Assault</b> (includes attempted rape and all sexual violence/abuse without penetration, and female genital mutilation) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Physical Assault</b> (includes hitting, slapping, kicking, shoving, etc. that are not sexual in nature) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Forced Marriage</b> (includes early marriage) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Denial of resources, opportunities or services</b> (includes denial of inheritance, earnings, access to school or contraceptives, etc. Reports of general poverty should not be recorded.) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Psychological / Emotional Abuse</b> (includes: threats of physical or sexual violence, forced isolation, harassment /intimidation, gestures or written words of a sexual/menacing nature, etc.) <input type="checkbox"/> <b>Non-GBV</b> (specify) _____		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. <b>Did the reported incident involve penetration?</b> If yes → classify the incident as "<u>Rape</u>". If no → proceed to the next incident type on the list.</li> <li>2. <b>Did the reported incident involve unwanted sexual contact?</b> If yes → classify the incident as "<u>Sexual Assault</u>". If no → proceed to the next incident type on the list.</li> <li>3. <b>Did the reported incident involve physical assault?</b> If yes → classify the incident as "<u>Physical Assault</u>". If no → proceed to the next incident type on the list.</li> <li>4. <b>Was the incident an act of forced marriage?</b> If yes → classify the incident as "<u>Forced Marriage</u>". If no → proceed to the next incident type on the list.</li> <li>5. <b>Did the reported incident involve the denial of resources, opportunities or services?</b> If yes → classify the incident as "<u>Denial of Resources, Opportunities or Services</u>". If no → proceed to the next incident type on the list.</li> <li>6. <b>Did the reported incident involve psychological/emotional abuse?</b> If yes → classify the incident as "<u>Psychological / Emotional Abuse</u>". If no → proceed to the next incident type on the list.</li> <li>7. <b>Is the reported incident a case of GBV?</b> If yes → Start over at number 1 and try again to reclassify the incident (<i>If you have tried to classify the incident multiple times, ask your supervisor to help you classify this incident</i>). If no → classify the incident as "<u>Non-GBV</u>".</li> </ol>	
<b>Were money, goods, benefits, and / or services exchanged in relation to this incident*?</b>		<input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes	
<b>Has the survivor reported this incident anywhere else?*</b> (If yes, select the type of service provider and write the name of the provider where the client reported). <input type="checkbox"/> No <input type="checkbox"/> Yes (specify) : _____			

Alleged Perpetrator Information		
<b>Number of alleged perpetrator(s)*</b> <input type="checkbox"/> 1 <input type="checkbox"/> 2 <input type="checkbox"/> 3 <input type="checkbox"/> More than 3	<b>Alleged perpetrator sex*</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Male <input type="checkbox"/> Female <input type="checkbox"/> Both <b>Age*</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Adult <input type="checkbox"/> Minor <input type="checkbox"/> Adult & Minor	<b>Main occupation of alleged perpetrator (if known)</b> <input type="checkbox"/> Farmer <input type="checkbox"/> Police <input type="checkbox"/> Soldier <input type="checkbox"/> Security Official <input type="checkbox"/> Teacher <input type="checkbox"/> Parent <input type="checkbox"/> NGO Staff <input type="checkbox"/> Religious / Community Leader <input type="checkbox"/> Other / Unknown <input type="checkbox"/> Unemployed <input type="checkbox"/> Any other individual associated with the project

## ANNEX 13. SEA/SH complaint verification Form

### Introduction:

*This form should guide the verification process by the verification structure/committee. The verification structure will be in the form of a committee, with five members, recruited. If permitted by the survivor, a representative from a service provider should participate in the verification committee in order to provide advocacy on behalf of the survivor and ensure that survivor care principles are respected throughout the process.*

*The verification committee is tasked to review available information about the SEA/SH claim in question, the nature of the claim, and whether there is a link with the project. The committee will also make its recommendations to the alleged perpetrator's employer or manager as to appropriate disciplinary sanctions.*

*It should be noted that the objective of the verification process is to examine only whether there is a link between the project and the reported SEA/SH incident and to assure accountability in recommending appropriate disciplinary measures. The verification process establishes neither the innocence nor the guilt of the alleged perpetrator as only the judicial system has that capacity and responsibility. In addition, all final decisions regarding disciplinary actions will rest solely with the employer or manager of the alleged perpetrator; the verification committee can make only its recommendations.*

### Section A:

Has the survivor provided his/her informed consent to access the grievance mechanism?

Yes ☐ No ☐

**IF YES**, please complete the form in its entirety.

**IF NO**, please seek the consent of the survivor only to anonymously share 1) the survivor code, 2) the type of incident reported and the date and area of the incident, 3) the alleged perpetrator's connection to the project (if known), and 4) the age and gender of the survivor.

Explain that this information will only be used by the project for the purpose of gathering information on the risks created by the project to the safety and well-being of women and girls in their communities and to take steps to mitigate these risks. No data specific to the incident in question, including the identity of the victim, specific location, etc., will be shared outside the provider.

Has the survivor provided his/her informed consent to share the abovementioned information?

Yes ☐ No ☐

**If YES**, please fill out below only Section B.2; B.2; B.3

**If NO**, please do not fill out the rest of the form.

### Section B :

#### 1. INFORMATION RELATED TO THE Complainant/GBV SURVIVOR

Survivor Code:

Age and sex of the GBV survivor:

Girl (<18) ☐

Woman (>=18) ☐

Boy (<18) ☐

Man (>=18) ☐

## 2. INFORMATION RELATED TO THE SEA/SH ALLEGATION:

Time, area and date of incident reported by the survivor:

GBV Type (classification GBVIMS) :

Rape ☐

Sexual aggression ☐

*If relevant, please specify:*

Sexual exploitation and abuse ☐

Sexual harassment ☐

Physical aggression ☐

Emotional and psychological violence ☐

Forced marriage ☐

Denial of resources and opportunities ☐

Has the survivor received any services? Yes ☐ No ☐

**If yes**, please specify:

Medical ☐

Psychosocial ☐

Legal ☐

Security/protection: ☐

Other ☐ please specify :

## 3. INFORMATION REGARDING THE LINK TO THE PROJECT:

*This session aims to determine whether the incident is linked to the project and if the alleged perpetrator is hired or is associated to the project*

Is the alleged perpetrator linked to the project?

Yes ☐

Non ☐

Do not know ☐

Name of the alleged perpetrator ( if known):

Role of the alleged perpetrator ( if known):

Farmer ☐

Teacher ☐

NGO staff ☐

Parent ☐

Police ☐

Soldier ☐

Security official ☐

Religious/community leader ☐

Any other individual associated with the project ☐

Not known ☐

Has the incident been confirmed as credible after verification?

Yes ☐ No ☐ Verification ongoing ☐

End date of the verification process:

Decision taken:

No action/sanction ☐

Informal warning ☐

Formal warning ☐

Additional training ☐  
Loss of salary ☐  
Suspension of employment ☐  
Layoff with notice ☐  
Layoff without notice ☐  
Report to the police if warranted ☐  
Fines ☐  
Other actions ☐

Please specify:

Date of notification to the perpetrator's employer/contractor:

Date of notification to the GBV survivor:

Notification of the implementation of the decisions/sanctions: yes ☐ No ☐

Notification to the PIU PCU yes ☐ No ☐

Notification to the World bank (*the verification structure needs only share the nature of the case, the age and sex of the complainant -if known-, whether there is a link with the project, and whether the survivor has been referred for services*)

yes ☐ No ☐

Note below any follow-up communication with the survivor:

*For example: When/if a verification has begun, or the allegation has been determined to have an insufficient basis to continue. It may also include concerns raised by the victim through the verification process.*

Last name and First name of the representative and signature

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## **ANNEX 14: Code of Conduct for Implementing ESHS and OHS Standards Preventing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH), and Violence Against Children (VAC)**

### **IMPLEMENTING ESHS AND OHS STANDARDS**

#### **PREVENTING SEXUAL EXPLOITATION AND ABUSE, SEXUAL HARASSMENT, AND VIOLENCE AGAINST CHILDREN**

##### **Individual Code of Conduct**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, acknowledge that adhering to environmental, social health and safety (ESHS) standards, following the project's occupational health and safety (OHS) requirements, and preventing sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), sexual harassment (SH), and violence against children (VAC) is important.

The company considers that failure to follow ESHS and OHS standards, or to commit acts of SEA/SH or VAC —be it on the work site, the work site surroundings, at workers' camps, or the surrounding communities—constitute acts of gross misconduct and are therefore grounds for sanctions, penalties, or potential termination of employment. Prosecution by the Police of those who commit SEA/SH or VAC may be pursued if appropriate, and only upon informed survivor consent, or in the case of a minor, with appropriate caregiver consent.

I agree that while working on the project I will:

1. Attend and actively partake in training courses related to ESHS, OHS, HIV/AIDS, SEA/SH and VAC as requested by my employer.
2. Will always wear my personal protective equipment (PPE) when at the work site or engaged in project related activities.
3. Take all practical steps to implement the contractor's environmental and social management plan (CESMP).
4. Implement the OHS Management Plan.
5. Adhere to a zero-alcohol policy during work activities, and refrain from the use of narcotics or other substances which can always impair faculties.
6. Consent to Police background check.
7. Treat women, children (persons under the age of 18), and men with respect regardless of race, color, language, religion, political or other opinion, national, ethnic, or social origin, property, disability, birth or nationality, sexual orientation, gender identity, or other status.
8. Not use language or behavior towards women, children or men that is inappropriate, harassing, abusive, sexually provocative, demeaning or culturally inappropriate.
9. Not engage in sexual exploitation, which is defined as any actual or attempted abuse of position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.
10. Not engage in sexual abuse, which is defined as the actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.
11. Not engage in sexual harassment, which is defined as any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favor, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behavior of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offense or humiliation to another, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.
12. Not participate in sexual contact or activity with children—including grooming or contact through digital media. Mistaken belief regarding the age of a child is not a defense. Consent from the child is also not a defense or excuse.
13. I will not have sexual interactions with members of the surrounding communities. This includes relationships involving the withholding or promise of actual provision of benefit (monetary or non-monetary) to community members in exchange for sex—such sexual activity is considered “non-consensual” within the scope of this Code.

14. Consider reporting through the GM or to my manager any suspected or actual SEA/SH or VAC by a fellow worker, whether employed by my company or not, or any breaches of this Code of Conduct.

- **With regards to children:**

1. Wherever possible, ensure that another adult is present when working in the proximity of children.
2. Not invite unaccompanied children unrelated to my family into my home unless they are at immediate risk of injury or in physical danger.
3. Not use any computers, mobile phones, video, and digital cameras or any other medium to exploit or harass children or to access child pornography (see also "Use of children's images for work related purposes" below).
4. Refrain from physical punishment or discipline of children.
5. Refrain from hiring children for domestic or other labor below the minimum age of 14 unless national law specifies a higher age, or which places them at significant risk of injury.
6. Comply with all relevant local legislation, including labor laws in relation to child labor and World Bank's safeguard policies on child labor and minimum age.
7. Take appropriate caution when photographing or filming children (See Annex 2 for details).

- **Use of children's images for work related purposes**

When photographing or filming a child for work related purposes, I must:

1. Before photographing or filming a child, assess and endeavor to comply with local traditions or restrictions for reproducing personal images.
2. Before photographing or filming a child, obtain informed consent from the child and a parent or guardian of the child. As part of this I must explain how the photograph or film will be used.
3. Ensure photographs, films, videos, and DVDs present children in a dignified and respectful manner and not in a vulnerable or submissive manner. Children should be adequately clothed and not in poses that could be seen as sexually suggestive.
4. Ensure images are honest representations of the context and the facts.
5. Ensure file labels do not reveal identifying information about a child when sending images electronically.

- **Sanctions**

I understand that if I breach this Individual Code of Conduct, my employer will take disciplinary action which could include:

1. Informal warning.
2. Formal warning.
3. Additional Training (increase dialogue and awareness training).
4. Loss of up to one week's salary.
5. Suspension of employment (without payment of salary), for a minimum period of one month up to a maximum of six months.
6. Termination of employment.
7. Report to the Police if warranted.
8. Fines (involve crime and serious human rights violations).
9. Suspended while investigations take place (to have clear evidence against the alleged perpetrator).

## **Reporting mechanism:**

If I see and/or witness a case of SEA/SH misconduct as described in this Code of Conduct, or I am a victim of any prohibited behaviors, I can call the toll-free number, 1212) or contact any SEA/SH focal points among the service providers, community-based structure, Community-based focal points or Regional SEA/SH Monitors listed in Annex. I can always contact the Social Safeguard specialist for guidance and information.

*I understand that it is my responsibility to ensure that the environmental, social, health and safety standards are met. That I will adhere to the occupational health and safety management plan. That I will avoid actions or behaviors that could be construed as SEA/SH or VAC. Any such actions will be a breach this Individual Code of Conduct. I do hereby acknowledge that I have read the foregoing Individual Code of Conduct, do agree to comply with the standards contained therein and understand my roles and responsibilities to prevent and respond to ESHS, OHS, SEA/SH and VAC issues. I understand that any action inconsistent with this Individual Code of Conduct or failure to act mandated by this Individual Code of Conduct may result in disciplinary action and may affect my ongoing employment.*

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Printed Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Witness Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_



## ANNEX 15 RESPONSE PROTOCOL FOR SEA/SH COMPLAINTS Response Protocol for SEA/SH Complaints

This annex provides standard operating procedures to follow for service referrals when a complaint related to SEA/SH is received through the project's grievance mechanism. This protocol should be adapted for each project intervention zone as needed in order to incorporate information about relevant and available local service providers.

### A. Protocol objectives

This protocol outlines the procedures to follow when a case of SEA/SH is reported and identifies the principal response actors that provide survivor support, normally health, psychosocial (which can include social reinsertion), and legal services. This protocol also outlines the roles, responsibilities, and guiding principles regarding SEA/SH response and survivor care.

### B. Key terms and concepts

- **Aggressor:** The person, group, or institution that inflicts directly, or supports by any other means, violence or abuse inflicted on another against his or her will.
- **Consent:** Consent must be informed, based on a clear appreciation, and understanding of the facts, implications, and future consequences of an action. In order to give consent, the individual concerned must have all relevant facts at the time consent is given and be able to evaluate and understand the consequences of an action. The individual also must be aware of and have the power to exercise the right to refuse to engage in an action and/or to not be coerced (i.e., by financial considerations, force, or threats). There are instances where consent might not be possible due to cognitive impairments and/or physical, sensory, or developmental disabilities.  
Children are considered unable to provide consent because they do not have the ability and/or experience to anticipate the implications of an action, and they may not understand or be empowered to exercise their right to refuse. **The World Bank considers children as anyone under the age of 18—even if national law may have a lower age—and, as such, not able to give free and voluntary consent.**<sup>15</sup> Mistaken belief regarding the age of the child and consent from the child is not a defense in SEA of children. Sexual activity with individuals below the age of 18 is therefore considered child sexual abuse, except in cases of pre-existing marriage.<sup>16</sup>
- **Gender-based violence (GBV):** Umbrella term for any harmful act that is perpetrated against a person's will and that is based on socially ascribed (i.e., gender) differences between males and females. It includes acts that inflict physical, sexual, or mental harm or suffering, threats of such acts, coercion, and other deprivations of liberty. These acts can occur in public or in private.
- **Sexual exploitation:** Any actual or attempted abuse of position of vulnerability, differential power, or trust, for sexual purposes, including, but not limited to, profiting monetarily, socially, or politically from the sexual exploitation of another.
- **Sexual abuse:** The actual or threatened physical intrusion of a sexual nature, whether by force or under unequal or coercive conditions.

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<sup>15</sup> Articles 1 of the UN "Convention on the Rights of the Child" defines children as those under the age of 18. The UN Secretary General's Bulletin on Special Measures for protection from sexual exploitation and abuse, October 9, 2003 ST/SGB/2003/13 also defines children as anyone under the age of 18 and explicitly prohibits sexual activity with a child regardless of the age of majority or age of consent locally (para 3.2 b).

<sup>16</sup> The age of consent has important implications for workers employed on World Bank-financed projects. If a worker is married to someone under the age of 18 and that marriage is recognized by a public, religious or customary authority and consistent with the legal age for marriage in the country, such underage marriage shall not constitute a reason not to employ the worker. Under any circumstances other than these, Codes of Conduct shall prohibit workers from engaging in sexual intercourse with anyone under the age of 18. If a worker engages in sexual intercourse with anyone under the age of 18 while employed under the project, a range of employment sanctions shall apply, as set out in the Code of Conduct, following a full and fair review.

- **Sexual harassment:** Any unwelcome sexual advance, request for sexual favor, verbal or physical conduct or gesture of a sexual nature, or any other behavior of a sexual nature that might reasonably be expected or be perceived to cause offense or humiliation to another, when such conduct interferes with work, is made a condition of employment, or creates an intimidating, hostile or offensive work environment.
- **Survivor or victim:** An individual who has experienced an incident of GBV, including SEA/SH. The terms “victim” and “survivor” are used interchangeably. The term “victim” is most often used in the medical and legal fields, and the term “survivor” is used more often in the field of psychosocial support to denote internal individual resilience.
- **Survivor-centered approach:** The survivor-centered approach is based on a set of principles and skills designed to guide professionals—regardless of their role—in their engagement with survivors (predominantly women and girls but also men and boys) who have experienced sexual or other forms of violence or abuse. The survivor-centered approach aims to create a supportive environment in which the survivor’s interests are respected and prioritized, and in which the survivor is treated with dignity and respect. The approach helps to promote the survivor’s recovery and ability to identify and express needs and wishes, as well as to reinforce the survivor’s capacity to make decisions about possible interventions.

### C. GBVIMS classifications

The Gender-Based Violence Information Management System (GBVIMS) offers six principal and systematic classifications for GBV, as listed below. Intake forms may use these classifications to identify a particular type of GBV incident. Cases of SEA and SH, apart from rape, would be classified under sexual assault.

1. **Rape:** non-consensual penetration (however slight) of the vagina, anus or mouth with a penis or other body part. Also includes penetration of the vagina or anus with an object.
2. **Sexual assault:** any form of non-consensual sexual contact that does not result in or include penetration. Examples include attempted rape, as well as unwanted kissing, fondling, or touching of genitalia and buttocks. Female genital mutilation/cutting (FGM/C) is an act of violence that affects sexual organs, and as such, should be classified as sexual assault. *This incident type does not include rape, i.e., where penetration has occurred.*
3. **Physical assault:** an act of physical violence that is not sexual in nature. Examples include hitting, slapping, choking, cutting, shoving, burning, shooting or use of any weapons, acid attacks or any other act that results in pain, discomfort, or injury. *This incident type does not include FGM/C.*
4. **Forced or early marriage:** the marriage of an individual against her or his will.
5. **Denial of resources, opportunities, or services:** denial of rightful access to economic resources/assets or livelihood opportunities, education, health, or other social services. Examples include a widow prevented from receiving an inheritance, earnings forcibly taken by an intimate partner or family member, a woman prevented from using contraceptives, a girl prevented from attending school, etc.
6. **Psychological or emotional harm:** infliction of mental or emotional pain or injury. Examples include threats of physical or sexual violence, intimidation, humiliation, forced isolation, stalking, verbal harassment, unwanted attention, remarks, gestures, or written words of a sexual and/or menacing nature, destruction of cherished things, etc.

### D. Guiding principles for survivor care

- **Confidentiality:** always Respect the confidentiality of the survivor and his/her family. If the survivor gives her/his informed consent, share only relevant information with others for the purpose of helping the

survivor, such as referring for services. Confidentiality and anonymity of the alleged aggressor's identity must also be respected. All identifying personal information (name, address, etc.) must be withheld in the reporting, compilation and sharing of data.

- **Exceptions to confidentiality** occur only when an adult survivor is threatening her or his own life or the life of another person and when the survivor is a child.
- **Non-discrimination:** Any adult or child, regardless of sex, has the right to receive care and support under the same conditions. SEA/SH survivors must receive equal and impartial treatment, regardless of their race, ethnicity, religion, nationality, sexual orientation, or gender identity.
- **Respect:** All actions taken will be guided by respect for the wishes, choices, rights, and dignity of the survivor.
- **Security:** Always ensure the safety of the survivor. Remember that s/he may be frightened and need assurance that s/he is safe. In all types of cases, ensure that s/he is not placed at risk of further harm by the alleged aggressor. If necessary and with survivor informed consent, ask for assistance from police, elders, community leaders or others who can provide security. Maintain awareness of safety and security of people who are helping the survivor, such as family, friends, counselors and health care workers.

#### E. Types of survivor support services

Actors that receive specialized training or have considerable programming experience in relation to service provision for GBV survivors are considered **specialized providers**, such as for health and psychosocial support services and case managers.

Actors that work in sectors outside of the GBV prevention and response arena are considered **non-specialized providers** though they may still be actors that offer other support services or additional entry points for orienting survivors towards assistance.

- **Health:** A survivor, especially following an incident of rape, may need medical care to treat injuries or to receive sexual or reproductive health care services, such as prevention of STIs, screening for and prophylactic treatment of HIV/AIDS, emergency contraception, and other common treatments for the physical consequences of GBV. Medical care can also encompass medico legal evidence collection.
- **Legal assistance:** These services offer legal counsel to survivors who wish to report or file a complaint in court against the alleged aggressor. Legal assistance also encompasses proper representation for the survivor before the court system and proper support throughout the legal process. Legal interventions in some project areas can be very limited and weak; therefore, it is important for the survivor to understand all of the advantages and disadvantages of pursuing a legal remedy in order to ensure an informed decision.
- **Psychosocial:** These services aim to offer a response to the harmful emotional, psychosocial, and social effects of GBV. Psychosocial support seeks to improve the survivor's well-being in aiding her/him to heal, re-establishing a normal life, protecting the survivor from an accumulation of troubling events, and encouraging the survivor and her/his family to rebuild their lives and envision a positive future. These services can encompass individual case management as well as group activities that target emotional support and social reintegration.

- **Security:** All service providers must prioritize and reflect upon the safety and security of the survivor and her/his family, as well as that of their provider colleagues offering support. Security services may encompass support from law enforcement or the court system, but this will depend upon the project context and whether these agents have been properly trained and equipped.
- **Additional survivor support options:** For survivors or complainants who are project personnel or workers, and with the survivor's full participation and consent, the project may also be in a position to undertake further survivor support measures to ensure the survivor's safety, such as adapting personnel duties, location, or hours; facilitating safe transportation options; ensuring adequate leave for needed appointments, safe accommodation, or caregiver duties; and adopting other measures to ensure family-friendly or flexible work arrangements.

## **F. Procedure for referrals or requests for assistance**

### **1. Reporting an incident**

A survivor has the right to report an incident of SEA/SH to any actor or individual that s/he wishes and whom she trusts, such as a family member, a friend, another member of the community, a service provider, or community or religious leader. A survivor may choose to receive or not to receive support or be referred for services, such as health or psychosocial care. Any actor or individual in whom a survivor confides should give the survivor all possible information about her/his options and available services, if the survivor consents. Service providers often provide helpful entry points, but any entry point into the grievance redress system must be accessible, secure, reliable, and confidential.

### **2. Referring for services**

#### **a. Service referrals can happen in multiple directions:**

- Referrals from individuals or actors who are not specialized GBV service providers;
- Referrals among specialized GBV service providers (e.g., between a medical and psychosocial support provider); and
- Referrals from specialized GBV providers to non-specialized providers, who may offer services in other areas not directly linked to GBV services.

#### **b. When a non-specialized provider receives a report of SEA/SH, this actor's principal priority is to provide basic emotional support as well as offer information to the survivor as to locally available services for referral, with the survivor's consent. Immediate actions for this individual would be to:**

- Offer active listening;
- Provide basic information about locally available services;
- Ask for the survivor's informed consent for referral; and
- Refer to other services in a timely manner.

The non-specialized actor should ensure that the suggested service provider can in fact provide assistance to the survivor, and once the survivor is referred for other services, the direct assistance from the non-specialized provider ends there.

- c. Specialized providers that receive a report of SEA/SH must provide care to the survivor in accordance with international best practices and guiding principles for survivor care.<sup>17</sup> Holistic support from specialized providers includes case management, medical care, psychosocial support and mental health interventions, security options, and legal assistance. These actors must likewise be active listeners and provide all information about a survivor's available options, obtaining the survivor's informed consent first before proceeding. Specialized providers should also provide survivors, and/or their caregivers where needed, information about any mandatory reporting laws, if relevant in a particular context, before proceeding.
  - d. **Consent form:** Both non-specialized and specialized actors must obtain informed consent from the survivor before proceeding with service referrals or information. Ideally, the survivor should read and sign a document that gives her or his consent to be referred for or to proceed with services as well as regarding sharing of limited case information. If the survivor is unable to read or write, the individual or provider can read the consent form aloud and the survivor can use a thumbprint to sign the document. Any such documentation must be maintained separately in a secure and locked area with strictly limited access.
  - e. **Intake form:** Specialized service providers that receive a case must fill out an intake form after obtaining survivor consent, which will assign an anonymous code to the survivor. During the interview, the provider should inform the survivor of the type of help that the provider can offer, including the advantages and disadvantages of receiving different services. Any intake and other case documentation must also be maintained separately in a secure and locked area with strictly limited access.
3. **What to do when services are not available:** If complete services are not available in a particular intervention zone, the survivor should still be informed of what services are or are not available and how remote support might be offered if that is an option. It is important that a survivor's expectations in relation to service availability be managed realistically.

**Working with child survivors:** In cases involving minors, actors specialized in child protection should be involved and integrated into the referral pathway. Children have the right to be consulted directly about their case as well as to receive all available information that is necessary to help them decide upon a particular course of action, in accordance with their age and stage of maturity and cognitive development. Wherever appropriate, parents or caregivers should also be involved in the case management process, and children have the right to let a service provider know the adult in whom the child places the most trust and confidence. If the alleged aggressor is a member of the family, it is extremely important that any interview with the child take place outside of the family unit and in the presence of an adult whom the child trusts. A child's capacity to provide consent with regard to services or information-sharing will depend upon the child's age, level of maturity, and ability to express him or herself freely; the best interest of the child should also be taken into account.

Everyone has a duty to report to either the Police or Department of Social Welfare, any case of child abuse or the violation of the right of any Child that he or she knows about. It is against the law to sexually abuse or exploit a Child in any form or even encourage it, to keep a brothel or allow a child to be in your brothel, (The children's Act 2005). For the benefit of PSVR projects, there are SEA/SH Focal Points identified within project sites who will work directly with the PSVR Safeguard Team. In addition, they are trained on how to handle and report SEA/SH cases

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<sup>17</sup> See Clinical Management of Rape (World Health Organization, 2009); Caring for Child Survivors of Sexual Abuse: Guidelines for health and psychosocial service providers in humanitarian settings (UNICEF and IRC, 2012); Interagency Gender-Based Violence Case Management Guidelines (IASC, 2017); and Minimum Standards for Prevention and Response to Gender-Based Violence in Emergencies (UNFPA, 2015).

especially when it involves a child survivor. All referrals are done by using the numbers of contacts indicated in the GM referral pathways and that of the GM Operator's number (for the most up-to-date information, please consult the Safeguard Team at PIU).

4. **Payment for survivor services:** The GM operator will arrange for payment of survivor support costs for project-related claims that are not otherwise covered through public services, such as government health or social service centers, including transport costs to ensure access to needed services. In order to facilitate this coverage, the project may need to enter into partnership arrangements with certain service providers for the life of the project.
5. **Information and data management:** With regards to management of SEA/SH-related data, all documentation related to any SEA/SH case must be filed and maintained separately, in a lockable space, with access that is strictly limited. All guiding principles regarding confidentiality and the secure and ethical collection of data must be respected,<sup>18</sup> and any identifying information about a survivor or the alleged aggressor must never be included in any reports regarding SEA/SH cases for the project. Any project personnel responsible for collecting data related to SEA/SH cases must be trained on proper data collection methods and relevant guiding principles, especially surrounding survivor confidentiality and safety.

The project may need to enter into information-sharing agreements with certain service providers in order to ensure the ethical and confidential reporting and sharing of case data. Generally speaking, any data-sharing should be limited to information regarding the nature of the incident, whether the alleged aggressor is linked to the project, the age and sex of the survivor (if known), and whether the survivor was referred for services, and only with the informed consent of the survivor.

## **G. Community Sensitization**

Information regarding the management procedures for SEA/SH claims and available services must be disseminated regularly within project-affected communities (service-mapping information must therefore be available prior to organizing community awareness-raising sessions or consultations). Community members should be informed about the following:

1. Entry points to seek help safely and confidentially, whether for services and/or to file a complaint;
2. Available services in the community and how to access them;
3. What to expect from service providers, including counter-referrals, as well as the roles and responsibilities of different actors; and
4. The existence of any mandatory reporting laws, especially in the case of SEA/SH or VAC, so that any survivors or their caregivers are aware of these regulations before deciding whether to seek support from a service provider that may be required to report.

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<sup>18</sup> World Health Organization, Ethical and safety recommendations for researching, documenting, and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies, 2007; Best Practices, Gender-Based Violence Information Management System, [www.gbvims.com](http://www.gbvims.com).