



Government of Nepal
Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development



**NEPAL RURAL ECONOMIC AND ENTERPRISE
DEVELOPMENT PROJECT**

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN (SEP)

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Table of Contents

Acronyms.....	5
EXECUTIVE SUMMARY	6
Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION.....	8
1.1 Context of the document.....	8
1.2 Objectives of the SEP	8
1.3 Project Description	9
1.3.1 Project Location.....	10
1.5 Potential E&S Risks and Management.....	13
1.6 Structure of the Plan	13
Chapter 2: KEY STANDARDS AND LEGISLATION	14
2.1 National Legislation	14
2.2 World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF)	16
Chapter 3: PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS	17
3.1 Stakeholder Identification and Analysis.....	17
3.2 Stakeholder Mapping.....	21
3.3 Stakeholder Engagement Strategy.....	22
3.4 Summary of the Consultations.....	24
3.5 Consultation on the draft EMSF.....	26
Chapter 4: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN.....	29
4.1 COVID-19 implications and considerations for stakeholder engagements.....	29
4.2 Engagement Summary.....	31
4.3 Strategies for Information disclosure.....	42
4.4 Strategies for Consultation	44
4.5 Strategies for Vulnerable Groups	45
4.6 Review of Comments and Report Back System.....	46
Chapter 5: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM	47
Chapter 6: GRIEVANCE MECHANISM.....	48
6.1 Objectives.....	48
6.2 Grievance procedure.....	48
6.3 Use of the Dispute Resolution Systems of the Local Levels	50

6.4 Complaint Resolution System	50
6.5 The Grievance Procedure	53
Chapter 7: MONITORING AND REPORTING.....	57
7.1 Monitoring of Stakeholder Engagement Activities	57
7.2 Monitoring of Stakeholder Engagement Activities	57
7.3 Reporting	58
Chapter 8: ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND RESOURCES.....	60
8.1 Planning Phase.....	60
8.2 Implementation and Operation Phases	61
8.3 The Roles and Responsibility of Key different Stakeholders.....	63
8.4 Estimated Budget.....	63
Appendix A: Planned Stakeholder Engagement Activities	66
Appendix B: Stakeholder Consultation	74
Appendix C: Project Information Disclosure Documents	76
Appendix D: List of participants in consultation of draft ESMF.....	77
Appendix E: Stakeholder Engagement Management System Template	80
Appendix F: Grievance form, Grievance Registry and closeout form	81

List of Tables

Table 3.1: Performance Indicator.....	24
Table 4.1: Engagement Summary	32
Table 4.2: Targeted Stakeholders and Consultation Strategy	44
Table 7.1: Performance Indicators	58
Table 8.1: Roles and Responsibilities for Planning Phase	60
Table 8.2: Roles and Responsibilities for Implementation and Operation	62
Table 8.3: The Roles and Responsibility of Key different Stakeholders	63
Table 8.4 REED Stakeholder Engagement Plan Budget (2020 - 2024).....	65

List of figures

Figure 1.1: Map of Nepal.....	10
Figure 6.1: Grievance Procedures for REED Project	49
Figure 6.2: Grievance Resolution System	52
Figure 6.3: REED Grievance Procedure	53
Figure 8.1: Organizational Structure During the Planning Phase.....	60
Figure 8.2: Organizational Structure for Implementation and Operation Phases	62

Acronyms

CES	Concise Environmental Study
ECO	Economic Corridor Office
ECTCC	Economic Corridor Technical Coordinating Committee
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
E&S	Environmental and Social
ESA	Environmental and Social Assessment
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESS	Environmental and Social Standards
E&S	Environmental and Social
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
IP	Indigenous People
IPP	Indigenous Peoples Plan
IPPF	Indigenous Peoples Policy Framework
LAPAF	Local Adaptations Plans for Actions Framework
MoALD	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development
OPD	Office of the Project Director
PIM	Project Implementation Manual
PAP	Project Affected People/Person (generally people affected by land acquisition)
PIU	Project Implementing Unit/Subproject implementing unit
PMU	Project Management Unit
PO	Producer Organization
PP	Productive Partnership
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RAP	Resettlement Action Plan
REED	Rural Economic and Enterprise Development
RE	Rural enterprises
RPF	Resettlement Policy Framework
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Rural Enterprise and Economic Development (REED) project aims to enhance the ecosystem for rural entrepreneurship and to strengthen the market linkages of rural entrepreneurs, including smallholder farmers and producers. This Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) for the REED project has been prepared to establish a functioning platform for effective interaction and meaningful consultations with potentially affected parties and persons, who have interests in the implementation, and outcomes of the REED project. With the conviction that an effective stakeholder engagement is a prerequisite for the smooth implementation of the project by building sustainable trust with project stakeholders, the REED project is committed to also engaging with local communities in project-related activities, importantly, with rural entrepreneurs, and to soliciting their feedback on project design and implementation while simultaneously managing expectations of beneficiaries and interested parties about project outcomes.

The SEP reviewed existing domestic law and policy as well as Environmental and Social Standard (ESS) 10 on Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure, of the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and found that Nepal's requirement for stakeholder engagement is not stringent enough to meet the requirements of the ESF¹, therefore activities have been proposed to help the project meet ESF requirements. Unlike stakeholder engagement throughout the project lifecycle that the SEF demands, Nepal's law requires only one stakeholder engagement and consultation during the project preparation phase. Except during land acquisition, there is no legal provision of a grievance redressal mechanism in the project. There are also no clear provisions for information disclosure. So, the SEP proposes various activities to help the project meet ESF requirements. Unlike stakeholder The SEP has outlined previous stakeholder engagement activities and has also categorized the identified stakeholders into various groups based on their interests and influence on the project. In addition, the SEP also identified and analyzed various stakeholders, including government agencies, elected local levels, local Agro enterprises and traders, and farmers. Further, the SEP also incorporated key characteristics of vulnerable groups, including female entrepreneurs and indigenous communities. The plan for stakeholder engagement takes into considerations requirements around purpose, timing and methods of stakeholder engagement and the strategy for information disclosure to vulnerable groups and indigenous communities.

¹ The Environment Project Act 2019 asks the proponent to conduct a public hearing during preparation of ESIA at the project site. As per the standard practice it is done only once during preparation of the project, not throughout the project lifecycle. Also, there is no clear provisions for stakeholder engagement activities and information disclosure, and the provision for GRM system.

A summary of the key organizational set up of the project and responsible persons for the implementation of the stakeholder engagement plan has been mentioned clearly in the SEP to help identify roles and responsibilities. The SEP has also provided effective procedures and mechanisms to ensure effective and meaningful consultations with the stakeholders, and timely disclosure of information related to the project. In addition, the SEP has also proposed a three-tiered grievance redress mechanism (GRM) for the REED project with clear provisions for receiving grievances, processing and resolution, and reporting back to complainant. The GRM has also incorporated a systematic escalation procedure of a grievance if the complainant remains unsatisfied with the resolution and seeks to appeal.

Resources required for implementing SEP activities for the whole project lifecycle has been included in the SEP. The SEP also clearly lays out a monitoring mechanism to ensure effective implementation of the activities and to enable the project to take corrective measures if required. Each Economic Corridor Office (ECO) has been made responsible for the implementation of the activities incorporated in the SEP. Accordingly, the ECO will prepare and disseminate a half-yearly SEP implementation report.

This SEP is a “living document” such that as circumstances of the project change, and sub project activities and specific stakeholders and needs are confirmed, this SEP will be updated. Further, this SEP should be read in context of the current COVID-19 environment, and the restrictions under COVID-19 which may impact on the ability to carry out stakeholder engagement activities as currently envisaged in this SEP. Some considerations for undertaking stakeholder engagements during the context of COVID-19 has been provided. Where circumstances related to COVID-19 change such that this stakeholder plan cannot be carried out as planned, this SEP will be updated as required.

Chapter 1: INTRODUCTION

1.1 Context of the document

This document constitutes the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) to be implemented throughout the life of the proposed Rural Economic and Enterprise Development (REED) project. The SEP identifies project stakeholders and describes how these stakeholders will be engaged through meaningful consultations throughout the project lifecycle. The SEP, being a “living document” will be updated and refined as the project progresses. This will include a revision prior to the commencement of project phases so that the SEP continues to be fit for purpose.

At the request of the Government of Nepal, the World Bank is planning to extend support to implement the REED project, which aims to enhance the ecosystem for rural entrepreneurship and to strengthen the market linkages of rural entrepreneurs, including smallholder farmers and producers. The REED project, to be implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MoALD) will be carried out from 2020 to 2024 and has three components, together with a fourth component on Component Contingent Emergency Response (details in Section 1.3.2).

1.2 Objectives of the SEP

The REED project is being prepared under the World Bank’s Environment and Social Framework (ESF). As per the Environmental and Social Standard (ESS) 10 Stakeholders Engagement and Information Disclosure, the implementing agencies should provide stakeholders with timely, relevant, understandable and accessible information, and consult with them in a culturally appropriate manner, which is free of manipulation, interference, coercion, discrimination and intimidation.

Specific objectives of ESS10 are providing as following:

- To establish a systematic approach to stakeholder engagement that will help Moiled build and maintain a constructive relationship with stakeholders, especially 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 to improve the environmental and social sustainability of the project.
- To provide means for effective and inclusive engagement with project-affected parties and other interested 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.

- To provide project-affected parties with accessible and inclusive means to raise issues and grievances and allow MoALD to respond to and manage such grievances.

1.3 Project Description

The protracted but successful conclusion of a political transition that began with the signing of the Comprehensive Peace Agreement in November 2006 came to an end following the successful elections for all three tiers of government (local, state and federal) of the new federal state architecture. In the economic front, Nepal's economy has performed reasonably well with average growth of 4.7 percent. Although declining as a share in the economy, agriculture continues to play a significant role, contributing around 30 percent of the country's GDP. However, growth in agriculture remains low and volatile due mainly to high dependency on monsoons, inadequate supply of agricultural inputs, and unreliable market linkages. As a result, agricultural imports have been rapidly rising, creating an agricultural deficit of US\$ 1 billion. Stimulating the agri-food non-farm economy in rural areas is considered an important step towards structural transformation for economic growth and job creation. However, limited access to financial services due mainly to collateralized lending system, the highest in the South Asia region, has been a critical constraint for the development of the agriculture sector, including small medium enterprises (SMEs).

In addition, Nepal recognizes the expansion of SMEs as one of the development priorities for job creation and economic development, as SMEs represent 98 percent of industrial establishments, 90 percent of industrial GDP and 70-80 percent of industrial sector value addition in Nepal. The growth of agri-SMEs has been slow, especially in rural areas mainly due to weak downstream linkages, a regulatory framework which undermines the competitiveness of agri-SMEs, limited access to financial services, and poor support services for agri-SMEs. Creating an inclusive entrepreneurship ecosystem is critical to generating the enterprises that will absorb the growing working age population and promote innovation, entrepreneurship and incubation.

The Agriculture Development Strategy (ADS) 2015-2035, which has recognized agri-business and private sector engagement in agriculture as an engine of growth for rural economic development, is the guiding document for agriculture development in Nepal for the next 20 years. In addition, along with weak capacity of government institutions, the roles, unclear responsibilities and powers across three tiers of government within the agriculture and rural sector also remains a challenge. Thus, strengthening capacity development through introducing the right policy and regulatory framework for both public as well as private sector actors is crucial to supporting the implementation of the ADS. Moreover, lack of crucial infrastructure required for building a sustainable business partnership between stakeholders, particularly between rural entrepreneurs and their buyers, has also been identified as a major bottleneck for the development of the agricultural sector. The project, therefore, also aims to support value

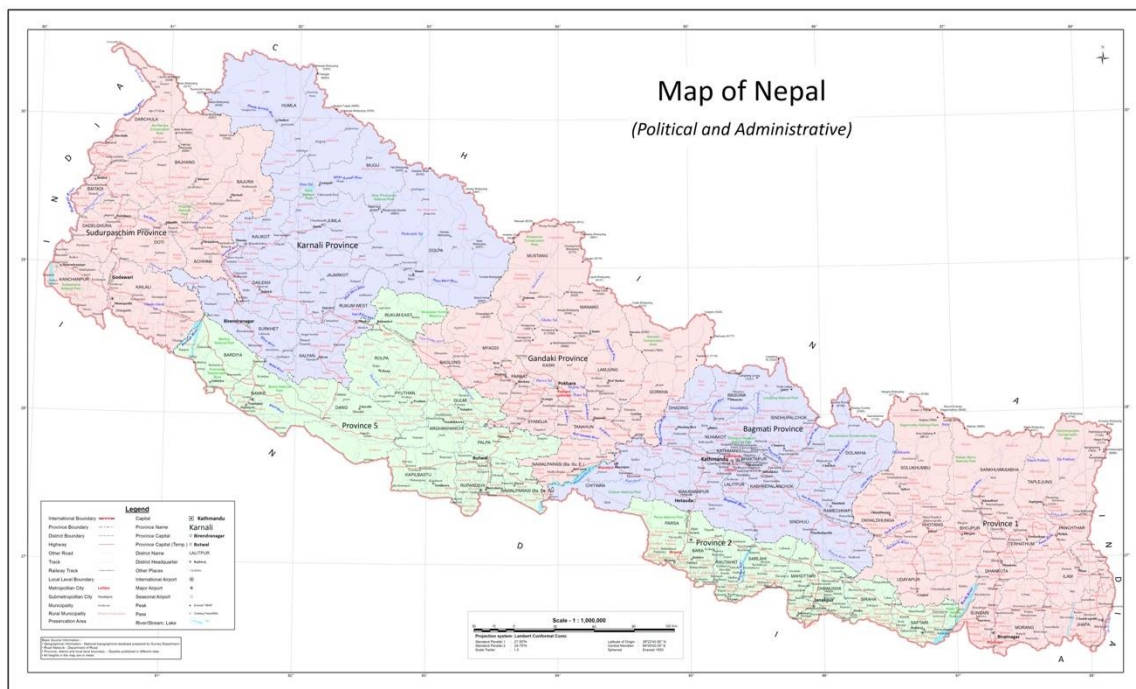
chain related infrastructures and semi-public infrastructures at local level to enable the sustainability and creation to pave the way for connectivity, access and scale up.

1.3.1 Project Location

The project is expected to cover six (6) provinces, with a phased approach, using a provincial or district focus, depending on the agreed criteria with the GoN. The project will prioritize project locations based on North-South and East-West road corridors, which connect provinces, and where main roads have created opportunities to link rural agriculture catchment with markets. The criteria could include economic potential of the project areas, including SME intensity, scalable value chains identified by Country Private Sector Diagnostic for Nepal and other studies, intensity of financial access as well as density of youth population. The following highways/main roads have been identified as such economic corridors.

- a. Mid-hill highway (Province 1 and 3)
- b. East-West Highway² and Postal Highway (Province 2)
- c. Mid-hill Highway (Gandaki)
- d. Bhalubang-Rolpa Highway (Province 5)
- e. Dhangadhi-Darchula Highway (Sudurpashchim)

Figure 1.1: Map of Nepal



1.3.2 Components of the Project

ⁱ² East-West Highway in Province 2 will overlap with Kamala-Dhalkebar-Pathlaiya (KDP) Road under Strategic Road Connectivity and Trade Improvement Project (SRCTIP)

The REED project has three components and six sub-components as described below.

The project will have the following four core components:

Component 1 (Strengthening Market Linkages through Productive Partnerships) - Budgeted at US\$ 40 million, this component aims to promote the development of sustainable business partnerships between Producer Organizations (POs), represented by small farmers and rural producers organized in groups, organizations, cooperatives or other forms of association, such as cottage industries and buyers. The component will support a comprehensive communication campaign, including women-focused campaign, brokering support for prospective buyer and POs to develop joint profiles, technical assistance to jointly develop business plans, start-up grants to POs, and support to formalize POs into legal entities.

Component 2 (Strengthening the entrepreneurship ecosystem in the federal structure) - With a proposed budget of US\$ 8 million, the component aims to support the POs by strengthening eco-systems of both public and private sectors to ensure their sustainability. In order to achieve the goal, the component will focus on building capacity in the federal structure to strengthen agri-business competitiveness, entrepreneurship development and build capacity of expert intermediary institutions that, in turn, will strengthen SMEs and agri-start up entities. The project will undertake a comprehensive capacity needs assessment to identify the capacity gap and design appropriate measures to bridge the gap. The interventions would include: (Subcomponent 2a) Capacity building of provincial and local government and related agencies to maintain service delivery and address capacity constraints at the provincial and local government levels, especially in terms of implementation capacity to ensure proper utilization of available resources; and (Subcomponent 2b) Capacity building of Intermediary Institutions and SMEs to strengthen the capacity and coordination mechanism of the concerned public agencies at provincial and local level in the agriculture sector in the Project area.

Component 3 will support to restoring and strengthening COVID-disrupted food supply chain and local economy. With the proposed budget of US\$ 22 million the project as part of COVID-19 response will support investments in restoring the regional food and inputs supply disrupted due to the limited movement, lockdown and the restriction of border trade and their long-term safe storage at municipal level to ensure food and inputs security. As the recovery actions, the project will support transfer of technologies and knowledge to farmers and agriculture related public and semi-public infrastructure and facilities. The project will also support to build public and semi-public agri-infrastructures and facilities by using labor-intensive Cash for Work (CfW) to create jobs in the rural area and contribute to enhancing rural income. The project will also support upgrading and building demand-driven market centers, value chain related infrastructures and semi-public infrastructures at local level, which could include regional market centers, collection centers, storage centers, cold-chain centers, packaging and processing centers, value addition facilities, among others. The value chain related infrastructures will be managed and operated by private sector/cooperatives to generate fees

and businesses to ensure sustainability. The project will support upgrading or building municipal agriculture centers to ensure safe storage at municipal level to ensure food and agriculture inputs security. These centers will also provide agriculture related training to returnee migrant workers to reengage them in agriculture sector on demand basis. This will also support post-COVID-19 rural economic recovery as restoring of supply and storage through municipal centers. All of the infrastructure and facilities related to value-chain and semi-public infrastructures will be constructed/upgraded by the project in the land owned either by the government or participating municipalities in COVID-19-compliant physical venues. The project will reinforce climate and environment considerations during the construction of the infrastructure in line with the ESMF to ensure that local knowledge and users' needs, and concerns are adequately addressed. In addition, the project will actively promote the use of renewable energy for the proposed infrastructures.

Component 4: Project Management with a proposed budget of US\$ 7.5 million will provide for the project management. This will cover the activities of the Federal-level Office of the Project Director (OPD) in Kathmandu within MoALD and Economic Corridor Offices (ECOs) that will be established in four selected locations (Province 1, 2, 5 and Sudurpaschim) including the Technical Assistance (TA) firms to support the OPD at the higher-level of project management, including setting up operational procedures and manuals, and developing and implementing communication strategy.

1.4 Current Stage of the Project

The REED project is currently at the planning phase and is in the process of finalizing all required environmental and social management plans and documents as required by the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). The Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development, with financial support of from the World Bank, is has prepared a draft of environmental and social management documents such as Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), which has set out the principles, rules, guidelines, and procedures to assess environmental and social risks and impacts, and mitigation measures. In addition, the project has also prepared drafts of Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) and Indigenous Peoples Framework (IPF). Along with a comprehensive ESMF, a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) have also been be prepared. Consistent with the objective of engaging stakeholders throughout the life cycle of the project, stakeholder engagement activities at this stage will focus on:

- Disclosing project information including alternatives;
- Informing stakeholders about the status of the Project;
- Seeking stakeholder inputs on various environmental issues, management measures and benefit enhancers; and

- Obtaining stakeholder insights that would help the evaluation of Project alternatives. Project development.
- Maintaining comprehensive records of each stakeholder engagement activity as useful documentation that is available to refer to.

1.5 Potential E&S Risks and Management

The potential environmental and social impacts of the Project that were identified during the scoping consultation visits has been incorporated into the ESMF. In addition, the SEP has also recorded the feedback and comments received during stakeholder scoping consultations conducted at different locations of the provinces 2 and 5 from September 11- 17, 2018. Some of the possible impacts of the project and sub-projects that need particular attention of the stakeholder engagement activities include:

Possible physical and economic displacements and impact on livelihood and implementation of livelihood restoration measures while acquiring government land the minor construction activities envisaged by the project. In case of the REED project, details assessment will be done during preparation the project that includes, managing possible environmental impacts, such as forest clearance, disturbances to biodiversity spots around the sub-projects, critical and natural flora and fauna habitats, wildlife, risk of grass land fragmentation, risks of landslides, and ecosystem services used by communities; Managing possible social impacts in the sub-project area due to arrival of construction workers and other employees, and conflict with host communities; Handling noise and dust pollution mainly due to construction activities, use of heavy machinery and increased vehicular movements, solid waste management and use of hazardous materials; Managing possible traffic congestion and minimizing traffic accidents during construction period; Managing health and safety impacts on community and especially the safety of women and community access to roads; Increased demand on social infrastructure and services; and, Generation of local income through providing employment opportunities to local communities in project-related activities.

1.6 Structure of the Plan

The remainder of this document is structured in the following manner:

- Chapter 2: Key Standards and Legislation;
- Chapter 3: Project Stakeholders;
- Chapter 4: The Stakeholder Engagement Plan;
- Chapter 5: Stakeholder Engagement Management System;
- Chapter 6: Grievance Management Mechanism;
- Chapter 7: Monitoring and Reporting; and
- Chapter 8: Roles, Responsibilities and Resources.

Chapter 2: KEY STANDARDS AND LEGISLATION

The following section aims to review existing policies and regulatory frameworks related to stakeholder engagement, including information disclosure and grievance management. The first part of the section focuses on the domestic legal and institutional framework, while the second part reviews the stakeholder engagement policy and practices of the World Bank.

2.1 National Legislation

- **The Constitution of Nepal, 2015:** The Constitution of Nepal is quiet about stakeholder engagement in development projects. Article 27 of the Constitution guarantees that that every citizen has the right to demand and receive information on any matter of their interest or of public interest either through the public information system adopted by all government agencies or filing an appeal through the National Information Commission. However, the constitutional provision doesn't explicitly talk about the need to engage project-affected people and other stakeholders while developing infrastructure projects. Article 59 of the Constitution provides the concept of benefit sharing and equity participation of locals in the projects based on natural resources. The Constitution, though indirectly, has provided platforms for stakeholder consultations and engagement since both benefit sharing and equity participation require extensive participation of project affected people and stakeholders.³ As per the constitution, the Federation, State and Local level shall provide for the equitable distribution of benefits derived from the use of natural resources. The practice of benefit sharing, however, is well established only in the energy sector.
- **National Environment Policy, 2019:** The government unveiled a new environment policy that aims to ensure the rights of people to live in clean and healthy environment by controlling, lessening and preventing all types of environment pollutions and managing household and industrial wastes. The policy aims to promote the role of stakeholders in environment management by ensuring their meaningful participation in the decision-making process. For this, the policy envisages strategies to inform and empower stakeholders for environment protection through capacity enhancement. In its intuitional framework, the policy has pledged to ensure the participation of concerned stakeholders in formulating, implementing, monitoring and evaluating policies and laws related to environment sector from the Federal, Provincial and Local Levels.
- **The Resettlement and Rehabilitation policy, 2015** stresses on meaningful consultations with the stakeholders. The Policy envisages that the project proponent will undertake social impact assessment in consultation with elected representatives of

³ The concept of benefit sharing is well established in the energy sector in terms of distribution of equity share to affected locals and allocation of budget for Community Development Program. However, the concept is not well implemented in other sectors, such as agricultural.

the local bodies, affected families and other concerned agencies. The policy has asked for meaningful discussions with the project-affected families and other stakeholders throughout the project's cycle, right from the preliminary stage of the project preparations to the stage of completion, though the implementation of the policy is weak in Nepal. As per the policy, the participants will be informed in advance about the discussion topic, date, time and venue, says the policy. The project proponent will have to maintain records of all the discussions and consultations along with the decisions made during consultations. The policy further says that the proposed mitigation measures and the provisions on compensation and other assistance outlined in the R&R plan should be finalized after incorporating suggestions recorded at the stakeholder consultations and discussions with the project-affected families. In order to protect interests of non-title holders, the policy asked to project proponent to have meaningful consultations with those who do not have legal document to prove ownership of the land where they are living at.

- **National Forest Policy, 2015:** The forest policy aims to maintain the environmental balance through conservation and management of forest, wetlands, wildlife and conservation areas along with increasing the forestry products and enhancing the livelihood of community dependent on forest resources. Periodic assessment and updating of information on forest resources of the country is also included in the forest policy. The forest policy emphasizes the avoidance of forest destruction or tree cutting while constructing infrastructures during implementation of project. The forest policy emphasizes the implementation of community and private forestry development programs, national parks and conservation areas management programs, soil and watershed conservation program, management and development of medicinal plants, and conservation of biological diversity.
- **Environment Protection Act, 2019:** Nepal recently unveiled its new Environmental Protection Act 2019 that says all project proposals will have to conduct environmental studies. As part of the efforts to promote stakeholder engagement and information disclosure about the project and its planned activities, the new act makes it mandatory to undertake prior-informed public hearings for all the environmental studies at the project site.
- **The Forest Act, 2019:** The Forest Act, 2019 stresses on need to protect and conserve forest resources with participation of local stakeholders and forest users. The Act has put an emphasis role of community forest in protecting and managing the national forest and has allowed the local level to have consultations with the local forest stakeholders and users to prepare forest action plan that reflects the wishes of the forest users group.
- **Land Acquisition Act, 1977:** The Act is the main eminent domain law in Nepal and guides the legal process related to land acquisition and resettlement. The Act envisages

no specific scope for stakeholder consultations but has made provisions to lodge grievances. Section 11 of the Act provides a window for those who have grievances on the procedures of land acquisition or oppose the proposed land acquisition by allowing them to appeal against the decision to Ministry of Home Affairs through the District Administration Office. As a part of information disclosure, the District Administration Office issues a public notice that, among others, contains the purpose of land acquisition, location of the land including plot number and name of landowners

2.2 World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF)

The WB's ESF sets out the World Bank's commitment to sustainable development and mandatory requirement for the bank finance projects. Environmental and Social Standard (ESS) 10 on Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure recognizes the importance of open and transparent engagement between the proponent and project stakeholders as an essential element of good international practices. 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.

The main objectives of the ESS10 are:

- To establish a systematic approach to stakeholder engagements that will help Borrowers identify stakeholders, 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.
- To provide project-affected parties with accessible and inclusive means to raise issues and grievances and allow Borrowers to respond and manage such grievances.

Chapter 3: PROJECT STAKEHOLDERS

3.1 Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

For the purposes of this SEP, project stakeholders are defined as individuals, groups or other entities who:

- are impacted or likely to be impacted directly or indirectly, positively or adversely, by the Project (also known as ‘affected parties’); and
- may have an interest in the Project (‘interested parties’). They include individuals or groups whose interests may be affected by the Project and who have the potential to influence the Project outcomes in any way.

Cooperation and negotiation with the stakeholders throughout the Project development often also require the identification of persons within the groups who act as legitimate representatives of their respective stakeholder group, i.e. the individuals who have been entrusted by their fellow group members with advocating the groups’ interests in the process of engagement with the Project. Community representatives may provide helpful insight into the local settings and act as main conduits for dissemination of the Project-related information and as a primary communication/liaison link between the Project and targeted communities and their established networks. Verification of stakeholder representatives (i.e. the process of confirming that they are legitimate and genuine advocates of the community they represent) remains an important task in establishing contact with the community stakeholders. Legitimacy of the community representatives can be verified by talking informally to a random sample of community members and heeding their views on who can be representing their interests in the most effective way. The Social Specialist based on each CEO will be trained and made responsible for the task. With community gatherings limited or forbidden under COVID-19, it may mean that the stakeholder identification will be on a much more individual basis, requiring different media to reach affected individuals. In addition, efforts will also be made to check their affiliation with the particular interest groups that they are claiming to be associated as a representative.

Methodology

In order to meet best practice approaches, the project will apply the following principles for stakeholder engagement:

- Openness and life-cycle approach: public consultations for the project(s) will be arranged during the whole lifecycle, carried out in an open manner, free of external manipulation, interference, coercion or intimidation;
- Informed participation and feedback: information will be provided to and widely distributed among all stakeholders in an appropriate format; opportunities are provided

for communicating stakeholders' feedback, for analyzing and addressing comments and concerns;

- Inlusiveness and sensitivity: stakeholder identification is undertaken to support better communications and build effective relationships. The participation process for the projects is inclusive. All stakeholders at all times are encouraged to be involved in the consultation process. Equal access to information is provided to all stakeholders. Sensitivity to stakeholders' needs is the key principle underlying the selection of engagement methods. Special attention is given to vulnerable groups, in particular women, youth, elderly and the cultural sensitivities of diverse ethnic groups.
- Flexibility: if social distancing inhibits traditional forms of engagement, the methodology should adapt to other forms of engagement, including various forms of internet communication.

Stakeholder identification for the REED project was initiated during the scoping meetings, and stakeholder mapping was further developed following field visits to probable project sites conducted by the consultants hired by the MoALD during the second week of March 2018. The stakeholder mapping workshop was undertaken to:

- Confirm the stakeholders and groups who were identified in initial scoping exercises and further revise and update the stakeholder list with input from key stakeholders;
- Analyze the level of impact the project has on each stakeholder group, their level of interest, influence and importance to identify the level of engagement required for each group; and
- Develop an engagement strategy for each stakeholder group and assign responsibility to team members.

For the purposes of effective and tailored engagement, stakeholders of the proposed project(s) can be divided into the following core categories:

- **Affected Parties** – individuals, groups and other entities which are located within the Project Direct Area of Influence (DIA)⁴ that are directly influenced (actually or potentially) by the project and/or have been identified as most susceptible to change associated with the project, and who need to be closely engaged in identifying impacts and their significance, as well as in decision-making on mitigation and management measures. Affected Parties include local communities, community members and other parties that may be subject to direct impacts from the Project. These may include, but not limited to:

⁴The National EIA Guidelines (1993) defines the direct impact as a direct alteration in the existing environmental conditions as a consequences of project activity. The DIA includes the Project footprint, which includes areas occupied by the Project structures, ancillary facilities, and immediately adjacent areas (i.e., extending up to 200 m from the Project footprint)

- Rural entrepreneurs including small farmers (particularly rural women entrepreneurs) and rural producers; agribusiness SMEs; agri-tech start-ups, other entrepreneurs who can benefit from the project
- Intermediary institutions (who are expanded their services to SMES and agri-tech startups)
- Agricultural institutions e.g. agricultural universities, local chambers
- Government officials, including mayors of municipalities located in the project areas, environmental protection authorities, health authorities
- Individuals and households that will be directly affected (physically or economically) by land acquisition processes for the project and sub-project activities.
- Individuals and households that will be directly affected by due to temporary restriction in the use of land due to construction activities related to the project and sub-project activities;
- Individuals and families who make their livelihoods by working around the project and sub-project construction sites but are unable to continue the works due project and sub-project related activities;
- Individuals and households that will have restricted access to natural resources (Ecosystem services) due to the project and sub-project activities. These stakeholders may include the people who collect grass/firewood for livelihood, communities that use the access road section;
- Public and private organizations and businesses whose normal operations are affected due project and sub-project related activities; and, People directly affected by the construction and operation of the ancillary facilities, such as access roads and labor camps.
- Indirectly Affected Population (or other interested parties) – individuals, groups and/or entities that may not experience direct impacts from the project but who consider or perceive their interests as being affected by the project and/or who could affect the project and the process of its implementation in some way. These parties may include, but not limited to:
 - Farmers and producers from communities surrounding the project areas who can benefit from selling produce in project-supported regional market centers
 - Graduates of agricultural farmer schools and educated youth interested in commercial agricultural
 - Individuals, families or communities residing in the ward of concerned Rural Municipalities or Municipalities but beyond the DIA who can benefit from training opportunities stemming from the project;

- Individuals, families or communities residing outside of the wards who may be affected by restricted access to roads and infrastructures due to the Project construction and operation;
 - Central government ministries including Ministry of Finance, MoALD, Ministry of Urban Development,
 - Provincial and local government agencies
 - Public and private organizations, civil society organizations (CSOs), non-government organizations (NGOs) included agricultural NGOs, and businesses located in the ward of concerned Rural Municipalities or Municipalities but beyond the DIA, identified during the ESMF baseline study and consultation activities.
 - Banks and financial institutions including Nepal Rastra Bank
 - Business owners and providers of services, goods and materials within the project area;
 - mass media; and,
 - associated interest groups, including local, regional and national printed and broadcasting media, local FM radio organizations, digital/web-based entities, and their associations.
 - Public, private, and non-profit organizations that deliver services to actors of the entrepreneurial ecosystem such as technology centers, innovation centers, incubators, accelerators, business support organizations, tech hubs, technology commercialization offices, and industry associations
 - Other affected parties may include, for example, people who may experience increased traffic congestion, increased cost of living, and reduced livelihood productivity.
- **Vulnerable groups** - persons who may be disproportionately impacted or further disadvantaged by the project(s) as compared with any other groups due to their vulnerable status⁵, and that may require special engagement efforts to ensure their equal representation in the consultation and decision-making process associated with the project. It is particularly important to understand whether project impacts may disproportionately fall on disadvantaged or vulnerable individuals or groups, who often do not have a voice to express their concerns or understand the impacts of a project and to ensure that awareness raising and stakeholder engagement with disadvantaged or

⁵ The National EIA Guidelines (1993) defines the direct impact as a direct alteration in the existing environmental conditions as a consequences of project activity. The DIA includes the Project footprint, which includes areas occupied by the Project structures, ancillary facilities, and immediately adjacent areas (i.e., extending up to 200 m from the Project footprint)

vulnerable individuals or groups on infectious diseases and medical treatments in particular, be adapted to take into account such groups or individuals particular sensitivities, concerns and cultural sensitivities and to ensure a full understanding of project activities and benefits. The vulnerability may stem from person's origin, gender, age, health condition, economic deficiency and financial insecurity, disadvantaged status in the community (e.g. minorities or fringe groups), dependence on other individuals or natural resources, etc. Engagement with the vulnerable groups and individuals often requires the application of specific measures and assistance aimed at the facilitation of their participation in the project-related decision making so that their awareness of and input to the overall process are commensurate to those of the other stakeholders.

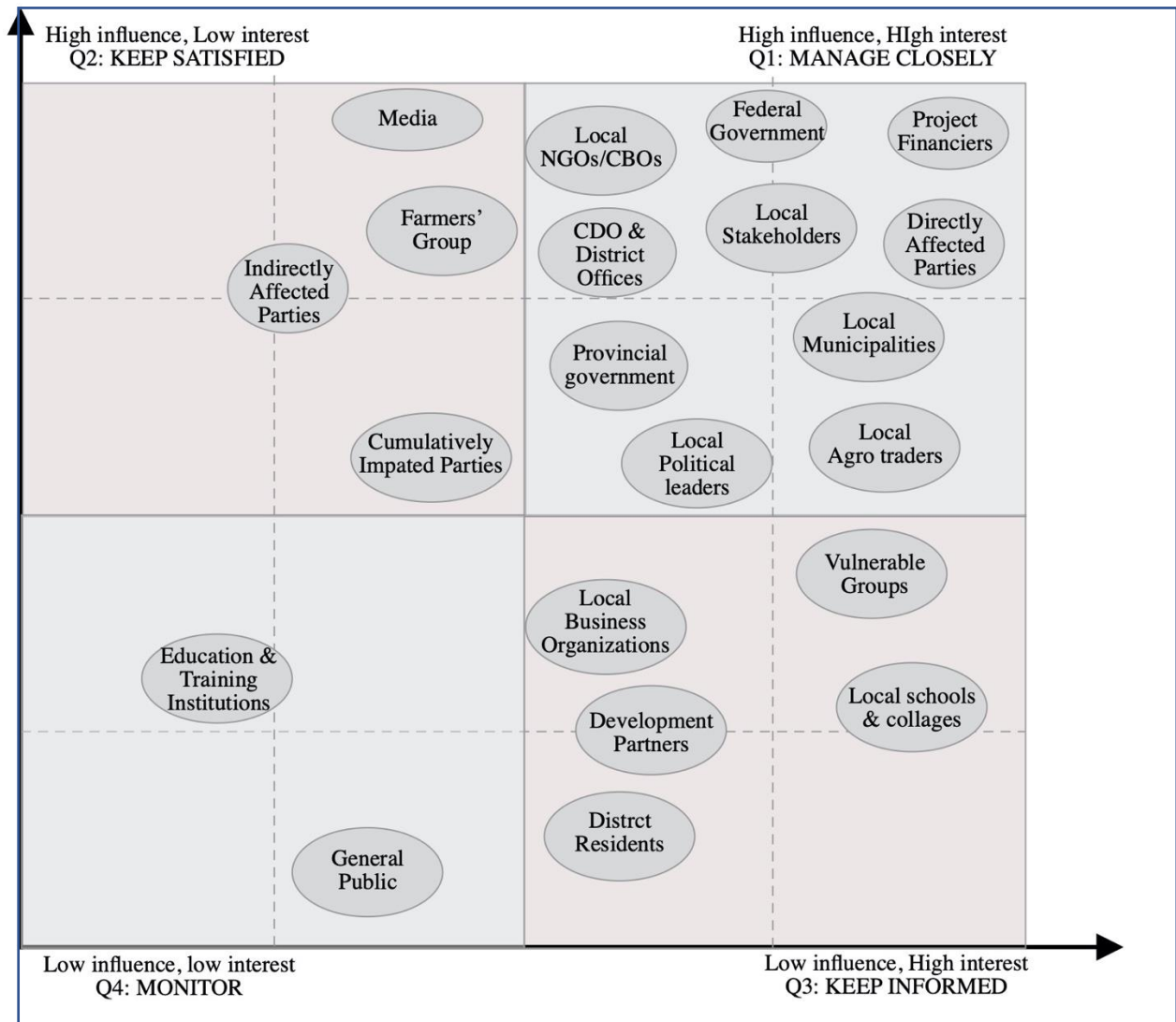
- Potential vulnerable groups were also identified during the stakeholder identification process, and include Dalits, people with disabilities, indigenous people, lesbian, gay, bisexual, transsexual, and intersex (LGBTI), ethnic and religious minorities (e.g. Muslims), youths, and female-headed households. These groups are considered vulnerable as their present circumstances may prove challenging for their ability to take advantage of resources and opportunities offered by the project-or sub-project activities.
- Vulnerable groups within the communities affected by the project will be further confirmed and consulted through dedicated means, as appropriate. Description of the methods of engagement that will be undertaken by the project is provided in the following sections.
- This SEP (as well as the ESMF prepared for this project) has also been prepared in a manner consistent with the ESS7 on Indigenous Communities to enable targeted meaningful consultation, including identification and involvement of IP communities and their representative bodies and organizations; culturally appropriate engagement processes; providing sufficient time for IPs decision making processes; and allowing their effective participation in the design of project activities or mitigation measures that could affect them either positively or negatively. The GRM established is culturally appropriate and accessible for IPs, taking into account their customary dispute settlement mechanism.

3.2 Stakeholder Mapping

The main purpose of this preliminary stakeholder mapping, as illustrated in Figure 3.1 below, is to have initial understanding about the interest and influence of identified groups of stakeholders and categorize them based on their level of interest and influence. The REED project will be further assessed and will refine the preliminary stakeholder mapping during the course of revising ESMF.

The stakeholders were mapped by group, based on the level of influence and level of interest.

Figure 3.1: Preliminary Stakeholder Mapping Results



3.3 Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

High interest and high influence group: Stakeholders with high influence and high interest will be managed closely and with serious efforts to fully engage them. The E&S focal person, who will be hired by subprojects, will maintain close contact with these stakeholders. In addition, the E&S focal person will also organize quarterly consultations with the stakeholders where project or subproject officials will update the project status, including past activities in relation to the E&S risks management, the activities planned in coming months and the possible E&S risks and impacts, and record concerns, issues and suggestions raised by the stakeholders.

Major engagement strategy:

- Maintain contact details of the individuals/institutions categorized in the group and update it regularly
- Maintain regular and close contacts
- Organize pre-informed quarterly consultation meeting
- Provide updates about the project including the past and upcoming ones
- Organize quick and short exposure visits, if required.

High influence and low interest group: For the stakeholders falling under the high influence and low interest stakeholder group, the project and subproject will put effective efforts to keep them informed. The E&S focal person will maintain regular contacts and organize targeted consultations with the group in every six months. The project or subproject officials will update the project status, including past activities in relation to the E&S risks management, the activities planned in coming months and the possible E&S risks. The E&S focal person will prepare a minute with signatures of the participants and the minutes will include the issues discussed and the decisions or actions agreed in the consultative meeting. At the end of every meeting E&S focal person will readout the minutes and a copy of the minute will be made available to the local ward office of concerned municipalities.

Major engagement strategy:

- Maintain regular contact with individuals/institutions categorized in this group
- Organize pre-informed half-yearly consultation meetings
- Provide updates about the project including the past and upcoming ones

High interest and low influence group: For the stakeholders falling under the high interest and low influence stakeholder group, the project and subproject will put efforts to keep them informed. The E&S focal person will maintain regular contact and organize targeted consultations with the group once in a year. The project or subproject officials will update the project status, including past activities in relation to the E&S risks management, the activities planned in coming months and the possible E&S risks. The E&S focal person will prepare a minute with signatures of the participants and the minutes will include the issues discussed and the decisions or actions agreed in the consultative meeting. At the end of every meeting E&S focal person will readout the minutes and a copy of the minute will be made available to the local ward office of the concerned municipalities.

Major Engagement strategy:

- Maintain contact with individuals/institutions categorized in the group
- Organize pre-informed yearly consultation meeting
- Provide updates about the project including the past and upcoming ones

Low interest and low influence group: For the stakeholders that have low interest and low influence stakeholder group, the project and subproject will monitor their activities. For this,

the E&S focal person will remain vigilant about the activities of this group and will share project related information when demanded.

Major engagement strategy:

- Monitor activities of the categorized in the group
- Share project-related information

3.4 Summary of the Consultations

An initial scoping visit for the purpose of preparing the SEP was conducted in Province No. 2 and 5, by a team of two environmental and social experts between March 11 to 17, 2020. The visits provided an opportunity to observe the project areas and conduct formal and informal stakeholder meetings. Table 3.1 provides summary of the consultations with issues raised and response from REED project.

Table 3.1: Performance Indicator

Date	Venue	Participants	Issues discussed
11th March 2018	Ministry of Land Administration Agriculture and Cooperative, Butwal, Province 5	Shreedhar Lohani, Senior Agriculture Officer Dila Ram Bhandari, ADS focal person	Focus on major issues related to agriculture commercialization, potential environment and social impacts, good agriculture practices
11th March 2018	Group Farming Promotion Program Tansen-7 Pravas Palpa, Province 5	Dhurba Raj Bhandari, Madan Pokhara Multipurpose cooperative Apil Chitrakar Technician Maheshwor Panta, Farmer	Farming in 40 Ropani in 4 different plots Vegetable Zone, Palpa Water problem Eight employees (2 women & 6 men) The market problem, water lifting through pumping, Govt commitment to market controlling,
12th March	Agriculture Knowledge Center Palpa, Province 5	Santhosh Pathak, Information officer Shiva Pd. Aryal chief AKC Palpa	Conductive environment Ginger and Honey major potential Plastic management issue, Focus on agro-tourism, Health hazardous, Agri infrastructure linked impacts
12th March	Agriculture Knowledge Center Gulmi, Province 5	Buddhi Raj Ghimire Senior Ag officer San Bdr. Rana AG officer Shiva Banjade Ag officer Rika Ram Neupare Ag officer Khusi Ram Pokhrel	Potential crops, Orange, Maize, Coffee, Apply Smart Agri System Issue discussed were Migration to Terai, and local waste management
12th March	Agriculture Knowledge Centre, Arghakanchi, Province 5	Devesh Kumar Mishra, Chief Chaturbhuj Chaudhary, Agronomist Babek Pant, Ag officer Nim Bahadur Acharya Data division Keshav Raj Khanal, Extension officer Muna Pokhrel, farmer Meena Bhattarai, Farmer Gayatri Bhattraai, Farmer	Potential Vegetable and goat farming such as Maize, Paddy and bee Issue: PPE less, sensitization on PPE use, Pesticide sensitization week, Orange emerging fruits Drone to be use pesticide Gender participation
13th March	Pahadi Mahela Krishak Samahua, Sandhaikharka-1 Shayle Bazaar	Kept in attendance	Gender disparity, designated roles Technical training on seed production, and harvesting

	Agrohakanchi Province 5		
13th March	Raipakha Women Cooperative Group Sandhikarka -6 Kimdanda, Province 5	Kamala Banjadee Bhagawati Banjadee Kamala Poudel Sumitra Banjade Kamala Banajdee A	Off seasonal farming, Rainwater harvesting operated cooperative,
13th March	Agriculture Knowledge Centre Kapilvastu Province 5	Govinda Arya, chief Ishwori Nath Tripathi Officer Bal Govinda Tripathi officer Labkush Kurmee Plant protection Khadga Chapagain Journalist Ishwori Poudel DFO	Open border big issue, Market access Paddy, maize Vegetable, wheat and beekeeping second potential Loss of indigenous crops, Kala 2000 honey Solar irrigation, Cannel maintenance, Deep tube well Collection Center Coordination Central vs local government Marginal land user/deprived community less access to the opportunities provided by the state
15th March	Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperatives, Janakpurdham, Dhanusa, Province 2	Mr Vijaya Kumar Mallik, ADS focal point	Discussed about major agriculture and livestock development activities of the province Major E&S impacts of existing agriculture and livestock development activities Prepared 3-days plan to visit offices/persons in different districts (he made communication after the meeting to the all necessary offices/individuals for consultations)
15th March	Ag. Knowledge Centre, Janakpurdham, Dhanusa, Province 2	Shankar Pd Shah, chief Pooja Kumari Mahato, officer Rajendra Pd Shah	Policy gap central govt vs local Rice and Fishery major potential crops Issues of non-registered pesticides and seeds imported Gender dimension Women access on banking, remittance, education, migration of youths
15th March	Veterinary hospital and Livestock Expert Centre, Jaleswor, Mahottarai, Province 2	Sanjib K Thakur, Dr., Jayannidha Jha Fishery technician Rameshwor Adhikary, Farmer	Potential goat Highway and Chicken/cow farming in postal road Multiple plan-production-processing and market and consumption Grant has a negative consequence, Opportunity, Biogas, employment market establishment
15th March	Bajrang Vegetable Farming farmers group Yadukuha, Dhanusha, Yadukuha Dhanusha, Province 2	Madan Pasawan, Dev Narayan Paswan, Deependra K Mandal, Ramu Mandal, Bijaya K Mandal, Pinky Mandal, Dev Kumari Mandal, Pawan Devi Mandal, Narayan Sharma	Farming for 10 years, 3 Bigha land Women more time engage production and market and money-saving, Male also help, Women man equal participation
16th March	Seed Laboratory Siraha, Province 2	Asok Kumar Yadav, Chief Mohan Mandal, Planning Off	Agro mechanization, crop intensification, production linked with market Post-harvest security-Storage

16th March	Local farmers of Province 2	Dhirendra Singh, Farmer	Fishery potential, appropriate farming opportunity and market access, enough grazing land ensure food supply
16th March	Ag. Knowledge Center and Soil and fertilizer laboratory Rajbiraj, Province 2	Krishna Bdr Raut Agri economist Sunil K sing, Senior officer Dinesh Pd. Yadav Horticulture	Soil fertility maintain issue, sensitize farmers, cropping pattern change, Road/literacy/irrigation issues Rich VS poor issue on power access
16th March	Office Rupani Rural Municipality, Province 2	Hare Ran Yadav, ward Chair	Cow /buffalo/fishery potential Ag mechanized Issues; Local road connectivity, market access, group farming practice
17th March	Divisional Forest Office, Morang, Province 1,	Mr Bishal Ghimire, Divisional Forest Officer	Discussed on impact of agriculture-related activities on environmental in the district
17th March	Agriculture land management and cooperative office, Biratnagar, Province 1	Mr Dashrath Moktan, ADS Focal Person of the Province	Agro enterprise and enterprise Team Large Cardamom potential Market control India business mand Research station establish, Social/ environment political corruption Research and expansion focus

3.5 Consultation on the draft EMSF

With an aim to have wider consultations among stakeholders on the draft ESMF and get their comments and feedback on E&S risk assessments and the mitigation provisions made in the ESMF, the Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development (MoALD) organized a stakeholder consultation on 16 July 2020. In addition to the EMSF, the consultative meeting also highlighted the key feature of Resettlement Policy Framework, Indigenous People Policy Framework and Stakeholder Engagement Plan. Due to the outbreak of COVID-19 crisis that has greatly restricted movements and public gathering, the MoALD organized a virtual consultation as required by national and World Bank guidelines. Based in the initial screening, the MoALD identified various potential stakeholders of the project, including representatives of various indigenous and vulnerable communities, including Dalits, INGOs/NGOs, various associations related with agriculture farming and trading, and officials representing both center and provincial government agencies, among others. The MoALD sent electronic invitations to the identified stakeholders along with an attachment of the draft ESMF and Zoom link a week prior to the proposed date of consultation. In response, 41 stakeholders participated in the consultation from 27 different stations. An hour-long consultation began with a PowerPoint presentation from the MoALD, which highlighted the core project activities, potential E&S risks and proposed mitigation measures, consultations, information and grievance redressal mechanism and organizational set up to ensure effective implementation of the ESMF. Following the presentation, participations were asked to provide comments, concerns or feedback on the E&S risk findings and mitigation provisions made in the EMSF and other social documents. The summary of the major issue raised/feedback and corresponding responses are presented below.

Dr. Sanjeev Thakur, Chief of Animal Hospital and Livestock Expert Center, Jaleshwar, Mahottari

He advised three major strategies to be included in the project document. He focused on technical training to rural farmers, group livestock farming as long-term sustainable practice and livestock raising in the leased system for a quick return. He advised some selected sustainable and social/environment-friendly interventions from the project. He also remembered the field consultation during ESMF development, where he highlighted the need to focus on rural and vulnerable community and their participation in project activities.

Dr Mohan Prasad Poudel, Divisional Forest Officer, Palpa

He expressed his experience in developing ESMF for WB-financed project of the forestry sector and requested to share detail ESMF and would be able providing technical comment in detail.

Ms Kopila Timelsena, Women Activist and Cooperative Actor

She advised to select sustainable project activities and to develop ownership of rural people. She said that ESMF is new for us. However, it should focus on the implementation of environmental and social friendly project activities.

Mr Dig Bijaya Dhakal, NGO Activist

He advised the MoALD to focus on the implementation of provisions of the ESMF. He also recommended the MoALD to comply with all elements of ESMF so that project-related risk in the social and environment could be reduced and mitigated.

Mr Lalan Prasad Singh, Senior Agriculture Development Officer, MoLMAC, Province 2

He advised to include some important agro-based enterprises in the project as potential activities in province 2 such as fishery, beekeeping, buffalo raising, vegetable farming, sugarcane plantation, cow farming and poultry. Further, he stressed that these enterprises would provide an opportunity for the small and medium farmer to participate in project activities for a quick return.

Mr Dila Ram Bhandari, ADS Expert, Province 5

He advised looking into migration pattern from hill to terai before defining project area and finalizing project activities. He focused that the project should give priority to the important value chain products and work to develop a strong linkage with the market.

Ms. Shila Pokhrel, Forest Officer, Arghakanchi

She said that the women who were attended during ESMF consultation had been asking project situation and progress. Women were awaiting some sort of intervention in their area and expected to participate as project beneficiaries.

Mr Tej Raj Subedi, Secretary Province 5

He advised to include value chain product and linkage with the market as key activities. Mainly he stressed that environment and social risks sometimes led to a critical situation during project implementation. Hence, the project should address those issues for project activities socially and environmentally sustainable.

A Detailed list of participants has been provided in Appendix D.

Chapter 4: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

Following the identification and analysis of the project stakeholders, the project will design and implement a comprehensive plan for stakeholder engagement, as outlined in the table below. The table presented below describes the three stages of engagement and the relevant activities and targeted stakeholders. Detailed stakeholder engagement activities during the project are provided in Appendix B. This table was prepared prior to the escalation of COVID-19, and consequently should be read together with suggested considerations for adapting engagement activities to the COVID-19 context.

4.1 COVID-19 implications and considerations for stakeholder engagements

The Government of Nepal has imposed various measures to mitigate the spread of COVID-19 including restrictions on non-essential movement, requirements for social distancing, and prohibitions on social gathering. Other measures have also been recommended by health organizations to limit the spread within countries. These measures impact the ability to undertake stakeholder engagement activities in the manner originally envisaged under the REED project. Given these measures, some considerations have been provided below, to be considered when implementing the plan as outlined below.

This SEP represents a “living document” such that it can be revised to reflect changing circumstances and remain relevant and responsive to stakeholder concerns and project needs. Consequently, in the situation where COVID-19 restrictions impose too many constraints in carrying out the engagement plan as envisaged to adequately meet the needs of the stakeholders and the requirements of the project, the SEP will be revised accordingly and will be resubmitted to the WB.

Considerations for adapting engagement activities

- Face to face meetings may not always be appropriate, and therefore the project should seek to avoid public gatherings (taking into account GoN restrictions or advice), including public hearings, workshops and community meetings. The project should consider whether the risk level would justify avoiding public/ face to face meetings and whether other available channels of communications to reach out to all key stakeholders should be considered (including social media, for example).
- If smaller meetings are permitted/advised, conduct consultations in small-group sessions, such as focus group meetings. The project members should articulate and express their understandings on social behaviour and good hygiene practice, and ensure that any consultations are preceded with procedures for articulate hygiene practices;
- Identify and connect with potential local partners for supporting in stakeholder engagement activities, including NGOs and CSOs supporting in particular vulnerable groups. These groups may be able to provide insights into the local context on the

ground and current conditions, support in information dissemination; serve as communication link between project teams and local communities

- The project team may consider engaging with local mobilizers or social influencers to support engagement. These could include trusted local individuals or social influencers, for example, youth social influencers, respected elderly persons, representatives of indigenous groups or women's groups. They can facilitate consultations and community engagement when public gatherings are restricted, or consultants cannot work safely with community members. An effective engagement approach may be for project teams to convey information to the social influencers through ICT tools, who can then use traditional methods to communicate with local communities.
- Diversify means of communication and rely more on social media and online channels. The project team should determine the project information that needs to be disseminated and assess the available channels for distribution. Where possible and appropriate, create dedicated online platforms and chatgroups appropriate for the purpose, based on the type and category of stakeholders. WhatsApp, Viber and Facebook messenger groups are all used within Nepal and should be considered for communications. ICT channels can also provide a useful feedback mechanism.
- Employ and diversify of traditional channels of communications such TV, newspaper, dedicated phone-lines, mail, and radio which is highly used amongst communities in Nepal, particularly when stakeholders do not have access to online channels or do not use them frequently. Traditional channels can also be highly effective in conveying relevant information to stakeholders, and allow them to provide their feedback and suggestions;
- Undertake consultation meetings virtually where feasible, considering the following for those consultations which cannot be postponed, and where all participants have proper ICT access and can be notified in advance regarding timing and format of meetings. Some considerations:
 - Vulnerabilities of participants need to be considered to ensure that vulnerable participants are not disadvantaged by being unable to connect.
 - Where all participants have proper ICT access, and can be notified sufficiently in advance, online communication tools should be employed where large meetings and consultations are essential via ICT solutions including WebEx, Skype and Zoom. In low ICT capacity solutions, audio meetings can also be effective tools to for virtual workshops and meetings
 - Where direct consultation and engagement with beneficiaries is required, such for completion of resettlement activities, only if required, or indigenous peoples plans, identify direct channels for communication with the affected household via a combination of email messages, text messages, dedicated phone lines

- Each of the proposed channels of engagement should clearly specify how feedback and suggestions can be provided by stakeholders.
- Special attention should be paid to vulnerable groups, as vulnerable groups are likely to be disproportionately impacted by COVID-19 and may have further limitations in accessing information and being engaged. The project should assess how COVID-related impacts might further restrict the ability of vulnerable groups to engage and participate in project consultations. The local community mobilizers noted above can be instrumental in identifying and engaging with these groups.
- The GRM proposed for the project should be reviewed and adapted as required to ensure that stakeholders can lodge grievances and can effectively be addressed. Channels for receiving grievances should be reviewed to maximise ways to submit and response to grievances. Where feasible, ICT-related options such as SMS, via email, or other online options should be implemented and communicated.

4.2 Engagement Summary

Table 4.1: Engagement Summary

Project Objective	Primary Engagement Activities and Topics	Target Stakeholders	Method(s) of Engagement	Frequency and Location	Stakeholder Feedback Opportunity	Responsibilities
Project Phase: Planning						
Disclose relevant project information to stakeholders and solicit their inputs/feedback into ESMF, ESCP, RPF, IPPF, RAP, IPDP, ESMP-sub projects and other plans.	Dissemination of Project details, including possible impacts and mitigation measures, E&S policy and principles of the REED project, Restatement, Rehabilitation and Livelihood Restoration Plan - if required, Information Disclosure and grievance Redressal Mechanism, Benefit Sharing Plan, information in FPIC process, Cumulative Impact Assessment, Separate consultations with IPs.	Stakeholder of all levels, including Project Affected Parties (PAPs), concerned government agencies at local, provincial and central levels, and local municipalities	Dissemination of project information sheets such as FAQs and fact sheets, community radio programs, use of social media, group meeting, Focus group discussions, particularly with women and vulnerable groups, Household survey and visits, one-to-one meetings if necessary.	Quarterly consultations, radio programs, visits to affected communities once in a month, regular communication through mass & social media, E&S focal person maintaining regular contacts with the affected population	Project officers will hear feedbacks & suggestions from the PAPs during the regular consultative meetings with PAPs. In addition, E&S focal person will be in the project site and will be receptive toward all sorts of feedback coming from PAPs and other stakeholders. The subprojects will also run radio programs and Facebook pages where stakeholders can provide feedbacks. There will also be GRM and Project Information Centre (PIC) to collected feedbacks.	PIU with E&S Team
	Project scope, rationale and E&S principles Resettlement assistance and livelihood restoration options, only if required, Grievance mechanism process	Representatives of affected communities, government entities & local municipalities,	Separate consultative meetings with identified stakeholders, PAPs and also joint public/community meetings, Meeting with the representatives of concerned government agencies and local municipalities	At least quarterly when can organized as when required.	Regular consultations with the PAPs and stakeholders through project office and E&S focal person. Functioning GRM and PIC.	Project team, E&S team of the project and E&S focal person

Project Objective	Primary Engagement Activities and Topics	Target Stakeholders	Method(s) of Engagement	Frequency and Location	Stakeholder Feedback Opportunity	Responsibilities
	Project alternatives, scope of the potential impacts and mitigation measures and benefit sharing Coordination activities for development and implementation of management plans	All the stakeholders, including PAPs, local, district, provincial and national stakeholders.	Consultative meetings with identified stakeholders, of all levels, including PAPs representatives of concerned government agencies and local municipalities	At least once in every six months or as and when required	Regular consultations with the PAPs and stakeholders through project office and E&S focal person and through functioning GRM and PIC.	Project team, E&S team of the project and E&S focal person
	Project information - scope and rationale and E&S principles Training on ESA and other sub-management plans	All interested stakeholders of all level form local to national	Face-to-face meetings, Trainings/workshops Invitations to public/community meetings	At achievement major ESA milestone and as and when needed	Meetings, trainings and workshops	Project team and E&S team of the project
	Consultations and coordination as a part of CIA to ensure implementation and management of cumulative impacts	All interested stakeholders of all level form local to national and other development projects in the REED project areas	Meetings, Trainings/workshops Invitations to public/community meetings	At achievement major ESA milestone and as and when needed	Meetings, trainings and workshops	Concerned ministry, project team and E&S team of the project

Project Objective	Primary Engagement Activities and Topics	Target Stakeholders	Method(s) of Engagement	Frequency and Location	Stakeholder Feedback Opportunity	Responsibilities
	Consultation and coordination with various stakeholders for feedbacks and effective implementation of Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP)	Interested stakeholders of all levels - District, Provincial and central governments, research institutions and NGOs.	Meetings, Trainings/workshops, Invitations to public/community meetings	At achievement major ESA milestone or as and when needed	Meetings, trainings and workshops	Project team and E&S team of the project
	Present the final ESMF, Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMP), draft environmental and social commitment plan (ESCP) and related plans for comments and feedback	PAPs, interested stakeholders of all levels - District, Provincial and central governments, research institutions and NGOs.	Local consultative meetings with PAPs, FGDs particularly with women and marginalized communities, Group meeting, Project Information factsheets and documents, FAQs, community radio, Mass/Social Media such as Facebook, PIC, project website and hotline	Once in each sub project site E&S Team during the finalization of the plans	Meetings and group discussions by inviting all interested stakeholders, Collection of comments and feedback through GRM, PIC project office and E&S focal person.	Project team and E&S team of the project
Presenting project information to solicit interest from project beneficiaries	Present details to potential project beneficiaries to inform and solicit interest from e.g. rural entrepreneurs, farmer groups etc., and to inform other interested stakeholders	All affected parties and interested groups included farmer groups, farmer associations agri start ups	Face-to-face meetings, Trainings/workshops, Invitations to public/community meetings Specific focus group discussions will be held with women, in particular rural female entrepreneurs, as well as with youths, and with	At least quarterly when can organized as when required.	Meetings, trainings and workshops	Project team

Project Objective	Primary Engagement Activities and Topics	Target Stakeholders	Method(s) of Engagement	Frequency and Location	Stakeholder Feedback Opportunity	Responsibilities
			indigenous groups, to ensure their participation.			
Project Phase: Pre-implementation						
Consolidate engagement activities to prepare stakeholders for construction phase Present Construction Contractors ESMPs and related plans, and final ESCP	Increase the frequency and intensity of ongoing consultation related to RPF & IPPF and benefit sharing Present ESMPs, ESCP and ES&S plans to construction contractors for comments & feedback Project updates including construction activities, construction management plans, engagement activities and responsibilities	Project Affected Parties	Local consultative meetings with PAPs, FGDs particularly with women and marginalized communities, Group meeting, Project Information factsheets and documents, FAQs, community radio, Mass/Social Media such as Facebook, PIC, project website and hotline	Once a month or as when required	Collection of comments and feedback through GRM, PIC project office and E&S focal person. Project Facebook, telephone line and email address, radio interview Meetings and household visits	Concerned ministry and government agencies, project team and E&S team of the project

Project Objective	Primary Engagement Activities and Topics	Target Stakeholders	Method(s) of Engagement	Frequency and Location	Stakeholder Feedback Opportunity	Responsibilities
	Construction permits and licenses and regular Project progress and updates	District level government agencies, Local Provincial and central governments agencies	One-to-one meetings Group meetings/ briefing	Once a month or as when required	Circulation of meeting minutes and feedback forms	Project team and E&S team of the project in support of contractors
	Interaction related to IPPF	Directly & Indirectly Affected Population	FGDs with IPP communities, IPPF consultation meetings	As when required	Meeting minutes, GRM	Project team and E&S team of the project
	Present the C-ESMP and related plans for comments and feedback Present final ESCP for feedback Project updates including construction activities, construction management plans, engagement activities and responsibilities	PAPs & all interested stakeholders, District level government agencies, local municipalities	Local consultative meetings with PAPs, FGDs particularly with women and marginalized communities, Group meeting, Project Information factsheets and documents, FAQs, community radio, Mass/Social Media such as Facebook, PIC, project website and hotline	As when required during the pre-construction phase	Meetings Feedback form and minutes, Project Facebook, telephone line and email address, radio interview and GRM	Project team and E&S team of the project

Project Objective	Primary Engagement Activities and Topics	Target Stakeholders	Method(s) of Engagement	Frequency and Location	Stakeholder Feedback Opportunity	Responsibilities
Presenting project information to provide updates to beneficiaries and other affected parties and interested stakeholders	Present update on project progress to project beneficiaries and including those affected groups and interested groups etc.	All affected parties and interested groups included farmer groups, farmer associations agri start ups	Face-to-face meetings, Trainings/workshops Invitations to public/community meetings Specific focus group discussions will be held with female farmers, as well as with youths, and with indigenous groups, to ensure their participation.	Once a month or as when required	Meetings, trainings and workshops	Project team
Project Phase: Implementation						
Provide regular updates on construction activities to PAPs and other stakeholders, Implement and monitor the implementation of ESMP Handling of complaints in a prompt and effective manner	Regularly update on construction activities, including key milestones, key changes in the Project design, and monitoring results from the ESCP and ESMPs, Health and safety impacts Benefit sharing, and community development initiatives Ensure effective functioning of the GRM	All stakeholders, including PAPs, local municipalities, concerned government agencies	PIC, Project Information Sheets, such as brochures, factsheets, notices and social media such as Facebook, feedbacks from stakeholders Community meetings and FGDs Monitoring and Community Perception Surveys Project Facebook and website Radio and newspaper GRM	Once on every three months or as when required	Meeting and meetings minutes, Feedbacks received through the LCO, Project Facebook, telephone line and email address, interactive radio programs and GRM	Project team, E&S team of the project and LCOs

Project Objective	Primary Engagement Activities and Topics	Target Stakeholders	Method(s) of Engagement	Frequency and Location	Stakeholder Feedback Opportunity	Responsibilities
	Disclose and consult on Construction Contractor activities, hiring preferences, job and business opportunities and skill training opportunities, among others. Undertake community Health and safety awareness program	All stakeholders, including PAPs, local municipalities, concerned government agencies	Community meetings PIC, Project Information Sheets, such as brochures, factsheets, notices and social media such as Facebook, feedbacks from stakeholders Project Facebook and website Radio and newspaper	Once on every two months or as when required Timely information to locals on job opportunities through PIC, social media, community radio and community meetings	Feedback Form Project Facebook and interactive radio program Community meetings Project telephone line, Facebook and email and GRM	Project team, E&S team of the project and LCOs
	Meetings and discussions with key government departments for construction permits and licenses and provide construction progress update	District level government agencies, Local Provincial and central governments agencies	Official meeting with concerned government officials, Group meeting, briefings and presentations	Once on every two months or as when required	Meeting minutes and meeting feedback forms and GRM	Concerned ministry and government agencies, project team and E&S team of the project
	Interaction with IIPs on IPPF governance	IIPs within the PAPs and identified shareholders	FGDs or group meeting with IIPs	Once on every two months or as when required	Meeting minutes and meeting feedback forms, GRM	Project team and E&S team of the project, LCOs

Project Objective	Primary Engagement Activities and Topics	Target Stakeholders	Method(s) of Engagement	Frequency and Location	Stakeholder Feedback Opportunity	Responsibilities
	Update on construction activities & implementation of ESMP, RAF, benefit sharing and skill training, community support programs, Functioning of GRM Updates and activities Community Health and safety, working condition Employment opportunities	PAPs and all other interested stakeholders	Community meetings PIC, Project Information Sheets, such as brochures, factsheets, notices and social media such as Facebook, feedbacks from stakeholders Project Facebook and website Radio and newspaper	Once on every six months or as when required	Feedback Form Project Facebook and interactive radio program Community meetings Project telephone line, Facebook and email, GRM	Project team and E&S team of the project, LCOs
Presenting project information to provide updates to beneficiaries and other affected parties and interested stakeholders	Present update on project progress to project beneficiaries and including those affected groups and interested groups etc.	All affected parties and interested groups included farmer groups, farmer associations agri start ups	Face-to-face meetings, Trainings/workshops Invitations to public/community meetings Specific focus group discussions will be held with female farmers, as well as with youths, and with indigenous groups, to ensure their participation.	Once a month or as when required	Meetings, trainings and workshops	Project team
Project Phase: Operation						
Maintain constructive relationships with stakeholders and maintain awareness of environmental and safety practices in	Regular engagement with stakeholders to maintain good relationships and provide update on the Project progress Manage community issues and monitor community attitudes	Project Affected Parties, local municipalities, concerned district level government agencies	Community meetings PIC, social media such as Facebook, feedbacks from stakeholders Project Facebook and website Community radio	Once on every six months or as when required	Feedback Form Project Facebook Community meetings Project telephone line, Facebook and email, GRM	Project team and E&S team of the project, LCOs

Project Objective	Primary Engagement Activities and Topics	Target Stakeholders	Method(s) of Engagement	Frequency and Location	Stakeholder Feedback Opportunity	Responsibilities
the local communities	Ensure functioning of the GRM					
	Environmental and safety awareness program Emergency preparedness and response	PAPs and all other stakeholders	Brochures, pamphlets, and regular environmental and safety updates, emergency response conversations with PAPs and other relevant stakeholders Emergency Drills	Once on every six months or as when required	Feedback Form Project Facebook Community meetings Project telephone line, Facebook and email, GRM	Project team and E&S team of the project, LCOs
	Regular engagement with stakeholders to maintain good relationships and provide update on the Project progress.	PAPs District, Provincial and National government departments Other Interested Stakeholders	Community meetings PIC, social media such as Facebook, feedbacks from stakeholders Project Facebook and website Community radio	Once on every six months or as when required	Feedback Form Project Facebook Community meetings Project telephone line, Facebook and email, GRM	Project team and E&S team of the project, LCOs

Project Objective	Primary Engagement Activities and Topics	Target Stakeholders	Method(s) of Engagement	Frequency and Location	Stakeholder Feedback Opportunity	Responsibilities
	Interaction in line with IPPF	IPPs within the PAPs and identified shareholders	FGDs or group meeting with IPs	Once on every six months or as when required	Meeting minutes and meeting feedback forms, GRM	Project team and E&S team of the project, LCOs

4.3 Strategies for Information disclosure

Timely and effective disclosure of relevant project-related information is crucial in helping stakeholders, including the affected persons and communities understand the risks, impacts and opportunities of the project. The REED project will ensure that the disclosure of the relevant information will inform the stakeholders about;

- The purpose, nature, and scale of the project,
- The duration of proposed project and associated activities during preparation, construction and operation phases,
- Risks and potential impacts of each activities to PAPs and other stakeholders,
- The mitigation plan, which will list out the measures that the project will undertake along with timeline for each activity, required financial resources and responsible units or persons within the project,
- GRM and Public Information Center (PIC) put in place by the project and their functioning, and
- Stakeholder engagement process including grievance redress mechanism

The Project aims to use the various mediums as explained in section 4.1.1 to disclose project-related information to all identified stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle.

The project officials and E&S focal person will make sure the disclosure programs are organized in culturally appropriate manners and ensure participation of women and vulnerable groups. The purpose of disclosing information is also to solicit information and input from community members and other project stakeholders through engaging in two-way discussions with project stakeholders. The project will ensure that the information disclosure materials that will be presented or distributed to the participants are prepared E&S focal person in a local language understandable to participants. Information will be displayed in well-publicized, visible and publicly accessible locations, to ensure that knowledge of/access to project information is not just limited to those who the project officials and E&S focal person engages with. Examples of publicly accessible locations includes public offices such as ward offices, schools, health clinics, town halls, and community centers.

Given the complex terrain and road connectivity that greatly limit the availability of public transportation, timely information of the disclosure events is crucial in ensure that the majority of the stakeholders are able to participant in such events. So, the project and sub-projects will make sure that appropriate and reliable means of communication is adopted to inform stakeholders about the date, time and place of such event. The project and sub-projects plan to use the following means and methods for such purpose:

- Display of public notice in various local places where general public gather
- E&S focal person and E&S team of the project areas
- Local municipalities, ward offices and their notice boards

- High school students and local schoolteachers and school boards
- Health centers and their notice boards
- Notice about the event in the local community radio and newspapers
- Social media, such as project's Facebook page
- Local NGO network
- District level Journalists Association

4.3.1 Communication Materials

Key disclosure and consultation materials include:

- **Project Information Document (PID):** This document consists of a non-technical summary of the sub-project, development timeline and milestones, sub-project updates, consultation program and opportunities for the stakeholders to participate in development of the sub- project, timeline and venues for engagement activities, contact details for questions and queries. The PID will be updated at each Project milestone to reflect the Project development and key activities at each stage.
- **Project Factsheet:** A short (two-pager) factsheet in Nepali highlighting crucial project information in simple, plain language accompanied with map, graphics and pictures.
- **REED Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs)** which comprises of project key risks and issues, and project's plan to address them, as well as answers to key questions raised by the stakeholders during the previous consultation. The FAQs will be revised and updated regularly to reflect Project development and key issues that have come to light.
- **Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM):** It details how to access the grievance mechanism and lodge grievances. This will include information on how the grievance management process will work, including the timeframes for responses.

Refer to **Appendix D** for the various E&S documents that would be disclosed to stakeholders and FAQs for the Project. Refer to Appendix B for more details on the series of communication materials planned for the Planning Phase.

4.3.2 Project Information Centre

Each sub-project office will also act as the Project Information Centre (PIC) the PICs will be equipped with trained human resources and necessary logistics. The PICs will be maintained by the E&S focal person, who will trained to handle the flow of information and grievances related to sub-project. The PIC will welcome visitors from the local communities and the district to obtain Project information, ask questions, raise issues or lodge grievances.

4.3.3 Project Website and Telephone line

A Project website both in Nepali and English languages will be established at Pre-Construction phase to provide information about the Project and disclose all Project related information to the wider public. The Project website will be regularly updated with new Project updates, such

as ongoing and upcoming project activities, job opportunities for local workforce, benefit sharing and livelihood restoration activities. The Project website will also allow the public to submit issues or grievances related to the Project development. The Project telephone line and email will also be made available from the Pre-construction to enable the public to ask questions, raise issues and submit grievances.

4.3.4 Social Media

Given the fact that Facebook is the most popular social media app in Nepal, the REED sub-project Facebook page will be established during the pre-construction phase, that among others will offer a platform for the sub-project to disseminate project-related information and allow the stakeholder to raise questions, concerns and provide suggestions. In addition, Facebook, which will be maintained throughout the project lifecycle, will also serve as an additional window for stakeholders, including the PAPs to lodge grievances, if they have any. Moreover, Facebook ads that target youth will be generated as much as possible to disseminate information to this high social media user group. In addition to Facebook, the project will also develop and maintain a project website to regularly post information and developments related to the project.

4.4 Strategies for Consultation

The project and sub-project will apply a number of strategies for communication to achieve a broader objective of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan. The project and the sub-projects will implement various consultation methods as outlines in the Table 4.2 to ensure inclusive and effective engagement with all stakeholders, including PAPs and marginalized groups.

During the current planning phase, the relevant E&S team member or E&S focal person will visit affected communities located in the Directly and Indirectly Affected Population. They will be deployed in field offices and will undertake consultation activities with the members of the communities that are most affected by the Project related activities.

Table 4.2: Targeted Stakeholders and Consultation Strategy

Consultation Methods	Targeted Stakeholders
Community meetings and proceedings appropriate to the culture and norms of the Indigenous Peoples	Every community in the Directly and Indirectly Affected Population.
Public Information Centre (PIC)	Each sub-project office will also act as the PIC and it will be made accessible to all interested stakeholders in getting project-related information
Focus group discussion (FGD)	Women groups (including with female farmers/entrepreneurs) marginalized community minority religious groups in the Directly and Indirectly Affected Population.
Household visits	Dalit households, households in extreme poverty, female headed households, people with disabilities, elderly who have mobility difficulties, minority religious groups in the Directly and Indirectly Affected Population.
School visit/ group briefing	Students, particularly affiliated with high schools, in the Directly and Indirectly Affected Population

Face-to-face meeting/ workshop	Government offices – all levels, elected officials, PAM, DCC, FNCCI, NCC, schools and health clinics, interest groups, NGOs,
Community Radio	Regional stakeholders and other interested parties who can call in to ask questions and raise issues/ concerns while REED representatives will attend and answer the questions.
Project Facebook page	All stakeholders can visit the project Facebook and get Project updates and ask questions, and raise issues/ concerns
Project email address	All stakeholders can email to request information, and raise issues/concerns

4.5 Strategies for Vulnerable Groups

In Nepal, vulnerable groups represent those underrepresented and voiceless people who may not be able to access to project information, articulate their concerns and priorities about potential project impacts and lodge official grievance, take opportunities unveiled by the project and participant in various benefit sharing activities of the project due mainly to a number of barriers, such as poverty, illiteracy and lower social status, among others. One visible example in Nepali patriarchal society, women are not expected to speak out and engage in debates in public. Other major factors of vulnerability are related to gender, caste, ethnicity, language abilities or religion. Against this background, the project and sub-projects will implement a number of measures, as described below, to ensure full and effective participation of vulnerable groups in project related consultations.

- **Women focused groups:** The project and sub-project will facilitate formation of a focus group for women, which will be led by a female facilitator, and will provide a platform to discuss any issues and concerns that the women may have regarding the Project development. This will particularly ensure that female farmers/entrepreneurs have the opportunities to participate in and benefit from the project. The E&S team will hire a woman as the facilitator and will keep record of issue of discussions in the meeting of such group. The project and sub-project teams will put maximum efforts to address the genuine concerns of the women group.
- **FGDs with IPs:** Project and sub-project will give priority to have effective and meaningful consultations with the identified IPs groups. Depending on the risks and impacts to IPs, the REED project will also deploy FPIC and other mechanisms.
- **Household visits:** Project and sub-project will give priority to individual household visits, particularly those that belongs to Dalit or those that are in absolute poverty, female headed households, people with disability, the elderly who have mobility difficulties, and households of minority religious groups to ensure they are aware of Project developments. During the visits, the targeted households can also raise questions and concerns freely without intimidation, discomfort or ridicule.
- **School visits:** Project and sub-projects will conduct school visits to disseminate Project information and consult with students and teachers about potential impacts and benefits. Such initiatives will also be used as an opportunity to share project-related information to schoolteachers and students, which the project believes is an effective way to reach out the broader community, as teachers are important influencers in the community and students often bring information collected from school to share with their families.

- Consultations in local language: Most IPs in the Project affected areas speak Nepali, but some individuals may experience language issues especially. So, the E&S field team, if necessary, will hold small group meetings in local IPs language to explain printed disclosure materials for people who are not literate or problem in reading/understanding Nepali. They will also assist IPs in how to provide comments, feedback and raise grievances.
- Consultations in appropriate manner: While reaching out to different groups particularly vulnerable groups such as women, elderly and disabled, the project and sub-project teams will make sure time and location of consultation are appropriate to their needs. In addition, the teams will make sure that the all the IP groups are adequately informed about the consultations at least one week prior to the schedules date.

4.6 Review of Comments and Report Back System

An effective mechanism to report back to stakeholder on their feedback, comments and grievance is one of the prerequisites to successful stakeholder engagement procedures. The project and sub-projects plan to deploy trained E&S team and E&S focal person to record feedbacks and comments from the stakeholders. They will also maintain a stakeholder engagement/feedback and grievance register that will be forwarded to the E&S Project team in Kathmandu. Urgent issues and grievances that need immediate attention will be communicated to the Social Specialist to take it up the chain of command as soon as practically possible. In addition, a number of comment boxes will be established in different locations and feedback form will be provided to stakeholders to provide input. Stakeholders can also make comments and suggestions through the project Facebook page, project email, and information telephone line. Stakeholder feedback will be collected, and the Social Team will analyze engagement data to identify stakeholder key issues, trends, suggestions and aspirations. During the Planning and Pre-Construction phases, a stakeholder engagement report will be produced at each consultation milestone and the report will include: (i) Number of various stakeholder consultations; (ii) Methods of engagement; (iii) Key issues raised during the consultations; (iv) Grievances and details of how they have been resolved; (v) During the Construction phase, the report will be produced monthly. The report will be submitted to REED Project Director and relevant managers in order to help them address the issues that have come up in different management plans, such as the traffic management plan, health and safety plan, or Construction Contractor's various plans. Mitigation measures will be addressed systematically through the relevant management plans. The FAQs will be revised and updated regularly to reflect Project changes and key issues that have come to light as a result of information disclosure and consultation activities.

Chapter 5: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT MANAGEMENT SYSTEM

Implementation of this SEP will be supported by a Stakeholder Engagement Management System. The system is a tool that can be used to track stakeholder activities and grievances and report on them. The system will help track the following information:

- The stakeholder – i.e. an organisation or individual;
- A contact person's name and position or title;
- Contact details (address, telephone, email, website);
- Stakeholder group(s);
- Stakeholder analysis results including potential impacts by the Project, level of stakeholder importance, influence, key interests etc;
- Details of engagement activities – i.e. date, location, attendees and key issues raised – and responses/actions agreed; and
- Grievances and how the Project has responded to them including responses, corrective actions, responsibilities, final decision, communication on proposed resolution and agreement, due dates, closed dates, etc.

A template to track stakeholder engagement activities is provided under Appendix D. The outputs from the stakeholder mapping process (Chapter 4) will be captured in the stakeholder database as well as the outputs from the engagement activities described above. This will help to ensure that issues and concerns are captured and can be fed into decision-making process and that commitments tracked over time ensuring that they are met.

Chapter 6: GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

This section details the grievance mechanism that will be used to identify, track, and manage grievances raised by PAPs and other project stakeholders. The REED project will scale the grievance mechanism to risks and adverse impacts of the project and is committed to address concerns promptly, and to use transparent process that is culturally appropriate and readily accessible to all segments of the affected communities. The project will also make sure that grievance redressal services will be provided at no cost to communities and without retribution, and that the grievance mechanism will not impede access to judicial and administrative remedies.

6.1 Objectives

The main objectives of the grievance mechanism to be implemented by the REED project are as follows:

- Implement grievance management procedures that are easy to comprehend, culturally appropriate, and readily available and accessible to all PAPs;
- address grievances promptly and effectively, in a transparent manner resulting in the outcomes that are seen as fair, effective and lasting;
- build trust as an integral component of the project community relations activities;
- provide effective monitoring and reporting of grievances through a by using modern means of communication and information technology; and,
- enable systematic identification of emerging issues, facilitating correcting actions and pre-emptive engagement.

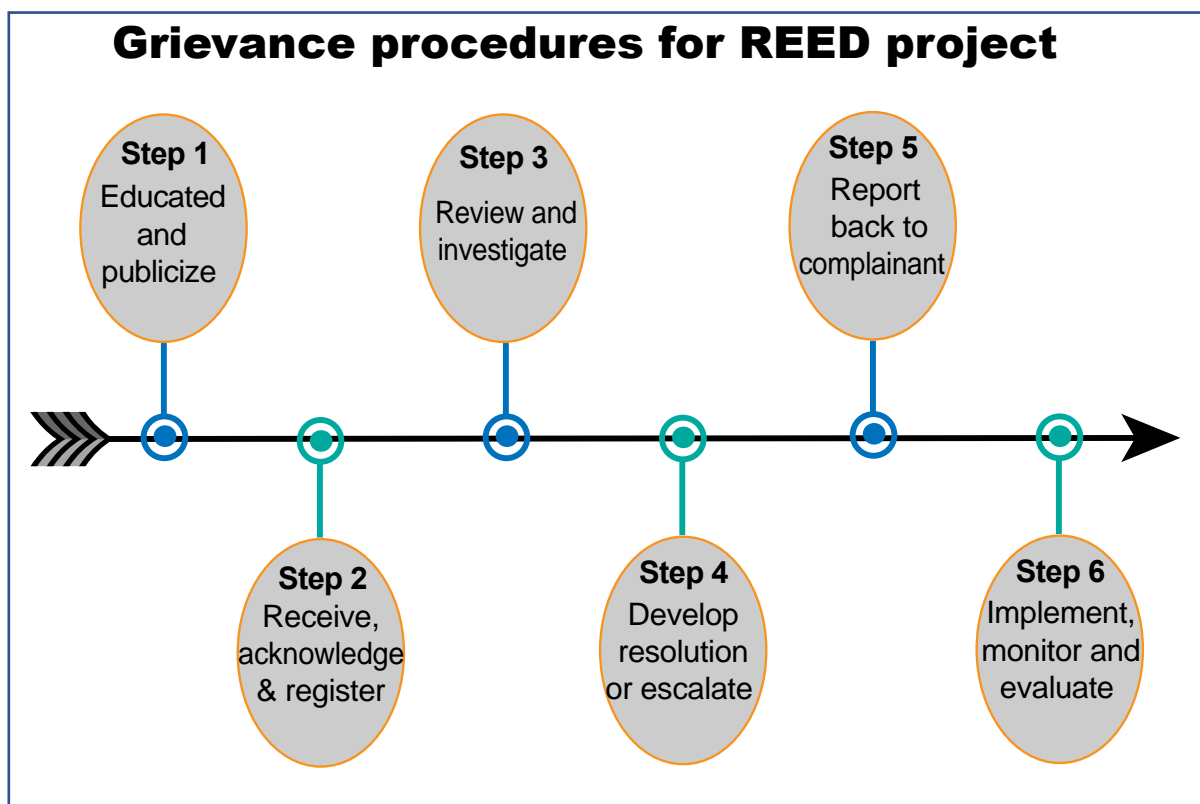
6.2 Grievance procedure

The REED project team will develop a written grievance procedure in consultation with project impacted communities and other parties. It will incorporate the following steps.

- 1. Publicize and educate stakeholders:** The project acknowledges the fact that all stakeholders, including the PAPs need to be educated about the availability of the GRM system so as to enable them to use the system whenever they need it. So, the project, during community engagement processes, will inform and educate the local stakeholders about the system, including various means available to lodge grievance. The project will also make sure the availability of grievance forms in all subproject office and E&S focal person will be trained to properly handle grievances coming from the stakeholders.
- 2. Receive, register and acknowledge the grievance:** The GRM system registers any grievances that come through verbally, filling up the GRM form, by phone, project website or by sending an email. All the registered grievance will have a unique registration number and the number be shared with the complainant so as to make it

easy to track of the status and developments related to the grievance. Grievances can be registered anonymously. A group can also register a grievance. Local project staff and E&S focal person will be trained to handle subproject related grievance methodically.

Figure 6.1: Grievance Procedures for REED Project



- 3. Review and investigate the grievance:** The project will put in place a functioning procedure for dealing with different types of grievances that includes categorization of registered grievances, response methods depending upon the levels of grievance along with response time.
- 4. Develop resolution or escalate the grievance:** The project will develop escalation routes for registered grievance that would enable to escalate to higher level if the complainant remains unsatisfied with the earlier outcome of earlier level.
- 5. Report back on the grievance:** The project will put in place a functioning procedure that will report back to the complainant about the status or outcome of their grievance within an agreed time frame.
- 6. Implement, monitor and evaluate:** Once a resolution is agreed, the project will put an effective system to take the agreed action into implementation. The E&S focal person will be made responsible for monitoring and reporting the implementation of grievance resolution.

6.3 Use of the Dispute Resolution Systems of the Local Levels

The project will explore the possibilities of using the existing regulatory system related to dispute settlement. Article 117 of the Constitution of Nepal, promulgated in 2015, prescribes a three-member Judicial Committee at the local level, coordinated by Vice-Chairperson in the case of a Rural Municipality and by Deputy Mayor in the case of a Municipality, in order to settle disputes under their respective jurisdictions in accordance with law. The judicial committee consists two members elected by the members of the Rural Municipality or the Municipal Assembly from amongst themselves, says the constitution. Similarly, the Local Government Operation Act (LGOA) 2017 empowers local judicial committees of Municipalities to deal with community-based disputes, though most of the disputes mandated by the Act to either resolve or mediate are more related to local issues mostly occur among the households within the communities. Clause 47 of the act authorizes the committee to mediate and find an agreeable solution to disputing parties on a wide range of issues at the local level. The Act has mandated the local level to resolve disputes related to 13 areas. Similarly, the Act has authorized the local level to mediate in the disputes of 11 areas. The GRM system of the REED project has the provision of consulting and inviting representatives of the local rural municipalities or municipalities during the grievance redressal process. This specific provision will link the existing dispute resolution system with the three-tier GRM system of the project.

6.4 Complaint Resolution System

The main purpose of this system is to ensure there is a robust and transparent process available for addressing complaints. This system comprises a sequential process of four levels of resolution and next level of resolution is triggered if the complainant or a group of complainants remains unsatisfied with the resolution made by the lower level. It is expected that all the grievances related to the project will come to the GRM system developed by the project for local communities. The REED project, however, recognises and accepts the right of the complainants to go directly to Level 4 to lodge complaints, bypassing the project GRM system.

Box 1: REED Grievance Resolution System designed for the REED project

Level 1: This is initial stage for all the grievances that come into the REED GRM system. Once the grievance is registered at the subproject level, it would automatically come into the level 1 of the GRM system. At this level, the complaint will be assessed by E&S focal person and other team members to find a resolution of the complaint. The team may also consult with the complainant to further understand the nature of the grievance and find an amicable a resolution. Once the grievance is solved, the E&S team of the project will officially report back to the complainant and will take immediate corrective actions.

Level 2: This level 2 is for complainants, who decline to accept the resolution made by level 1 GRM system or if the level 1 of the GRM system remains unable to provide any resolution

to the grievance within 15 working days after the date of registration. Once the complainant officially appeals to the project about his/her refusal to the proposed resolution, the system will automatically escalate the grievance to level 2, where the grievance will be handled by Economic Corridor Office (ECO) led by head of the ECO. The ECO can invite the complainant to further understand the nature of the grievance and find an amicable a resolution. If the grievance is solved at this level, the E&S team of the project will officially report back to the complainant and will take immediate corrective actions.

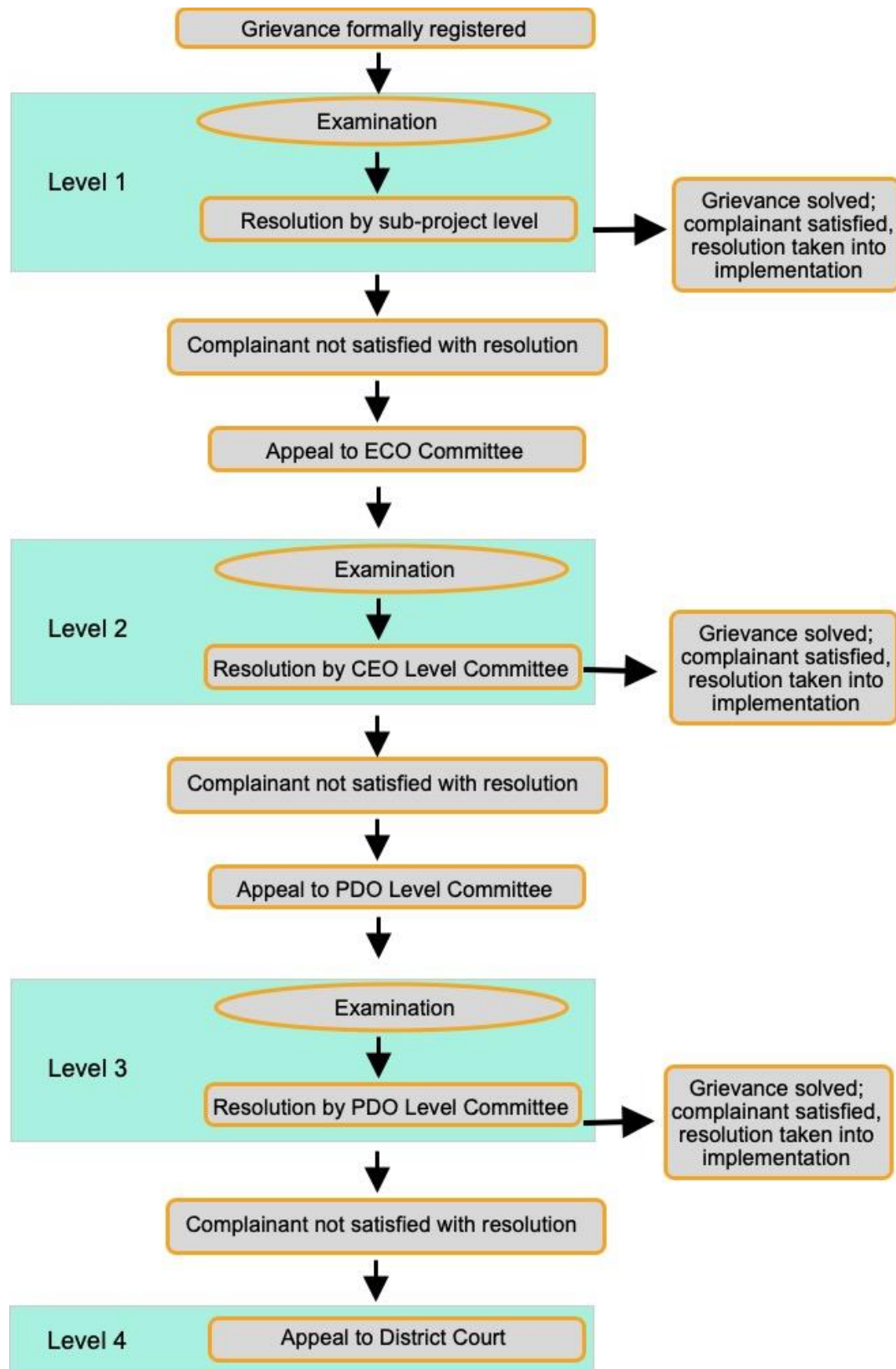
Level 3: If the complainants are not satisfied with the resolution proposed by the Level 2, they can appeal to the Safeguard Unit at the Project Director's Office (PDO), which will be headed Project Director. The complainants can be invited for consultations.

In order to ensure a fully functioning GRM system, the sub-project level of the REED project, as per the provision of setting up a multitier grievance redress mechanism system in the ESMF, will set up GRM system at planning stage. The three-tier GRM system has been envisaged because of the fact that each ECO which will be established at the provincial level will have multiple subprojects scattered within the province. The entire GRM system of the will closely works the grievance unit established at the MoALD. So, it expected that the establishment of GRM system at the subproject level will provide an accessible way to lodge complaints on sub-project level activities, if they have any and will consists of as:

- **Subproject Level Grievance Committee (SLGC):** The committee (Level 1) will be formed at the sub-project level and will consists of E&S focal person and technical staff. The committee will be led by the head of the sub-project.
- **ECO level Grievance Committee:** The committee (Level 2) will be led by the chief of the ECO and will consists of Social and Environment Specialists and head of the concerned sub-project. The committee can discuss with the complainant and can invite representatives of construction contractor, Ward/Municipality officials, particularly the Vice-Chairperson of the Rural Municipality or Deputy Mayor of the Municipality, and community representatives (especially women and youth) for broader consultations.
- **PDO level Grievance Committee:** The committee (Level 3) will be headed by Project Director and the it will function in a close coordination with the grievance unit established at the MoALD. Chief of the ECO, unit head and members of Safeguard Unit of the PDO, focal person of GRM unit of the ministry and representatives of construction Contractor will be the members of the committee. In addition to the complainant, the the committee can invite or consult with the concerned representatives of Municipality, District Coordination Committee, and District Administration Office.

The Grievance Resolution System is illustrated in **Figure 6.2** below.

Figure 6.2: Grievance Resolution System

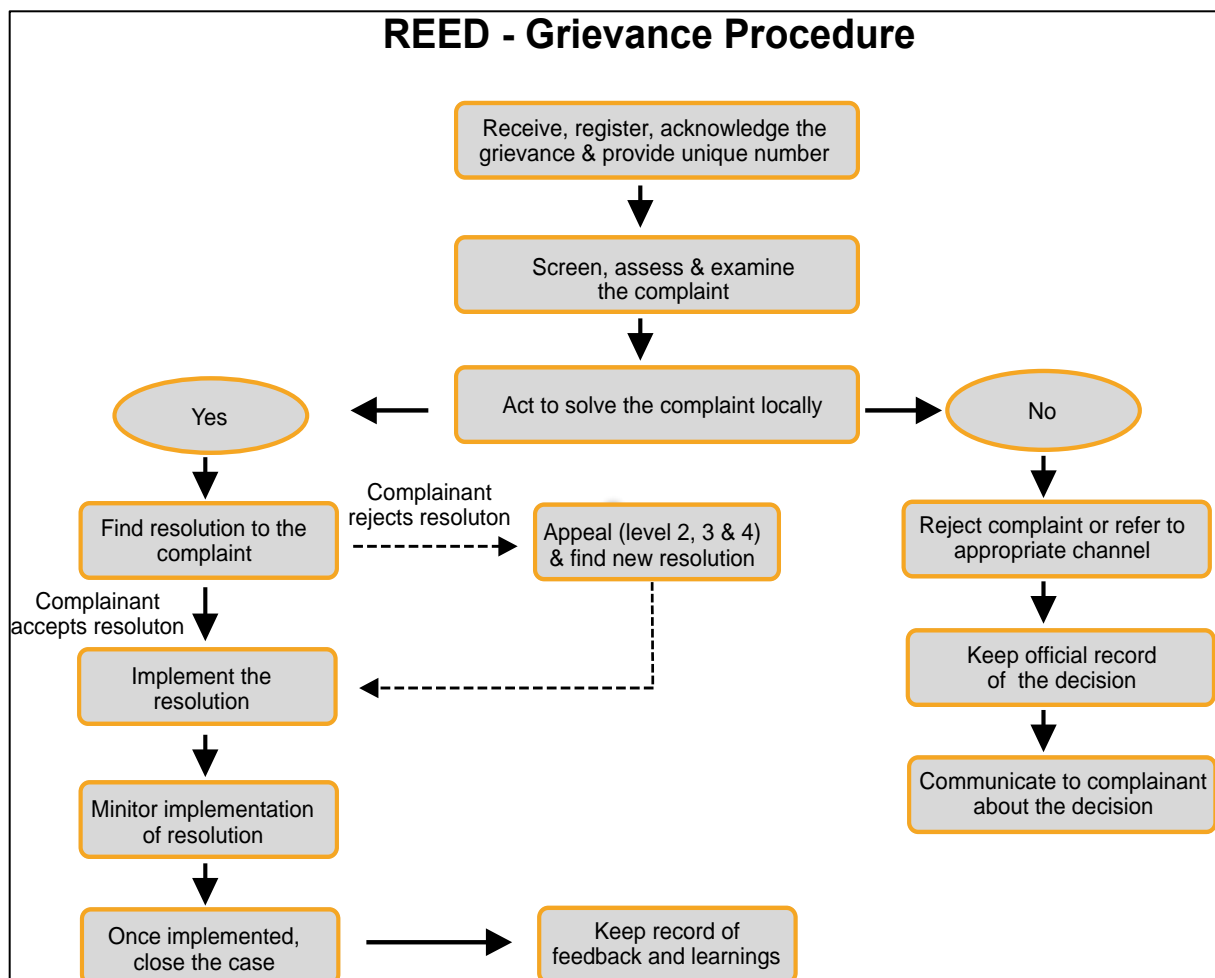


6.5 The Grievance Procedure

The REED project and sub-projects will manage all the grievances in accordance with the Grievance Procedure illustrated in the **Figure 6.2**. All grievances will be handled in a discreet and objective manner. The E&S person will take into consideration the sensitive nature of the needs and concerns of the affected communities and be responsive to the grievances made by the PAPs, especially during the peak of the construction period.

All grievances and how they have been managed will be recorded in the Stakeholder Engagement Management System including complaint details, a summary of the grievance, the resolution or agreement on proposed actions (between the Project and the complainant), and monitoring actions taken in response to the grievance.

Figure 6.3: REED Grievance Procedure



The key steps of the procedure are as follows:

1. Receive, register and acknowledge the grievance

The REED project and sub-projects will ensure availability of a variety of methods for stakeholders to lodge grievances. This will include:

- PAPs and other stakeholders can lodge grievance verbally with the E&S focal person, who is stationed in the sub-project field office and E&S focal person will assist in filling out the complaint form for those who have difficulty reading or writing or unfamiliar with the grievance process;
- PAPs and other stakeholders can lodge a written grievance by filling up a complaint form (**Appendix E**), which will be made available in the sub-project office. The E&S focal person will also provide the form to the complainants, if required. In addition, the form form will also be made available at Ward Offices of the Local Government and other disclosure venues identified in the ESMF consultations;
- The complainants can also handover the filled-up grievance forms to the E&S focal person or drop them in the Comment Box (complaint boxes) available at the Project field/site office, Ward Offices and public places, or send them to the project office through postal services.

The E&S focal person, who received either through directly from the complainant or through complaint box, email, postal services will register the grievance in their Grievance Log and the Social Safeguard Specialist will register it in Stakeholder Engagement Management System weekly. The E&S focal person will assign a unique grievance number to each grievance for easy tracking.

Grievances related to highly sensitive cases or as per the wise of the complainant will be filed anonymously, which is essential for capturing any grievances that may arise in relation to GBV (gender-based violence) and SEA (sexual exploitation and abuse).

The E&S focal person will provide the complainant with a verbal acknowledgement of the receipt of the complaint within 3 working days through phone call, text message, or through a meeting with the complainant and a written acknowledgement, such as email or letter, within 7 days. The acknowledgement will include the grievance number so the complainant can use as reference to track the status of their complaint. If the grievance is not well understood or if additional information is required, E&S focal person will contact the complainant during this step.

2. Grievance is screened and assessed within 10 days of receipt. The significance of the grievance will then be assessed.

- If the grievance is related to the project development and can be resolved locally then it will proceed to the next step.
- If the complaint is not related to the project or not triggered by the project, the grievance will be rejected and will properly communicated with the complainant about the decision along with explanation. If appropriate, the project can refer to or asked the complainant to contact concerned agencies.

3. Inform and assign responsibility. Apart from the general questions and curiosities from local communities and municipalities officials about the project, it is expected that the complaints related to the project activities will be nominal during the ESMF stage, as the PAPs and other stakeholder remain unaware of potential impacts of the projects. That said, a system will be put in place for the managing the grievance that might come during the preparation of sub-project specific Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and SEP stage. The ESMP preparation team deal with the grievances at this stage. Following the completion of E&S studies, the ECO will take over the role from the ESMP preparation team.

The Social Specialist will notify all grievances of level 3 to Project Director. Each sub-project will hire an E&S focal person, who will facilitate the grievance redressal procedures and ensure the smooth functioning of PICs.

4. A resolution is developed in consultation with the complainant as soon as possible but no later than 15 days after screening and assessing the grievance at the SLGC. During the examination of the grievance, the SLGC may seek inputs from relevant officials from municipalities or rural municipality officials as well as Project personnel and Construction Contractors, if required. The resolution is communicated to the complainant through proper channel and the SLGC through the E&S focal person will ask complainant for written acceptance of the resolution. The SLGC will manage to secure a written acceptance of the resolution from a person authorized by the complainant to act on his/her behalf if the complainant has difficult reading/writing.

5. If the complainant rejects the proposed resolution, the SLGC will refer the grievance to the ECO level Grievance Committee, which is a level 2 of the Grievance Resolution System and led by sub-project chief. The committee will facilitate to reach to an agreeable resolution and produce a resolution within 15 working days. In this process, the committee might further examine the grievance and consult with complainant, stakeholders and experts before reaching to conclusion. If the complainant does not accept solution proposed by the committee, he or she can appeal to the PDO level Grievance Committee, which is the level 3 of the Grievance Resolution System. The PDO level Grievance Committee, which will be led by the project director or any person designated by project director for the task, will provide its resolution within 20 working days after the grievance is officially referred to the level 3. If the complainant remains unsatisfied with the resolution of level 3, as the last resort, he/she can appeal to District Court (Level 4).

6. Once the resolution is accepted by the complainant, it is taken into implementation. For relatively simple and short-term actions, the resolution will be taken into implementation within 30 days of the official acceptance of resolution by the complainant. For specific resolutions that take longer time, for example local constructions, to address or need additional corrective actions, the E&S lead of the sub-project and E&S focal person will

monitor the implementation of the resolution and will inform the complainants about the progress on a regular basis until the resolution is fully implemented.

- 7. The project and sub-project will make sure that the complainant will be notified once the resolution is implemented.** The responsible E&S lead of the sub-project and E&S focal person will inform the complainant that the corrective actions have been implemented and confirm that the complainant is satisfied with the resolution.
- 8. Once the complainant is satisfied with the outcome of the resolution, the project and sub-project will properly document the grievance resolution process** and close the grievance with sign-off from the sub-project E&S Lead with the Project Director approval to close out for any grievance of level 3 or above. A grievance close-out form will be used (Appendix D).

All correspondence related to the grievance must be documented in the Stakeholder Engagement Management System for monitoring, reporting and learnings. This will help drive continual improvement.

Chapter 7: MONITORING AND REPORTING

7.1 Monitoring of Stakeholder Engagement Activities

There are two methods through which the stakeholder engagement process will be monitored:

1. Review of engagement activities in the field:

- Following each and every stakeholder engagement activity, the sub-project E&S lead and E&S focal person will assess the usefulness and effectiveness of the meetings by using a feedback evaluation form and interviewing the participants. The feedback and comments made by the participants will be carefully examined and appropriate reforms will be made in future engagement activities to increase their effectiveness.
- After the completion of each stakeholder engagement phase, the sub-project E&S lead will apprise the Social Specialist of the project about the activities and outcomes of the stakeholder engagement. The sub-project E&S team will document such engagement activities and will highlight lesson learnings from each activity.

2. Each ECO will prepare a half-yearly SEP Implementation Report and submit it to the PDO.

Once approved by the project director, the report will be disseminated to the stakeholders through periodic consultations and project website. In addition, special monitoring of a specific or a set of activities can be undertaken at particularly time when the Project has potential to face a high social risk.

7.2 Monitoring of Stakeholder Engagement Activities

Overall performance will be reviewed on an ongoing basis to determine the effectiveness of the SEP, including the methods of engagement being used, their outcomes and the accuracy of the mapping results.

The project and sub-project will undertake a formal monitoring of the implementation of the SEP as per the performance indicators set out in **Table 7.1** to determine the extent to which the objectives of the SEP have been achieved. For the indicators related to participation and grievances filing, all the data and information will be disaggregated according to gender and ethnicity. Information from the Stakeholder Engagement Management System and formal/informal feedback from stakeholders will be used to assess the performance indicators. The monitoring results will be used to update the SEP and will be reported internally as well as to key external stakeholders, as requested.

The annual review, which will be done internally, and by a third party if required, will start after the agreement on the ESCP. The CEO social specialist will the first quick internal monitoring in six months after the project implementation date to check if the different systems employed for the SEP are working and will submit a report to PDO.

The annual review will also provide a periodic opportunity to review the stakeholder mapping results to ensure that the mapping results are still accurate. It will also provide an opportunity for the project and sub-projects to make required corrections if deviations are found the initial mapping.

The monitoring and evaluation activities and criteria will be reassessed when the complete ESMF is available.

Table 7.1: Performance Indicators

Objectives	Performance Indicators
PAPs and stakeholders are provided information about the sub-project in a timely and culturally appropriate manner	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Means of informing the PAPs and stakeholders about the meeting • Were the participations given advance notice about the meeting • Were the participations aware in advance about meeting agenda, • Number of consultation meetings within a specific time period, • Means of dissemination and number of materials disseminated, • Comments received on disclosure materials, positive or negative • Locations of information disclosure and nature of participation
Stakeholders have an opportunity to share their views and concerns about the Project's development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Type of engagement opportunities given to participants in the meeting • Nature of participation in terms of gender and indigenous people • Quality of recording of comments made by the participants • Attendance rates • Numbers of grievances related to the sub-project activities
Informed participation by Vulnerable Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and type of engagement opportunities provided to Vulnerable Groups • Types of feedback/comments from vulnerable groups • Attendance rates • Representation of all sub-groups • Number and type of grievances from vulnerable groups
Positive working relationships are built and maintained over time	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Number and type of grievances lodged by stakeholders • Number of satisfactorily closed out grievances • Percentage of stakeholders taking part in engagement efforts • Community attitudes and perceptions
Engagement continues to be transparent, inclusive and appropriate throughout the Project lifecycle	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adherence to the schedule of stakeholder engagement activities • Representation of Vulnerable Groups in engagement activities • Number and type of grievances lodged by community members • Number of satisfactorily closed out grievances

7.3 Reporting

Effective implementation of community engagement is vital for building trust and respect with stakeholders. Letting affected people and interested parties know what has happened with the feedback provided during consultation, the importance of their contribution to the

project, and what the next step will be, is not only a good practice, but also a common courtesy.

Reporting back is crucial in convincing the stakeholders that the project is serious about the complaints lodged by local community and the GRM system, put in place by the project, indeed works. In addition, double checking information, testing the stakeholder's reaction to the proposed mitigation measures, and obtaining further feedback to refine the measures before implementation, getting buy-in from key stakeholders for implementation plans are other major advantages of reporting back system.

The process of reporting back to the stakeholders will be conducted in the following ways:

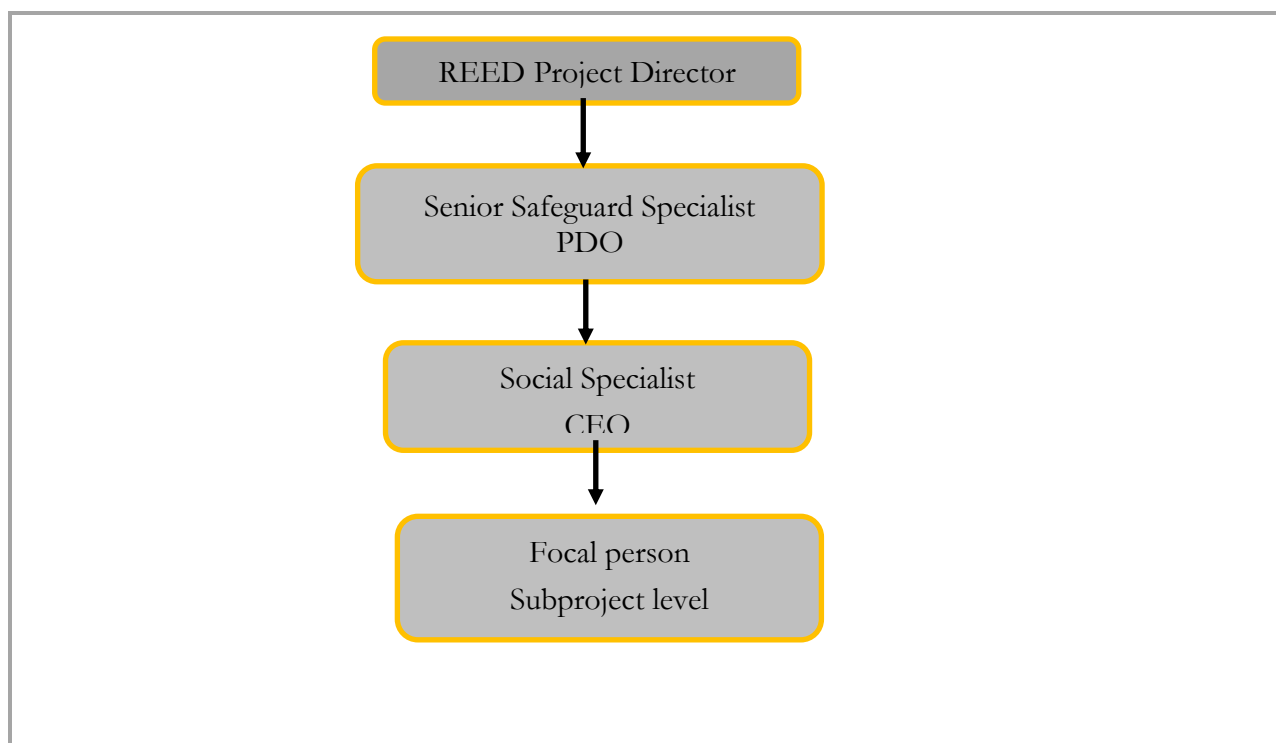
- Frequently updated FAQs to address new concerns that have come to light through stakeholder feedback during planning, pre-construction, construction and operations. The updated FAQs is one of the key disclosure materials for the Project throughout the Project lifecycle.
- Issues and Response Reports (“You Ask We Answer”) to be disclosed with the Draft ESMF. The report will provide summary stakeholder engagement activities undertaken to date, including a description of the stakeholders consulted, a summary of the feedback received and a brief explanation of how the feedback was taken into account or the reasons why it was not.
- Updated Issues and Response Report to be disclosed with the final ESMF incorporating any feedback received during the Draft ESMF consultation phase and how the feedback has been considered in the Project designs and decisions.
- Construction Issues and Response Report to be disclosed which incorporate any new issues that have come to light and concerns and queries raised by the Project stakeholders, especially the Project-Affected Parties during construction, and how the feedback has been considered in the Construction designs and decisions.

Chapter 8: ROLES, RESPONSIBILITIES AND RESOURCES

8.1 Planning Phase

The organisation chart that depicts the roles and responsibilities for implementation of the SEP at the Planning Phase is provided in **Figure 8.1**.

Figure 8.1: Organizational Structure During the Planning Phase



MoALD has the overall responsibility for oversight of development and execution of the SEP. The roles and responsibilities of the planning phase stakeholder engagement team are summarised in **Table 8.1**

Table 8.1: Roles and Responsibilities for Planning Phase

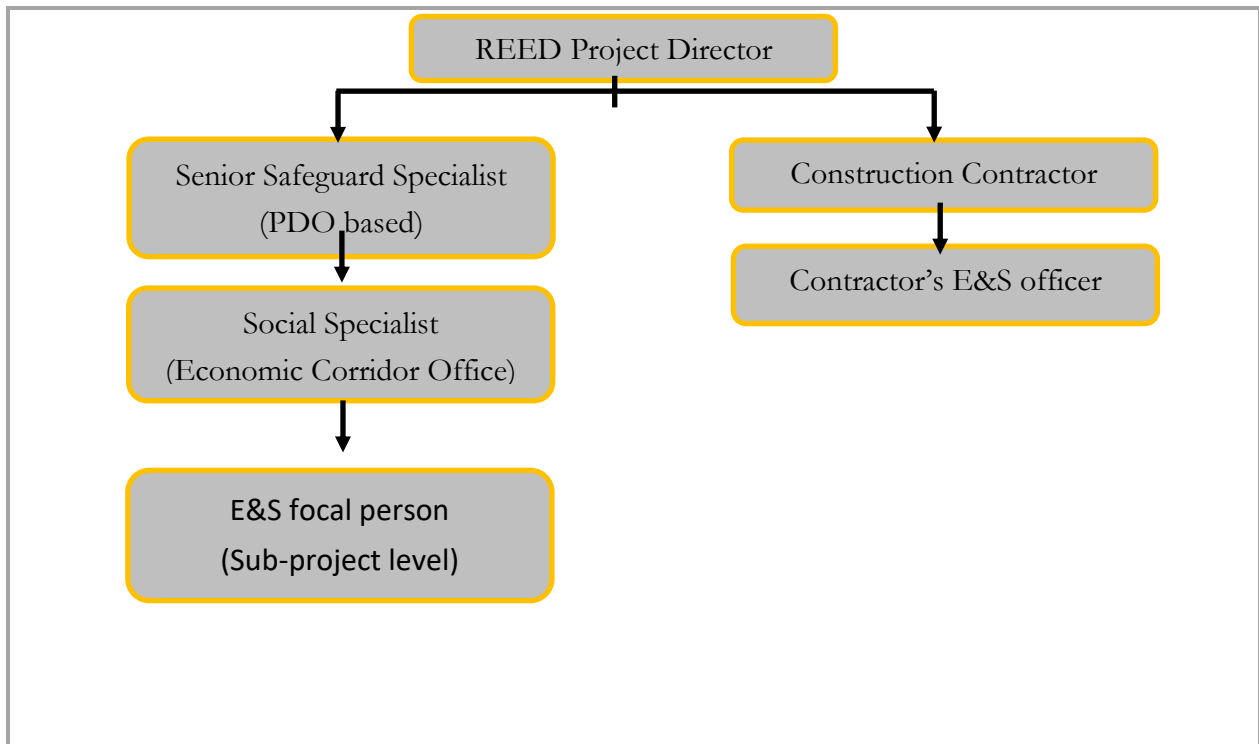
Planning Phase Team Member	Responsibilities
REED Project Director (MoALD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has the overall responsibility for oversight of development and execution of the SEP Responsible for approving the SEP, including the annual budget required for implementation.
Senior Safeguard Specialist (PDO based)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Manage interactions with key national-level stakeholders in Kathmandu such as media and critical NGOs, and policymakers, among others. Provide resolutions of all grievances related to the Project according to the Grievance Mechanism Prepare a six-monthly SEP Implementation Report of the REED project and submit it to the Project Director

<p>Social Specialist (ECO based)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lead in the implementation and monitoring of the SEP • Interface between MoALD and the Project stakeholders • Lead to organize stakeholder engagement activities outlined in the SEP • Prepare a six-monthly SEP implementation report of the economic corridor and submit to PDO • Coordinate the resolution of grievances with Communication Officer/Grievance Manager • Monitoring and reporting on the SEP, including updates, as required, to the stakeholder mapping results • Execute and complete E&S disclosures • Adjust the SEP to accommodate any changes. • Undertaking at least one visit to the affected communities a month the Directly and Indirectly Affected Population • Being the point of contact for any grievances for the PAPs • Coordinate the E&S focal person activities • Help organise community level meetings for MoALD, WB • Maintain proper documentation of stakeholder engagement activities and results, as well as grievances in the Stakeholder Engagement Management System.
<p>E&S focal person, Sub-project based</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordinate with ward chairperson and concerned officials of municipality • Receive and acknowledge all sort of project-related grievances and maintain a proper log of the grievance • Implement sub-project Public Information Centers in the project area • Hold FGDs in local IPs language to explain printed disclosure materials for people who are not literate or problem in reading/understanding Nepali • Maintaining the Project Information Centre • Maintain a log of stakeholder meetings • Communicate urgent issues and grievances to the E&S lead in a timely manner.

8.2 Implementation and Operation Phases

At the beginning of pre-construction phase, the Project will appoint a Social Specialist who will take over the responsibility from Communication and Stakeholder Lead and oversight of the implementation of the SEP on behalf of the MoALD. This organisational structure (**Figure 8.2**). will be reviewed periodically to ensure effectiveness of SEP implementation.

Figure 8.2: Organizational Structure for Implementation and Operation Phases



The roles and responsibilities of the stakeholder consultation team during the future phases of the project are presented in **Table 8.3**.

Table 8.2: Roles and Responsibilities for Implementation and Operation

Future Phases Stakeholder Engagement Team Member	Responsibilities
REED Project Director (MoALD)	Responsible for approving the SEP, including the annual budget required for implementation.
Senior Safeguard Specialist (PDO based)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Responsible for the overall implementation of the SEP and to ensure that grievances are resolved in a timely manner Coordinate the engagement activities between the SEP and various frameworks/plans such as IPPF and RPF, including adjusting the SEP to accommodate any changes. Accommodate the grievance mechanism likely to be included in the Indigenous People’s Planning Framework.
Social Specialist (ECO based)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support the Senior Safeguard Specialist in the implementation of the SEP Coordinating the E&S focal person s activities on the ground, including regular training and briefings Hold weekly meetings with E&S focal person to examine the stakeholder engagement/feedback and grievance register records undertaken by the E&S focal person Provide a weekly summary of feedback and grievances to the Communications and Stakeholder Engagement Lead and Social Team Lead

E&S focal person (Subproject based)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement Project Information Mobile Libraries in the PAP area • Receive training once a month on general Project information, engagement skills and techniques, various specialist topics centred on Project key risks and how the Project team plans to manage them • Hold small group meetings in local IPs language to explain printed disclosure materials for people who are not literate or problem in reading/understanding Nepali • Receive stakeholder feedback and grievances, and each will maintain a log of meetings held by them • Communicate urgent issues and grievances to the team coordinator in a timely manner
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8.3 The Roles and Responsibility of Key different Stakeholders

The Roles and Responsibility of Key different Stakeholders are shown in the table below.

Table 8.3: The Roles and Responsibility of Key different Stakeholders

Key Agencies	Responsibilities
REED - MoALD	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning Budgeting and Implementation of the SEP throughout project lifecycle • Guiding stakeholder engagement activities for the success of project; • Management of grievances and its resolution as mention in ESMF • Coordination and monitored to the consultants and contractors on SEP activities; • Documentation of the environmental and social performance SEP implementation • Monitoring and Evaluation of the feedback of SEP
Construction Supervision Consultation CSC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Facilitate the SEP activities for the implementation • Supervision and monitoring of Contractor's activities during construction phase.; • Coordination and Management of engagement meetings of stakeholders during the construction phase • Facilitate to lodge overall project level grievances.
Contractors	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implementation of given activities as per stakeholder engagement plan • inform and share the project any issues related to their engagement with stakeholders; • Updates the activities of SEP in every monthly Meeting

8.4 Estimated Budget

A tentative budget for implementing activities related to Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) over the period of five years (2020 - 2024) that covers the planning and preparation and project implementation phases is provided in the table given below. MoALD – REED project will review this plan every six months to determine if any changes to stakeholder classification or engagement are required. If required, the plan will be updated, and a new

revised SEP will be prepared and disseminated. The budget items and budget will also be revised accordingly.

Table 8.4 REED Stakeholder Engagement Plan Budget (2020 - 2024)

Item	Quantity	Unit Cost (US\$)	Months	Total Cost (US\$)	Remarks
Periodic stakeholder consultations	20	500	-	10,000	On average once a quarter for 5 years
Travel expense	60	1,500		90,000	On average once a month for 5 years
Logistic expense	-	-	-	10,000	Lump-sum (around 2,000 US\$ per year for five years)
Exposure visits	5	3,000	-	15,000	Once a year for 5 years
Training and orientations for staff - Communications	5	3,000	-	15,000	Once a year for 5 years
Training and orientations for staff GRM and Grievance committee members	5	2,000	-	10,000	Once a year for 5 years
Stakeholder Engagement Management System (Operations, collecting and processing grievance, and maintaining database)	-	-	-	15,000	The ECO and PDO will be responsible for this task. Lump-sum (around 3,000 US\$ per year for five years)
Project Information and GRM Centres (Establishment and operations)	-	-	-	10,000	One for each four sub-projects
Communication and GRM Materials (FAQs)	-	-	-	10,000	Lump-sum (around 2,000 US\$ per year for five years)
Project website (Development and operations)	-	-	-	5,000	Lump-sum (around 2,000 US\$ per year for five years)
Monitoring and Evaluation, including half-yearly SEP implementation report	10	1,000		10,000	Twice yearly for five years
Total				200,000	

Appendix A: Planned Stakeholder Engagement Activities

Consultation and Information Disclosure during Planning Phase

Given the importance of agricultural sector in the development in Nepal, stakeholder engagement for the REED project needs to start early, during the planning process to obtain input and discuss potential concerns from Project stakeholders, to support a comprehensive impact assessment and identification of potential mitigation measures. Early engagement will lead to a greater likelihood of Project acceptance within the community. Engagement will need to continue throughout the Project lifecycle.

The ESMF process is likely to be the most intense period of planned public participation for the Project to establish a strong foundation for a long-lasting and trusting relationship between MoALD and stakeholders, in particularly the PAPs and surrounding communities, and to identify key issues and have an effect on the project decisions to which they relate.

The ESMF consultation aims to achieve the following goals:

- Disclose relevant Project information to help affected communities and other stakeholders understand the risks, impacts, and opportunities for the Project in a timely, understandable, accessible and appropriate manner and format;
- Provide the affected communities and stakeholders with opportunities to express their views on Project risks, impacts, and mitigation measures;
- To solicit stakeholders' ideas, opinions, and recommendations on various alternatives; and
- 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 mitigation measures as well as development benefits and opportunities.

Stakeholder Consultation

The aim of the stakeholder consultations is to help identify more accurately the full range of potential impacts of the Project. The results of the completed stakeholder consultations will be incorporated into the Draft SEP. **Appendix C** provides information on the stakeholder consultations that has been undertaken.

During consultation with PAPs, the Project team PAPs, both men and women will participate in the stakeholder consultations. To ensure the objective of the SEP is met and basic principles of good stakeholder engagement are followed, the gender imbalance will be addressed and managed in the ESA consultation and throughout all Project phases. See the following sections for measures to increase women participation in the Project consultation and disclosure.

Incorporating Stakeholder Feedback and Reporting Back

Stakeholder questions, issues, suggestions and feedback during the stakeholder consultations will help the Project team scope the key risks and issues for the Project. The key stakeholder issues also will inform the content of the ESA consultation materials such as the Project Information Document (PID), the Frequently Asked Questions (FAQs) in **Appendix D**. These materials will be disclosed widely following the disclosure channels identified in **Section 4.2** as a way for Project to report back to stakeholders how the Project has incorporated their feedback into Project design and decision-making.

Consultation on Draft SEP

The Draft SEP be prepared by the MoALD and submitted to the World Bank for review.

A series of expert panel workshops will be held to present the findings of the draft SEP to the key stakeholders who directly or indirectly influence the Project development and seek their input.

At the district level, a meeting will be held with key stakeholders such as the District Coordination Committee Office, the District Administration Office, the District Agricultural Knowledge Centre, Other relevant District Offices, and local NGOs working in the area.

Similarly, at the provincial level, meetings will be conducted with key stakeholders such as:

- Kathmandu: Consultation meeting with the Members of Parliament from the Sub-Project District, MoALD, Members of Parliament's agricultural Committee and Kathmandu-based project "concerned group" members.
- Province Headquarter: Consultation meeting with the Chief Minister, Ministers of provincial governments and senior officials (e.g. the Provincial Planning Commission, Secretaries, etc.), provincial agricultural Committees. and Provincial community service organisations (CSOs) representing women, Indigenous Peoples, Dalits and other vulnerable groups

The comments and suggestions received from the participants at the district, provincial and central levels will be collected and incorporated in the final SEP.

Information Disclosure

The following information about the REED project will be disclosed to the stakeholders:

- PID: This document consists of a non-technical summary of the Project, development timeline and milestones, the ESMF process and activities, SEP procedures and management and opportunities for the stakeholders to participate in development of the Project, timeline and venues for engagement activities, contact details for questions and queries.
- REED Component FAQs which comprises of Project key risks and issues, and Project's plan to address them, as well as answers to key questions raised by the stakeholders during the stakeholder consultations. The FAQs will be revised and updated regularly to reflect Project development and key issues that have come to light.

- Grievance mechanism: Details on how to access the grievance mechanism will be provided. This will include information on how the grievance management process will work, including the timeframes for responses.

Please refer to **Appendix D** for the Draft PID and FAQs for the Project.

The Project related information documents will be translated into Nepali and will be brought to the PAPs by the E&S lead who is stationed in the local area.

The E&S lead will visit the communities in the PAPs twice a month and move around communities and social venues such as local markets and tea houses in the Project Areas of Influences whenever possible. E&S focal person stationed at sub-project site offices will undertake regular consultations with community people in these two locations.

In addition, the Project will make disclosure materials available to stakeholders via the communication channels outlined in **Table 4.2**.

Consultation strategy will be adopted and implemented as outlined in **Section 4.3**.

Consultation Activities

Consultation activities during this period will be undertaken following the methods identified in **Section 4.2**.

In addition to introducing Project information and alternatives, and obtaining stakeholder feedback, consultation at this stage will focus on key issues identified during the earlier consultations, such as environmental impacts, compensation, employment opportunities, community risks, and E&S mitigation measures as well as benefit sharing.

Stakeholder feedback will be documented, collated, and analyzed in the Stakeholder Engagement Management System as discussed.

Incorporating Stakeholder Feedback and Report Back

Refer to **Section 4.4** for details.

Consultation on the Draft E&S documents

The key objective of the consultation is to:

- Disclose the Draft ESMF, SEP and ESCP; and
- Consult on Project potential risks and impacts and proposed mitigation measures and benefit enhancers and respond to stakeholder comments and inputs. Feedback will be incorporated them into final project designs and ESCP.

Information Disclosure

The following information will be disclosed to the stakeholders in Nepalese:

- A non-technical summary of the ESMF, SEP and ESCP;
- A list of potential risks and impacts, proposed mitigation measures and benefit enhancers;
- Opportunities for comments and feedback, next steps, and contact details for questions and queries;
- Updated the REED project FAQs based on feedback received during previous consultation activities (Impact Assessment Consultation);
- An Issues and Response Report which provides summary stakeholder engagement activities undertaken to date, a summary of the feedback received and a brief explanation of how the feedback was taken into account or the reasons why it was not; and
- Full version of the Draft ESMF, ESCP, and SEP.

Information will be disclosed via the channels established at the ESMF Consultation stage (**Table 4.2**).

Consultation Activities

Consultation activities during this period will be undertaken following the methods identified in **Table 4.2**.

Incorporating Stakeholders and Report Back

Stakeholder feedback will be documented, collated, and analysed in the Stakeholder Engagement Management System as discussed in **Section 5**. Stakeholder comments and suggestions will be addressed and incorporated into the Final ESMF and management plans.

The Project team will report back to the stakeholders about how their feedback has influenced the Project outcomes via the Issues and Response Report described above.

Pre-construction Engagement

Pre-construction engagement is designed to seamlessly continue the engagement. The aim is to:

- Provide stakeholders with updated information about the Project and progress towards development;
- Disclose the final ESMF, SEP and ESCP as well as Contractors ESMPs and related plans such as Community Health and Safety Plan, Traffic Management Plan, Worker's Camp Management Plan, etc.;
- Provide information on construction management plans such as traffic management plan, health and safety plan

- REED project mitigation measures and benefit sharing activities as envisaged in the ESMF; and
- Provide an update on engagement activities that will occur during construction, including the frequency in which activities will be undertaken, and the key points of contact within the Project team.

Disclosure and Consultation

Consultation materials to be disseminated during this phase include, but are not limited to:

- Project brochure – consisting of Project updates, construction activities and timelines, engagement activities during construction, details of the Project Information Centre, Project Information Mobile Libraries, point of contact for questions or queries;
- A non-technical summary of the Final ESMF and ESCP;
- Updated REED project FAQs based on feedback received during the ESMF consultation;
- Updated Issues and Response Report based on feedback received during the Draft ESA consultation; and
- Full version of the Final ESMF, ESCP, SEP, sub-project specific ESMPs and related plans such as Community Health and Safety Plan, Traffic Management Plan, Worker’s Camp Management Plan, etc.

Information will be disclosed via the channels used during the ESA consultation period (**Table 4.2**).

Pre-construction engagement will be held at local, district, provincial and center levels and will include all stakeholders impacted or interested in the construction phase. The complete list of stakeholders is presented in **Table 3.1** and **Table 3.2**. Consultation with stakeholders will be via channels and methods identified during the initial SEP consultation phase (**Table 4.3**). Many of these channels and methods will be tested during the earlier stages of the Project to see if they meet the needs of stakeholders and modifications will be made to the SEP accordingly to ensure the effectiveness of the plan, particularly to ensure that vulnerable groups are able to engage in the process.

Incorporating Stakeholder Feedback and Report Back

Stakeholder feedback will be documented, collated, and analyzed in the Stakeholder Engagement Management System. Stakeholder comments and suggestions will be filtered to the Project team to incorporate into the various construction plans.

The Project team will report back to the stakeholders about how their feedback has influenced the Project outcomes via an Updated Issues and Response Report.

Project Information Centers

The offices of the subprojects will also serve as Project Information Centres (PICs) that will operate in full capacity during the pre-construction phase. See **Section 4.1.2** for details.

A Project website and Facebook page will be established at this stage as described in **Section 4.1.4**.

Engagement During Construction

Engagement during construction will focus on construction of relocation sites for resettlement and resettlement activities, only if required due to displacement that may occur from government-owned land, together with subsequent construction of the Project facilities and land clearing activities. The main objectives of the consultation process during the construction phase are to:

- Provide regular updates to stakeholders on construction activities, in particular activities that may cause disruptions (e.g. road disruption, noisy activities, etc.), changes to construction schedule, and changes in designs, as well as various plans to manage construction-related impacts;
- Undertake stakeholder engagement to ensure compliance with and management of the construction various plans;
- Identify new issues, concerns or needs of the Project affected communities related to construction and address them promptly;
- Provide resolution of community complaints in an expedited manner whenever possible;
- Assess the effectiveness of environmental and social mitigation measures by participatory monitoring, and social monitoring in communities and direct feedback; and
- Identify opportunities for the Project to make a sustainable contribution to local communities and the region.

Once the Project construction begins, while the Construction Contractors will relevant stakeholders on construction related activities directly, MoALD will remain the first point of contact with the affected communities on many issues during the construction period. MoALD will work closely with the Construction Contractors to ensure that communications are consistent, and that information is provided on hiring opportunities and practices, local workforce training, worker camps and codes of conducts, and upcoming construction activities.

MoALD and the REED project will remain in charge of community relations although it will require the Construction Contractors to have appropriate personnel to undertake parallel

consultation and disclosure activities, particularly in construction schedule updates, local job opportunities and emerging issues related to their scope of work.

Table B.1 describes the main activities for consultation anticipated during construction. More details are provided in **Table 4.1**.

Table B.1: Engagement during Construction

Engagement Activities	Details
Regular updates about the Project	Disclosure of Project information at Project Information Centre and district government offices Local radio notices and updates (monthly or quarterly) Provincial newspaper notices and updates (quarterly and as required) Regular revision of information on the Project website and Facebook page Periodic press conferences and interactions with media, including site visits
Monitor community concerns, attitudes and progress	Identify and manage issues via a range of community relation activities including Community meetings, focus group discussions and household visits (Vulnerable Groups), written correspondence
Monitor the effectiveness of the ESCP	Assess the effectiveness of the ESCP implementation through participatory monitoring and community perception surveys
Construction Contractor activities	Construction Contractors to consult and disclose on a range of activities during construction including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Construction activities and schedule • Additional mitigation measures/ updated ESCP • Community health and safety, workers camp code of conducts, environmental management, road access and traffic management • Hiring opportunities and practices and local worker training program
Project telephone line	For phone enquiries and complaints for regional and national stakeholders
Community enquiry line	Maintain FAQs to respond to community queries Provide mailboxes (complaint boxes) at Project Information Corners and public places
Complaints handling and management	A formal grievance mechanism has been introduced (Section 5) and will continue through to the construction phase Provide mailboxes (complaint boxes) at Project Information Centres and public places in the PAP area
National and international communications	Regular updates on the Project website and Facebook page Report annually to district, provincial and central governments Site tours as required Engage with national and international media as required

The activities outlined above are indicative of engagement activities and methods that will be undertaken for the Project construction phase. Many of these activities will be tested during the earlier stages of the Project to see if they meet the needs of stakeholders and modifications will be made accordingly based on these review processes, particularly to ensure that vulnerable groups/IPs are able to engage in the process.

Engagement during Operation

Consultation at this phase will focus on day-to-day operation of the Project, through project related information. The main objectives of the consultation process during Operation are to:

- Provide updates on the progress of the Project;
- Maintain constructive relationships with the communities adjacent to the Project facilities;
- Maintain awareness of environmental and safety practices in the local communities, especially emergency preparedness and response;
- Manage concerns and complaints from stakeholders and in particular PAPs and Adjacent and Surrounding Communities; and
- Monitor community attitudes towards the Project and MoALD.

Table B.2 describes the main activities for consultation anticipated during operation.

Table B.2: Engagement during Operation

Engagement Activities	Details
Updates about the Project	Brochures, fact sheets made available for Project-Affected Parties bi-annually Newsletters to district and provincial government offices bi-annually or annually Local media notices and updates once at the beginning of operation and as required Regular revision of information on the Project website Briefings of media as needed
Community relations activities	Consultation and disclosure activities will form part of day-to-day functions Community relations staff will be placed throughout the life of the Project to maintain relationships with local communities and other stakeholders
Environmental and safety awareness program	Provide brochures, pamphlets, and regular environmental and safety talks to relevant stakeholders
Emergency preparedness and response	Provide training, brochures and pamphlets for local communities and workforce on emergency preparedness and response Undertake emergency drills as outlined in Emergency Preparedness and Response Plan
Manage community issues and monitor community attitudes	Through a range of community relation activities including Community meetings, group discussions, household visits, community perception surveys
Project telephone line	For phone enquiries and complaints for regional and national stakeholders
Complaints handling and management	A formal grievance mechanism will be introduced (Section 5) and will continue through to the operational phase

The activities outlined above are indicative of engagement activities and methods that will be undertaken for the Project operation phase. The SEP will be updated prior to operation to provide more details on how these engagement activities will be carried out, and how the stakeholder comments and feedback will be incorporated and reported back.

Appendix B: Stakeholder Consultation

Stakeholder consultations, as per the procedures set by the SEP will be conducted and the results of the consultations will be duly recorded and addresses.

Consultation with Project Affected Parties (PAPs)

Consultation meetings with the Project Affected Persons will be undertaken in different locations. The Project team will introduce the Project to the local community people, answer questions, and obtain feedback. Community people participating during the meetings will include women, Indigenous Peoples, and Dalit participants. Key issues, suggestions and feedback that were raised across the local communities will be properly recorded after the consultation and circulated among E&S Manager, E&S Sub-project lead and WB officials.

Table C.1 provides the template for documenting stakeholder consultations.

Table C.1: Template for Stakeholder Consultation with Local Communities and Key Suggestions and Issues Discussed

Date	Meeting Location and Communities	Attendees		Key Suggestions and Issues Discussed
		Male	Female	

The Project team will also undertake consultation with PAPs of the stakeholders.

Table C.2 provides the template for further details on the key issues raised, as well as the locations of the meetings and the attendees.

Table C.2: Template for Consultation with other Stakeholders in the PAPs

Date	Meeting Location and Stakeholders	Attendance	Key Suggestions and Issues Raised by Stakeholders

Consultation with Other Interested Parties

The Project team will also undertake consultation meetings with other stakeholders:

- Meeting with DCC and senior district officials
- Radio talks on local community radios

Key issues, suggestions and feedback raised:

This section will be filled-up after the consultation.

Table C.3 provides template for further details on the key issues raised, as well as the locations of the meetings and the attendees.

Table C.3: Template for Consultation with Other Interested Parties and Key Suggestions and Issues Discussed

Date	Meeting Location and Stakeholders	Attendees	Key Suggestions and Issues Discussed

Appendix C: Project Information Disclosure Documents

- Draft ESMF
- Draft ESCP
- Draft SEP
- Draft PID
- FAQ

(Documents to be added).

Appendix D: List of participants in consultation of draft ESMF

SN	Name	Position	Address	Category	Remarks
1	Anu Raj Bhandari		World Bank, Nepal Country Office		
2	Anupa Silwal	Forest Officer	Divisional Forest Office, Palpa	Provincial Government	
3	Bal Govinda Tripathi	Agriculture Development Officer (ADO)	Agriculture Knowledge Center (AKC), Taulihawa	Provincial Government	Group Taulihawa
4	Bibek Panta	ADO	AKC, Sandhikharka, Arghakhanchi	Provincial Government	Group Sandhikharka
5	Binod Ghimire	Sr. ADO	MoLAC, Province 5, Butwal	Provincial Government	
6	Deepak Regmi		Made Nepal	NGO	
7	Devesh Kumar Misra	Chief / Sr. ADO	AKC, Sandhikharka, Arghakhanchi	Provincial Government	Group Sandhikharka
8	Dhirendra Singh	Farmer	Rajbiraj, Saptari	Community	
9	Dhruba Raj Bhandari	Farmer	Tansen-7 Pravas, Palpa	Community	Group DFO Palpa
10	Dig Bijaya Dhakal		Forward Nepal	NGO	
11	Dila Ram Bhandari	Provincial Coordinator	ADS Project, Province 5, Butwal	Development Project	
12	Ishwari Poudel	DFO	DFO, Taulihawa, Kapilbastu	Provincial Government	Group Taulihawa
13	Jaya Prasad Pandey	Vice- Chairperson	Federation of Collaborative Forest Users, Nepal	Community	
14	Jaya Sharma		World Bank, Nepal Country Office	Development Partner	
15	Kamla Banjade	Chairperson	Ripaha Women Community Forestry Group / Agriculture Cooperative Group / Sandhikharka, Arghakhanchi	Women group	With Shila Pokhrel
16	Kiran Paudyal	Consultant	REED Project, MoALD	Federal Government	
17	Kopila Timelsena	Women activist		Community	
18	Labhakush Pd. Kurmi	Ag. Officer	AKC, Taulihawa, Kapilbastu	Provincial Government	Group Taulihawa
19	Lalan Pd Singh	Senior Ag.	Ministry of Land	Provincial	

		Officer	Management, Agriculture and Cooperative (MoLMAC), Province 2	Government	
20	Madan Mohan Sandilya	Member	Tilaurakot Community Forestry Users Group	Community	Group Taulihawa
21	Maheswor Panta	Farmer	Tansen-7 Pravas, Palpa	Farmer Group	Group DFO Palpa
22	Manish Basnet		World Bank, Nepal Country Office	Development Partner	
23	Mohan Poudel	Divisional Forest Officer	DFO, Tansen, Palpa	Provincial Government	
24	Pranav Acharya		World Bank, Nepal Country Office	Development Partner	
25	Prem Khanal		World Bank, Nepal Country Office	Development Partner	
26	Raghabendra Chaudhary				
27	Raj Kumar Mahato	Project Coordinator	Asman Nepal	NGO	
28	Rajendra Pd. Yadav	ADO		Provincial Government	
29	Rajendra Prasad Misra	Joint Secretary	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development	Federal Government	
30	Rishikesh Dhakal	Agriculturist	FORWARD Nepal	NGO	
31	Sanjeeb Kumar Thakur	Chief / Doctor	Animal Hospital and Livestock Expert Center, Jaleswor, Mahottari	Provincial Government	
32	Sannani Chalise	Member	Banganga Agriculture Cooperative	Community	Group Taulihawa
33	Shankar Prasad Sapkota	Under Secretary	Ministry of Agriculture and Livestock Development	Federal Government	
34	Shiva Dhakal	Consultant	REED Project, MoALD	Federal Government	
35	Shlia Pokhrel	Forest Officer	DFO, Sandhikharka, Arghakhanchi	Provincial Government	
36	Shridhar Gyawali	Senior ADO	Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperative (MoLMAC), Province 2	Provincial Government	
37	Sujita Chaudhary	Teacher	Maha Gadimai Municipality	Community	
38	Sumitra Nepal	Member	Agriculture Cooperative, Butwal	Community	

39	Tej Raj Subedi	Secretary	Ministry of Land Management, Agriculture and Cooperative (MoLMAC), Province 5	Provincial Government	
40	Vijaya Kumar Mallik	Coordinator	ADS Project, Province 2, Butwal	Development Project	

Appendix E: Stakeholder Engagement Management System Template

Table E.1: Stakeholder Database Template Example

Stakeholder	Contact person	Contact details	Interest/ Issues	Details of engagement		
				Engagement	Issues	Actions
Stakeholder group	Individual	Ward, Municipality, District, Province		Date Location Attendees	Key issues raised Response provided	Agreed actions

Appendix F: Grievance form, Grievance Registry and closeout form

Table F.1: Grievance Submission Form

REED Project Grievance Form				
Grievance registration no.				
Date of registration				
Details of complainant: (Tick the box for anonymity)				
Name:				
First Name	Middle name	Last name		
Gender:				
Male	Female	Others		
Address:				
Province	District	Municipality	Ward No.	Name of place
Contact details:				
Primary mobile no.		Email		
Secondary mobile no.		Facebook		
Preferred mode of contact: _____				
Nature of the project impact on complainant:				
Physically displacement	Economically displaced	Others		
Brief description of grievance:				
Mode of submission of grievance:				
Verbal	Written	Complaint Box	Phone	Email
Others				
----- Signature of Complainant			----- Signature of Grievance Officer	

Table F.2: Grievance Registry

N o	Date of receiving incoming letter / form	Grievance Reference Number	Name / Surname of grievance originator (if not anonymou s)	Gende r	Type of grievanc e	Details of grievance	Mediu m of comm.	Name of staff responsi ble for managin g the grievanc e	Date of grievance acknowledge ment	Date of feedback provision/refer ence number	Present status	Remark s
1												
2												
3												
4												
5												
6												
7												
8												
9												

Table F.3: Grievance Close Out Form

Grievance Closed Out Resolution
Describe the steps taken to resolve the grievance and the outcome.
Department: Mode of communication for reply (meeting/ written/ verbal/ display): Date closed:
Signatures
Complainant: Project representative: Date: