Government of Nepal

Ministry of Water Supply

Nepal Water Governance and Infrastructure Project (NWGIP)

Draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan

January 2022

Abbreviations and Acronyms

CBOs	Community-based organizations
DoWSSM	Department of Water Supply and Sewerage Management
E&S	Environmental and Social
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
IDA	International Development Association
IPs	Indigenous Peoples
LLG	Local Level Government
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MoWS	Ministry of Water Supply
NEFIN	National Federation of Indigenous Nationalities
NWGIP	The Nepal Water Governance and Infrastructure Project
OHS	Occupational health and safety
PLCU	Province Level Monitoring Unit
PMU	Project Management Unit
SEA/SH	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse, Sexual Harassment
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
WASH	Water, sanitation, and hygiene
WB	World Bank

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Nepal Water Governance and Infrastructure Project (NWGIP) aims to promote and improve water supply service and sanitation in selected municipalities under the Karnali and Sudurpachim provinces. The project will be implemented by the Ministry of Water Supply (MoWS) through the Department of Water Supply and Sewerage Management (DoWSSM). A Project Management Unit (PMU), led by a project manager, will be formed to carry out this task. At the provincial level, municipal authorities will be responsible for the construction of improved drinking water and sanitation project. Municipal authorities will play a leadership role and provide day-to-day support to the project implementation. This Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is prepared in line with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Standard 10 (ESS10) to promote timely disclosure of relevant project information to project stakeholders, guide consultation with local communities and enable constructive dialogue between the Ministry of Water Supply (MoWS), DoWSSM, beneficiary municipalities, water consumers and relevant stakeholders. The SEP consolidates ongoing consultation activities and establishes a systematic approach to identify and engage project stakeholders and ensure meaningful consultation with the stakeholders in the design and implementation of the project. For this purpose, the DoWSSM first identified the project stakeholders and categorized them into various groups (i.e., government agencies, municipalities, water supply user groups, targeted beneficiary communities, and the people who might be adversely impacted by the project activities) based on their interests and influence on the project. The SEP includes an analysis of these various stakeholders and proposes strategies for engaging them throughout the project life. The SEP also makes provision for engaging indigenous people (IPs) and vulnerable groups such as Dalits present in the project area and to inform them about the risks and impacts of the project along with the mitigation measures that the project aims to adapt and project-related opportunities.

The institutional arrangements for implementing stakeholder engagement activities have been incorporated in the SEP. At the national level, the MoWS and DoWSSM will lead the implementation of most information disclosure and consultation activities. At the municipal levels, municipal authorities (especially the Social Development Section) will lead the implementation of SEP activities and help to uptake and address project-related grievances. Based on a preliminary assessment, it is recognized that capacity (including staffing and training) at the municipal level is particularly weak. As such, the World Bank will provide technical support (including training on ESF) to the staff that will be directly responsible for environmental and social risks and impacts of the project.

In addition, the SEP also proposes a two-tiered grievance redress mechanism (GRM) for the project with clear provisions for receiving grievances, processing, and finding resolution, and reporting back to complainants in a timely and culturally appropriate manner. The GRM has also incorporated a sequential escalation procedure of a grievance if the complainant remains unsatisfied with the resolution and seeks to appeal. The SEP includes an

estimated budget to support the implementation of the consultation and information disclosure activities throughout the project lifecycle and lays out a monitoring and reporting mechanism. Being a living document, the SEP can be updated and revised whenever necessary, thus enabling the project to take corrective measures, if required. Further, this SEP has also envisaged the threat posed by the continued threat posed by COVID-19 and seeks to adopt safety protocols prescribed by the government and the World Bank.

सारसंक्षेप

नेपाल खानेपानी सुशासन तथा पूर्वाधार आयोजना (NWGIP) ले कर्णाली र सुदूरपश्चिम प्रदेश अन्तर्गतका छनोट गरिएका नगरपालिकाहरूमा खानेपानी र सरसफाई सुविधाहरूको प्रवर्द्धन र सुधार गर्ने लक्ष्य लिएको छ । यो आयोजना नेपाल सरकार, खानेपानी मन्त्रालयले खानेपानी तथा ढल व्यवस्थापन विभाग (DWSSM) मार्फत कार्यान्वयन गर्नेछ । यो कार्य सम्पादनका लागि आयोजना प्रबन्धकको नेतृत्वमा आयोजना व्यवस्थापन इकाई (PMU) गठन गरिनेछ । सुधारिएको खानेपानी तथा सरसफाई आयोजना निर्माणको जिम्मा प्रदेश स्तरमा नगरपालिकाले लिनेछ । नगरपालिकाका सम्बन्धित पदाधिकारीहरूले यसमा नेतृत्वदायी भूमिका निर्वाह गर्नेछन् र आयोजना कार्यान्वयनमा आवश्यक सहयोग गर्नेछन् । यो सरोकारवाला संलग्नता योजना (SEP) विश्व बैंकको वातावरणीय र सामाजिक मापदण्ड १० (ESS10) लाई आयोजनाका सरोकारवालाहरूलाई आयोजना सम्बन्धी सान्दर्भिक जानकारीहरू समयमै सार्वजनिकीकरण गर्न, स्थानीय समुदायहरूसँग परामर्श गर्न र खानेपानी मन्त्रालय, खानेपानी तथा ढल व्यवस्थापन विभाग, आयोजना सञ्चालन हुने नगरपालिकाहरू, खानेपानी उपभोक्ताहरू र सम्बन्धित सरोकारवालाहरू बीचको रचनात्मक संवादलाई अघि बढाउनका लागि तयार गरिएको हो । सरोकारवाला संलग्नता योजनाले भइरहेका परामर्शहरूलाई अझ सारगर्भित बनाउँछ र आयोजनाका सरोकारवालाहरूको पहिचान गर्न र उनीहरूलाई आयोजनामा संलग्न गराउन एक व्यवस्थित दृष्टिकोण स्थापना गर्नुका साथै आयोजनाको डिजाइन र कार्यान्वयनमा सरोकारवालाहरूसँग अर्थपूर्ण परामर्श सुनिश्चित गर्दछ । यस उद्देश्यका लागि, खानेपानी तथा ढल व्यवस्थापन विभागले सर्वप्रथम आयोजना सरोकारवालाहरूको पहिचान गरेर उनीहरूलाई रुचि र प्रभावका आधारमा विभिन्न समूहहरूमा वर्गीकृत गर्‍यो (जस्तै - सरकारी निकायहरू, नगरपालिकाहरू, खानेपानी उपभोक्ता समूहहरू, लाभान्वित समुदायहरू, र आयोजना गतिविधिहरूबाट प्रतिकूल असर पर्न सक्ने मानिसहरू आदि) । सरोकारवाला संलग्नता योजना (SEP) ले यी विभिन्न सरोकारवालाहरूको विश्लेषण संलग्न गर्दछ र उनीहरूलाई आयोजना अवधिभर संलग्न गराउनका लागि रणनीतिहरू प्रस्ताव गर्दछ । SEP ले आदिवासी जनजाति (IPs) र आयोजना क्षेत्रमा बसोबास गर्ने दलितहरू जस्ता जोखिममा परेका समूहहरूलाई आयोजनामा समावेश गर्न र उनीहरूलाई आयोजनाको जोखिम र प्रभावहरूको बारेमा जानकारी

गराउनका साथै आयोजनासँग सम्बन्धित अवसरहरूहरूलाई अनुकूलन गर्ने प्रावधानहरूको व्याख्या गर्दछ । यसले न्यूनीकरणका उपायहरूको बारेमा पनि बताउँछ ।

SEP मा सरोकारवाला संलग्न गतिविधिहरू कार्यान्वयन गर्ने संस्थागत व्यवस्थाहरू समावेश गरिएको छ । राष्ट्रिय स्तरमा, खानेपानी मन्त्रालय र खानेपानी तथा ढल व्यवस्थापन विभागले अधिकांश सूचना सार्वजनिकीकरण र परामर्श सम्बन्धी गतिविधिहरूको कार्यान्वयनको नेतृत्व गर्नेछ । पालिका स्तरहरूमा, पालिकाका अधिकारीहरू (विशेष गरी सामाजिक विकास शाखा) ले SEP गतिविधिहरूको कार्यान्वयनको नेतृत्व गर्नेछन् र आयोजनासँग सम्बन्धित गुनासोहरू व्यक्त गर्न र तिनको सम्बोधन गर्न मद्दत गर्नेछन् । प्रारम्भिक मूल्याङ्कनका आधारमा पालिका स्तरमा क्षमता (कर्मचारी र तालिम सहित) विशेष गरी कमजोर रहेको देखिएको छ । यसरी, विश्व बैंकले आयोजनाको वातावरणीय र सामाजिक जोखिम र प्रभावहरूको लागि प्रत्यक्ष रूपमा जिम्मेवार हुने कर्मचारीहरूलाई प्राविधिक सहयोग (ESF मा तालिम सहित) उपलब्ध गराउनेछ ।

यसबाहेक, SEP ले आयोजनाका लागि दुई तहको गुनासो निवारण संयन्त्र (GRM) पनि प्रस्ताव गरेको छ जसमा गुनासोहरू प्राप्त गर्ने, प्रशोधन गर्ने र समाधानका उपायहरू खोज्ने र उजुरीकर्ताहरूलाई समयमै र सांस्कृतिक रूपमा उपयुक्त रूपमा रिपोर्ट गर्ने स्पष्ट प्रावधानहरू छन् । यदि गुनासोकर्ता समाधानका उपायबाट सन्तुष्ट हुन सकेन र त्यस उपर अपील गर्न चाहन्छ भने गुनासो निदान संयन्त्रको तहगत प्रक्रियालाई पनि समावेश गरिन्छ । SEP ले आयोजनाको पूरै जीवनचक्रमा परामर्श र सूचना सार्वजनिकीकरण सम्बन्धी गतिविधिहरूको कार्यान्वयनलाई मूर्त रुप दिन ६ अनुमानित बजेट समावेश गर्नुका साथै एक अनुगमन र रिपोर्टिङ संयन्त्र तयार गर्दछ । SEP एक गतिशील दस्तावेज भएकोले यसलाई आवश्यकता अनुसार अद्यावधिक र परिमार्जन गर्न सकिन्छ, यसरी आवश्यक भएमा सुधारात्मक उपायहरू अवलम्बन गर्नका लागि आयोजनालाई सक्षम बनाउँछ । यसबाहेक, यस दस्तावेजले कोभिड-१९ ले निम्त्याएको निरन्तर खतराबाट उत्पन्न खतराको पनि परिकल्पना गर्नुका साथै नेपाल सरकार र विश्व बैंकले तोकेका सुरक्षा सम्बन्धी प्रावधानहरू/प्रोटोकलहरू अपनाउने प्रयास गरेको छ ।

1. Introduction

1.1 Project Description

The Nepal Water Governance and Infrastructure Project (NWGIP) is a five-year IDA-funded project designed to transform water governance in Nepal and improve water supply service and sanitation in five selected municipalities under the Karnali and Sudurpachim provinces of the country. The selected municipalities include Birendranagar in the Karnali province as well as Dipayal Silgadhi, Sharada, Joshipur and Janaki municipalities – in the Sudurpashcim province. Approximately 40 percent of project funds will be invested in Birendranagar municipality (see figure 1: project location map below). The project comprises three components:

- **Component 1:** Improving Water Sector Governance and Institutional Capacity for Water Supply Service
- **Component 2:** Access to Improved and Safe Water Supply and Sanitation
- **Component 3:** Building Resilience through Integrated Watershed Management
- **Component 4:** Contingency Emergency Response (US$0 million)

Figure 1.1: GIS Map of Karnali and Sudurpachim provinces
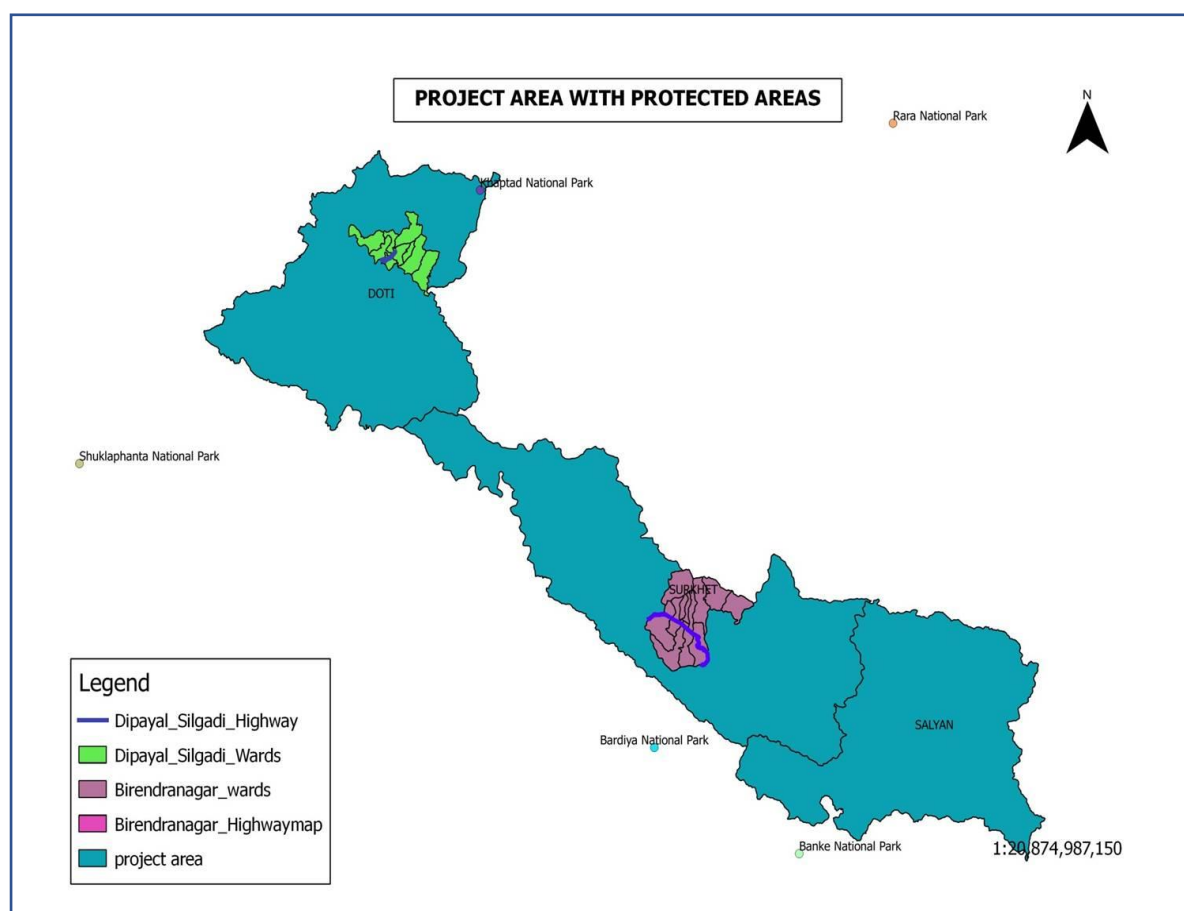
Figure 1.2: GIS Maa of Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet
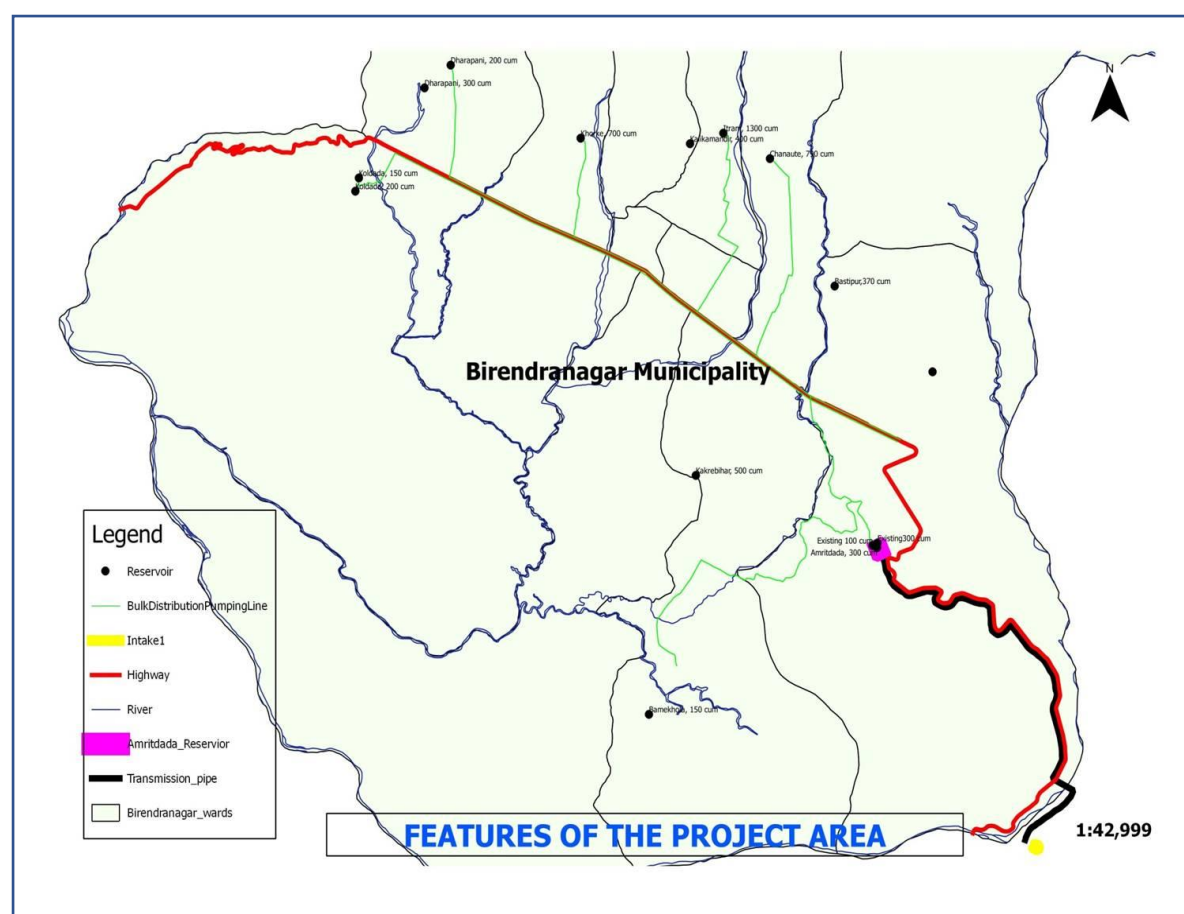
Overall, the project aims to strengthen sector institutional capacity for water supply service delivery by establishing functional Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene (WASH) units; and to increase access to improved and climate-resilient water supply and sanitation in participating municipalities. Specific activities to be supported by the project include establishment and training of municipal WASH units (M-WASH); building technical and institutional capacity of water supply and sanitation agencies across federal(i.e. MoWS, DoWSSM), provincial (i.e. Provincial Ministry of Physical Infrastructure Development), and local levels; constructing and rehabilitating water supply schemes and wastewater treatment facilities; constructing fecal sludge and wastewater treatment facilities; monitoring water quality; and implementing integrated watershed management and nature-based solutions.

The organizational arrangement for implementing the project is two-tiered. At the national level, the Ministry of Water Supply (MoWS) through the Department of Water Supply and Sewerage Management (DoWSSM) is the lead implementing agency and is responsible for improving sector governance and institutional capacity of the concerned municipalities and project management under component 1, building resilience through integrated watershed management under component 3, and contingency emergency response under component 4.

At the local level, municipal authorities will be responsible for access to improved and safe water supply and sanitation under component 2 and provide day-to-day support to the project implementation.

Whilst the project will extend overall positive benefits, the implementation of some project activities is expected to induce notable environmental and social impacts. Based on preliminary environmental and social risks review, the World Bank determined the environmental and social risks of the project as "**Substantial**". Key environmental impacts which may emerge from the construction of infrastructure (especially during the construction phase) include removal of trees/natural vegetation to make way for project infrastructure, solid waste management, building an access road along the proposed pipeline, building retaining and breast walls to protect the slope against landslides**.** Similarly, main social risks and impacts which may result from the project include the potential for land acquisition and displacement of local people, temporary restriction and/or disruption of access to homes, businesses and common property resources, occupational and community health and safety (during construction) and impacts on cultural heritage.

In addition, there is the potential for exacerbating marginalization of the poor and vulnerable groups, particularly people with disabilities, indigenous and lower-caste groups such as Dalits in terms of access to project information and benefits. Illiteracy, poverty and predetermined low social status among these groups can limit their participation in project activities, constrain their access to project benefits, and undermine the objectives of the project.[1] The World Bank's Environmental and Social Standards and relevant national laws and regulations of Nepal will provide the legal and operational framework for assessing and managing the risks and impacts highlighted above.[2]

1.2 Stakeholder Consultation and Information Disclosure

In line with the World Bank's ESS 10, this Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is prepared to promote timely disclosure of relevant project information to project stakeholders, guide meaningful consultation with local communities and enable constructive dialogue between the Ministry of Water Supply (MoWS), the Department of Water Supply and Sewerage Management (DoWSSM), beneficiary municipalities, water consumers and relevant stakeholders. Ultimately, using this SEP, the MoWS/DoWSSM intends to disclose relevant information (including its environmental and social risks and impacts) about the project to relevant stakeholders and to solicit their perspectives, views and concerns that can be integrated

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[1] The detailed environmental and social risks and impacts of the project are noted in the World Bank's Environmental and Social Risks Review Summary of the project.

[2] Based on the ESRS (see footnote 1), the World Bank Standards that are relevant for managing environmental and social risks under the project include ESS1: Assessment and management of environmental and social risks and impacts; ESS2: Labor and working conditions; ESS3: Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management; ESS4: Community health and safety; ESS5: Land acquisition, restriction of land use and involuntary resettlement; ESS6: Biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of living natural resources; ESS7: Indigenous People/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities; ESS8: Cultural heritage; and ESS10: Stakeholder engagement and information disclosure.

in project design, planning, and implementation. The SEP consolidates previous engagement activities which have been carried out by the implementing agencies and outlines a series of strategies for further consultation and engagement of relevant stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle, making sure that such consultations are transparent, meaningful, and effective enough to inform project design, generate community support for the project, and inform inclusive and responsive design and implementation.

For the purposes of this SEP, stakeholders, as defined in the World Bank ESF, refers to individuals or groups who: (i) are impacted or likely to be impacted directly or indirectly, positively or adversely, by the project (also known as *'affected parties'*); and (ii)may have an interest in the project (**'***interested parties'*) and 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. The SEP is a "living document" and will be updated and refined as the project progresses.

1.3 Objectives of the SEP
The objectives of this SEP are:
- To identify relevant stakeholders of this project and assess their interest and potential influence on the project
- To ensure that all relevant project stakeholders receive relevant information in an inclusive and culturally appropriate manner, thereby enabling their support and/or participation in the project implementation process
- To outline a responsive and functioning Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) that is readily available to project-affected parties to lodge project-related complaints and concerns and to allow the project to respond to and manage such grievances
- To provide means for effective and constructive and inclusive engagement with project-affected parties and other interested parties throughout the project lifecycle on issues that could potentially affect them and,
- To ensure that appropriate project information on environmental and social risks and impacts are disclosed to stakeholders in a timely, accessible, and appropriate manner and format.

As a part of project preparation, the DoWSSM has identified key stakeholders that will be directly or indirectly affected by the project; carried out preliminary engagement with some of these stakeholders and outlined ways by which they can share information with stakeholders, consult them in a meaningful way, and enable stakeholder participation and feedback to project implementation process. This SEP summarizes the findings of the analysis and describes the timing and methods of engagement with stakeholders throughout the life cycle of the project.

2. Summary of previous Stakeholder Engagement Activities

Preliminary consultations have carried out engagements with various key institutional and community stakeholders including federal government ministries, authorities of provincial and municipal authorities, Water Supply Users Committees, Divisional Forest Authorities, and Forest User Groups. Through these engagements, the government disclose early project concepts and objectives, noted their ideas, suggestions and concerns which are being used to inform the project design. Table 1.1 below summarizes key engagements and issues discussed.

Table 0.1: Previous stakeholder engagement activities

Stakeholder/date of engagement	Issues Discussed	Key points raised
DoWSSM *12/11/2021*	• Project concept, components, and objectives • Project implementation arrangements • Key environmental and social issues related to the project • Tariffs, access, and cost recovery	• Expressed government support for the project • Stressed on the need to for strong support from the Bank to enable the Dept. to implement the project (including managing E&S risks and impacts) • Underlined the need to onboard required manpower to undertake the assessment and prepare the instruments.
Ministry Physical Infrastructure and Urban Development *28/11/2021*	• Project concept, components, and objectives • Project implementation arrangements • Tariffs, access, and cost recovery	• Emphasised the need to explore new resources to meet the current demand through improving the Surkhet Valley Drinking Water Project. • Highlighted the need to work effectively for wastewater management • Discussed the need to give priority for the improvement of water quality. • Discussions were held on to empower the local government for good water governance • Emphasized on working in partnership with the provincial government • Exploring the possibilities of public-private partnership.
Birendranagar Municipality, Surkhet, Karnali Province	• Project concept, components, and objectives	• Support for the project • Leverage project to equip and support municipality to discharge its mandate (training and resourcing)

28/11/ 2021	• Environmental and social concerns of the project (esp. land to support project investments) • Organogram and staffing of the municipality (need for staffing to support project implementation) • Tariffs, access, and cost recovery	• Strengthen the Social Development unit of the municipality to support project implementation (especially on E&S issues) • Need of the better coordination with the ward offices of the municipality to implement E&S risk and impact assessment • Need of better collaboration with the key stakeholder such as water Users' groups • Need to allocate required resources and human resources to complete the ongoing information collection related to WASH
Sukhet Water Supply Users Organizations 28/11/ 2021	• Project concept, components, and objectives • Environmental and social risks and impacts of the project • Organogram and staffing of the organization • Existing Grievance Redress mechanisms of the organization • Tariffs and cost recovery	• Need to consider local representation in the proposed WASH units (component 1 of the project) • Build on and strengthen existing structure of the organization • Insufficient water and water rationing in the valley • Water loss (leakage up to 35%) due to aging infrastructure • Lack of cooperation and the coordination at the local level in the issues related to drinking water • Limited experience in conducting E&S risk assessment and implementing mitigation measures • Need of supports to strengthen the implementation of E&S related measures, including the management of grievances from users
Karnali Chief Minister and his officials	• Project concept, components, and objectives • Environmental and social risks and impacts of the project • Need for Chief Minister's support to the project • Balancing tariffs, access, and cost recovery	• Expressed support for the project concept and components • Need for subnational governments to be resourced and supported • Need for attention to client-resilient infrastructure • Explore private participation in the water sector

Sharada Municipality, Salyan district, Karnali Province 29/11/ 2021	• Project concept and objectives • Environmental and social risks and impacts of the project • Staffing and resources at municipality to help implement the project • Cost recovery, tariffs, and access to water in the municipality	• Need for dedicated staffing and resources to manage the E&S issues related to the project • Leveraging the project to provide capacity and technical support for Municipality to carry its mandate • Need for basic socio-economic data to support project planning in the municipality
Surkhet Community Forest User Group (Dalits)	• Project concept and objectives • Proposed location of water reservoir in the community forest • Environmental and social risks and impacts of the project • Project-community relations and collaboration	• Support for the project as it will improve access to water • Prioritize the group for construction-related jobs • Support to rehabilitate degraded portions of the forest • Need for other income generation and livelihood activities • Access to information about the project

Given the prolonging COVID19 situation and the restrictions on travel and gathering, the PMU was unable to share the draft of the SEP with wider stakeholders and get their feedback. However, the PMU is committed to sharing the draft SEP with the identified stakeholders of the sub-projects and making appropriate revisions based on feedback and concerns before the implementation of the project. In addition, the PMU also consult with the vulnerable groups, such as Dalit and IP communities to apprise them about the SEP, incorporate their appropriate concerns and feedback and engage them in the process of implementing the SEP.

3. Stakeholder identification and analysis

This section provides information about key stakeholders – both affected and interested parties - that have been identified, and will be informed and consulted about the project, including individuals, institutions, interest groups, and local communities. Indigenous people as well as vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in the project locations have also been identified, recognizing existing limitations on the ability of such groups to access relevant project information and the opportunities that may come through the project. These stakeholders were identified using the following criteria:

- **Dependency:** individuals or groups significantly dependent on the project or ongoing operations, and who stands a chance of being further affected by the proposed project in economic, financial, or utility terms.
- **Representation:** Individuals or groups with the right to be represented in the project or ongoing operations, and this right is legitimated through legislation, custom and/or cultural specifics.
- **Influence:** Individuals or groups who may be able to substantially influence the project planning, implementation, or ongoing operations.
- **Liability:** Project implementation or ongoing operations may result in legal, financial, or other liabilities of the project to a social group.
- **Partnership:** There are opportunities for building partnerships between the project and a given social group in the framework of the project implementation or ongoing operations.
- **Expressed interest:** A social group and/or individual may express interest in a project or ongoing operations, and this group is not necessarily directly affected by the planned or current activities

The limitations of Covid 19 and the need to operate safely imposed constraints on the ability of the project team to travel, identify and engage stakeholders. Nonetheless, the team conducted a few field visits and drew on secondary data and previous experience to map out and analyze the interest of various stakeholders in the project across federal, provincial, and local government levels.

2.1 Project-affected parties

They include individuals, groups, and entities within the project's Area of Influence that may be directly impacted by the project activities and/or have been identified as most susceptible to the change associated with the project, and who need to be closely engaged in identifying impacts, as well as in decision-making on mitigation and management measures. They include:

- Local populations living in the vicinity of the planned project infrastructure and activities that may be adversely affected mainly by noise, dust, vibration, vehicular movements,

- Persons or households who may lose access to land and/or will be restricted from accessing natural resources because of the project, e.g., farmers, landowners, squatters, forest user groups, etc.
- Indigenous and vulnerable groups such as Dalits, elderly, physically and mentally disabled persons, landless people, single mothers, adolescent girls, minority communities, and the children,
- Local health centers would have to provide basic health supports to the project staff and migrant workers.
- NGOs working in the area on environmental and social issues and the media

2.2 Interested parties

The interested parties in this project, other than those directly affected, include:
- Government officials (elected and non-elected), regulatory, and permit awarding agencies at the federal, provincial, and local levels, including environmental, technical, and labor authorities.
- Government officials at District level offices of key ministries, including Divisional Forest Offices, Irrigation Offices, Road Offices, Survey Office, Land Revenue Offices, and Electricity Authority, etc.
- Non-elected officials with wide recognition within the community, such as headteachers of local schools, religious leaders, or leaders of local cooperatives
- Leaders of informal or traditional community institutions such as women groups, Dalits Samaj, water consumer groups, village councils, etc.
- NGOs and CBOs at national, provincial, and local levels on the welfare and rights of indigenous people and vulnerable groups such as Dalits and other minorities, gender/GBV issues, etc.
- Business owners, traders, suppliers of goods and services to the construction and operation of the project
- Residents and communities within the project area that can benefit from increased economic opportunities, employment, and training opportunities stemming from the project; and,
- Media including district and local press clubs.

Table 3.1: Other interested parties and their interests in the project

Interested parties	Interest in the project
International Level	
Environmental I/NGOs and Activists, NGOs working on IPs and Human rights, Gender Activists	• Understanding the range of impacts of the project activities and effectiveness and implementation of the prescribed mitigation measures along with the opportunities associated with the project(s).
Private Corporations	• Explore business opportunities in PPPs on water and sanitation
Development partners and Agencies (DPs)	• Explore opportunities for scaling the project investments, e.g., ADB, USAID, JICA, • Due diligence and compliance on environmental and social impacts • Project management and scalable lessons.
Academics and researchers	• Possible research work at the project site to provide scientific knowledge of the risks, impacts and opportunities of the project.
Federal Level	
Ministry of Finance, National Planning Commission, Water and Energy Commission	• Ensuring that project funds will be used for project purpose. • ensuring that project investments align with national and local level development priorities (15th Periodic Plan). • Project impacts on watersheds and mitigation measures
Federal Ministry of Forest and Environment	• Trees clearance for project site development and management for compensatory tree plantation
Department of Urban Development and Building Construction	• Preparation a provincial Master Plan for the project area and thus needs project-related information.
The Federation of Drinking Water and Sanitation Users Nepal	• Facilitation of the provision of drinking water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) services and advocating for water and sanitation rights and promoting good government on water use.
National NGOs with focus on E&S Gender issues, IPs and Dalits right issues	• Represents the interests of different interested parties and vulnerable groups •
Workers' organizations	• Interest in potential E&S risks as well as community health and safety, including occupational health and safety of the project workers

Contractors, subcontractors, and service providers	• Procurement and contracting opportunities associated with the project • Providing services for and on behalf of the project e.g., skills development training for workers, pump operators, labor supply contractors, etc.
Media	• To provide information and news about the project to their listeners, • Accountability for project/public funds • represents public interest
Academic institutions such as universities and think tanks	• Research/study opportunities for the students on various issues such as WASH, E&S risks and impacts, health outcomes of potable water, labor influx. etc
Provincial and Local Levels (Karnali and Suderpachim provinces)	
Provincial Social Development Ministry	• Social impacts (positive and negative) of the project activities and contribution to the social development by the project • Community representation in water facility management
Provincial Economic Affairs and Planning Ministry	• Contribution to the economic development by the project
Provincial Planning Commission	• Economic development and development planning processes of drinking water supply
Provincial Ministry of Industry, Tourism, Forest and Environment and District Forest Office	• Possible impact to the forest, tree clearance and management of compensatory tree plantation
Political leaders (i.e., Chief Ministers, Political Party Heads, Mayors	• Taking credits of economic and social development in the region
Provincial and local level NGOs, Right Groups, Activists,	• Represents the interests of different interested parties and vulnerable groups • Facilitation of WASH services and advocating for water and sanitation rights and promoting good government on water use at the regional level.
Provincial Ministry of Physical Infrastructure Development and District Road Office	• Construction of access road to proposed project site
Chambers of commerce and business associations	• Business opportunities unveiled by the project activities
Mass Media (FM/community radios, newspapers, TV channels, social media,	• To provide information and news about the project to their listeners, • Accountability for project/public funds

including the Facebook and twitter, among others)	• represents public interest • local correspondence for national and international networks

2.3 Disadvantaged/vulnerable individuals or groups

The DoWSSM recognizes that it is important to understand whether project impacts may disproportionately fall on disadvantaged or vulnerable individuals or groups that are often unable to express their concerns or may not even understand the impacts of a project. The vulnerability may stem from an individual's gender, race, age, health condition, ethnicity or caste, income levels and other elements of marginalization. The stakeholder engagement activities in this project will consider these elements of vulnerability and adapt information disclosure and consultation strategies to the concerns and cultural sensitivities of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups to ensure a full understanding of project activities and benefits. The project will also take special measures to ensure that disadvantaged and vulnerable groups have opportunity to participate in accessing project benefits, provide feedback, and submit grievances. These groups may include and are not limited to the following:

- The elderly, especially those living alone
- Individuals with chronic diseases and pre-existing medical conditions
- Minority groups including Dalits and Muslims (see table 3.2 below)
- Indigenous peoples and groups
- Female-headed households
- Disaster-affected populations
- Poor households including homeless and landless families
- Survivors of gender-based violence (GBV), sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment (SEA/SH)
- People/children with disabilities; and,
- Sexual minorities including LGBTI groups.

Table 3.2: Dalit population in the proposed project districts

Proposed site	% of Dalits papulation as the total population
Birendranagar Municipality	18.9
Sharada Municipality	13.2
Dipayal Silgadi Municipality	22.9
Joshipur Rural Municipality	4.8
Janaki Rural Municipality	11.4

Source: Population Census 2011, Central Bureau of Statistics

As the project progress, vulnerable groups within the affected community will be further confirmed, included, and consulted with, as necessary. Where the SEP is used to address IPs, it will be prepared in a manner consistent with ESS7 to enable targeted meaningful consultation, 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. Against these, the project will:

- give priority to vulnerable family members to provide skills development training and on successful completion would provide jobs on a priority basis,
- create and ensure jobs for women-headed households as well as low-income families and persons with disabilities.

Table 3.3. Analysis of issues related to Disadvantaged/Vulnerable Groups

Project component	Vulnerable groups and individual	Key Characteristics /Needs	Preferred means of Consultation/Information disclosure	Additional Resources Required
Component 1. Improving Sector Governance and Institutional Capacity, Project Management				
• To provide support to improve sector governance and build institutional capacity of WASH agencies of all tiers of the government • To establish dedicated municipality WASH units and municipal utilities. • To provide support to build the capacities of private operators responsible for front-end delivery of water and sanitation services	Physically challenged persons with difficulties in movements, persons with visual and hearing impairment and persons living in extreme poverty	• Remote Distance, Poor Communication network • Lack of access to meeting places, distance to communal water points, language barrier, visual impairment	• community level meetings/fora, • Community notices • Local radio • Local/community radio, the media	• Provision of supporting the IPs, Dalits and other vulnerable groups to attain stakeholder consultations and information disclosure activities. • Provision of information on noticeboards, use of water scheme members to disseminate information to remote areas • Information translated to indigenous languages, sign language/ braille

Project component	Vulnerable groups and individual	Key Characteristics /Needs	Preferred means of Consultation/Information disclosure	Additional Resources Required
Component 2. Access to Improved and Safe Water Supply and Sanitation				
• To construct and rehabilitate water supply schemes to improve water and sanitation service delivery levels. • To construct faecal sludge and wastewater treatment facilities including both sewer systems, Faecal Sludge Treatment Plants (FSTPs) and on-site sanitation. • To construct water quality testing infrastructure, notably functioning laboratories to support water quality monitoring • To operationalize national water quality surveillance and governance system and integrated MIS	• People with physical disabilities and visual impairment • Forest User Groups (usually Dalits and other minorities) • Female-headed households, Women, girls, poor and disadvantaged children pregnant school age girls	• Accessibility, lack of information, limited voice • Cultural and traditional barriers poverty stigma	• Consider income levels in tariff review, locate water points closer to households, • More information dissemination through the local radio, Group discussions, pictorial posters, local language skits and discussions. • Focus group meeting, use of gender champions,	• Engagement of local NGOs and CBOs who work with vulnerable people at the community level to help disseminate information and organize consultation • Engagement of local NGOs and CBOs who work with vulnerable people at the community level to help disseminate information and organize consultation

Project component	Vulnerable groups and individual	Key Characteristics /Needs	Preferred means of Consultation/Infor mation disclosure	Additional Resources Required
Component 3. Building Resilience through Integrated Watershed Management				
• To support urban/rural watershed management and provide nature-based solutions to improve upstream/downstream water quality and environmental flows. • To provide adaption and mitigation measures against climate related hazards including droughts, floods, and landslides • To support a feasibility study on water source augmentation	Stakeholders in remote areas Forest User Groups (usually Dalits and other minorities)	Limited voice, Low representation, Lack of access to information,	Focus group meetings, engagement at the local level including the use of radio and town hall meetings	More information dissemination through local radio, pictorial posters, local language skits and discussions. Community level engagement/consultations

4. Stakeholder Engagement Program

4.1 Purpose of stakeholder engagement program

The stakeholder engagement program is designed to establish an effective platform for productive interaction with potentially affected parties and others with interest in the preparation and implementation of the project. Meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout the project cycle is an essential aspect of good project management and provides opportunities for the project to:

- Inform the stakeholders of the project related information especially issues that could potentially affect them in a timely, understandable, accessible, and appropriate manner and format,
- Assess the level of stakeholder interest and support for the project and to enable stakeholders' views to be considered in project design and environmental and social performance,
- Building and maintaining a constructive relationship with various stakeholders that have been identified,
- Provide project-affected persons with accessible and inclusive means to raise issues and grievances and allow the project to respond to and manage such grievances.

4.2 Principles of meaningful consultation

To meet the overall objectives of the SEP, the DoWSSM and participating municipalities aim to apply the following principles to ensure meaningful engagement with stakeholders:

- **Openness and life-cycle approach:** Activities related to stakeholder engagement, public consultations, and disclosure of project-related information will be conducted throughout the project lifecycle in a transparent manner, free of external manipulation, interference, coercion, or intimidation

- **Informed participation and feedback:** Information will be provided to and widely disseminated among all stakeholders through appropriate means and format to ensure maximum assessment of the stakeholders to the project-related information. Opportunities will be provided to stakeholders for their feedback and comments on information related to the project, and appropriate mechanisms will be put in place to address appropriate comments and concerns

- **Inclusiveness and sensitivity**: Stakeholder identification is undertaken to support better communications and build effective relationships. The project will ensure that the participation process would be inclusive, and all the stakeholders are encouraged to be involved in the consultation process. Equal access to information is provided to all stakeholders. Special attention is given to indigenous people, vulnerable groups especially children/students of both gender, women, Dalits, and the elderly, and to the cultural sensitivities of diverse ethnic and caste groups.

Table 4.1 presents an outline of key stakeholder engagement activities to be implemented throughout the project life: preparation to implementation and closure.

Table 4.1: Plan for Stakeholder Engagement

Topic of consultation / message	Target Stakeholders	Method(s) of Engagement	Frequency/time frame	Responsibilities
Project Phase: Planning and preparation				
At the Federal Level • Objectives and the planned activities of the project • E&S principles policies and scopes • The ESMF and potential E&S risk and impacts • The ESMP /updated ESMF • Stakeholder consultations and information disclosure • Grievance Redress mechanisms (GRM) • Citizen Engagement Activities • GBV and SHE/SH risks and impacts, including the SEA/SH Action Plan	• Federal government line agencies/officials • Provincial government line agencies/officials • Rural Municipalities and concerned officials • National level NGOs with a focus on WASH • Federation of Drinking Water and Sanitation Users' Nepal • Media	• Phone, call centers, email, official letters • Orientation/Training workshops • Virtual meetings (One-on-one/Group discussions) • Other outreach activities (All face-to-face meetings and small gatherings will be conducted by adopting COVID-19 related protocols)	Throughout the project preparation	MoWS and DoWSSM at the federal level

At the provincial and local levels • Objectives and the planned activities of the project • E&S principles policies and scopes • Engagement and consultation program with project stakeholder • The ESMF and potential E&S risks and impacts • Information about the mitigation measures and implementation modality, • Stakeholder consultations and information disclosure • Establishment and functioning procedures of GRM • Citizen Engagement Activities • GBV and SEA/SH risks and impact, including the SEA/SH Action Plan and management procedures • All activities to ensure access of all the beneficiaries, including the IP and vulnerable groups	• Affected individuals (project beneficiaries) • District Coordination Committees (DCCs) • The Surkhet Valley Drinking Water Consumers' Committee • Local communities • Vulnerable groups including women's groups and Dalits • Indigenous peoples • Local NGOs • Local press and media • Community leaders	• Virtual one-on-one or group meeting • Periodic stakeholder engagement activities • Periodic project-related information disclosure • meetings with local municipalities • FGDs with stakeholders • Targeted outreach activities and FGDs with women, IP organizations and other vulnerable groups, such as Dalits • Regular contacts through phone and text messages with representatives of project • Community radio, social media and local media (All face-to-face meetings will be conducted in a small group by adopting COVID-19 related protocols)		MoPID at provinces and project implementing municipalities at the LLs

Topic of consultation / message	Target Stakeholders	Method(s) of Engagement	Frequency/time frame	Responsibilities
• Program to ensure equity and quality of services and				
Project Phase: Implementation				
• Project scope and ongoing activities, and project status • Revision/updates of ESMF and other E&S instruments • Implementation of mitigation measures • SEP related activities • Functioning of the GRM • Periodic stakeholder consultations • Project-related information disclosure • Other potential E&S concerns	• Federal government line agencies/officials • Provincial government line agencies/officials • Municipalities and Rural Municipalities and concerned officials • The Surkhet Valley Drinking Water Consumers' Committee • WASH experts	• Phone, call centers, email, letters • Face-to-face/virtual meetings with federal, provincial and local agencies and officials • Orientation Program/ Training/workshop • Regular information updates in the MoWS and DoWSSM websites	Throughout the project implementation	MoWS and DoWSSM at the federal level
• Project scope and ongoing activities, • Status ESMF and related instruments • Progress in the implementation of mitigation measures • Updated SEP and related activities	• Affected individuals (project beneficiaries) • Local communities • Vulnerable groups • Indigenous peoples • Local NGOs • Local community leaders • Local press and media	• Periodic consultation with project stakeholders • Information disclosure through mass meetings, brochures, flyers, project website and local media, among other • Accessible and functioning GRM	Throughout the project implementation	MoPID at provinces and project implementing municipalities at the LLs

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Topic of consultation / message	Target Stakeholders	Method(s) of Engagement	Frequency/time frame	Responsibilities
• GRM implementation • Implementation of SEA/SH Action Plan • Periodic stakeholder consultations • Project-related information disclosure • Other potential E&S concerns		• Periodic small groups meetings with vulnerable and IP groups • Application of audio/visual communication techniques, and other accessible formats to engage with vulnerable groups, including people with disabilities (All face-to-face meetings will be conducted in a small group by adopting COVID-19 related protocols)		
• Understanding perception of beneficiaries about the activities and services extended under the project	• All targeted beneficiaries of subprojects	• Beneficiary Satisfaction Survey	First survey after two years of project implementation and the second during the final year of operation	DoWSSW

4.3 Proposed strategy for information disclosure

All relevant documents of the project, including the ESMF, SEP, ESCP, and ESRS, among others, will be disclosed and made accessible to all stakeholders. The information will be disclosed through all possible means, ranging from face-to-face and virtual consultations with the project stakeholders, distribution of hard copies, posters, leaflets, and brochures, through social media, DoWSSM and project website and local media so that the documents are accessible to all project beneficiaries of the project, including those in residing in the remote areas.

Table 4.2: Proposed strategy for information disclosure

Target stakeholders	List of information to be disclosed	Methods and timing proposed activities
Project preparation phase		
Government officials (Federal, provincial, District Coordination Committees (DCCs) and other district-level government agencies and project hosting municipalities and rural municipalities, including ward offices)	• Project concept and planned activities • Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) • The ESMF and the SEP • GRM process • SEA/SH management procedures • Revised and updated project information	• Group consultation • Training, seminar, and workshop • Electronic publications • Information leaflets and brochures • Cluster meetings with provincial authorities • MoWs website *(All face-to-face meeting will be conducted by adopting COVID-19 related protocols)*
• Private and public WASH and health institutions workers • Local NGOs and CBOs • Community leaders • National & local Media	• Project concept and planned activities • E&S management plans (i.e., highlights of ESMF, SEP, ESIAs, etc) • GRM procedure, • SEA/SH management procedures, and • Revised project information.	• Face-to-face or virtual meetings, webinars • Telephone calls, emails, and SMS • Seminar and workshops • Information boards, leaflets, and brochures • Regularly updated project information on the MoWs/ DoWSSM website
• Individuals and communities with a focus on vulnerable groups, including, IPs, women, and Dalits • Forest User Groups	• Project concept and activities • E&S procedures and management plans • Updated SEP, GRM procedures, ESMF and ESCP, and	• Regular release of public notices though mass media, community radio, television, and social media in Nepali as well as local language

• Water Supply and management Schemes • Local NGOs and CSOs	• Revised project information	• Regular updates of information on the MoWs /DoWSSM website • Distribute information leaflets and brochures to public • Air project information/ messages through community radio in Nepali and other local languages • Periodic small group meetings with vulnerable and IP groups • Regular contacts with the representatives of IP and vulnerable groups through phone calls, emails, text messages *(All face-to-face meeting will be conducted in a small group by adopting COVID-19 related protocols)*
Project implementation phase		
Government representatives (Federal, provincial, District Coordination Committees (DCCs) and other district-level government agencies and project hosting municipalities and rural municipalities, including ward offices)	• Scope of project and status of planned and ongoing activities • Regular updates on project status including the implementation of ESMF, SEP and GRM	• Sharing project update and reports through emails and meetings • Electronic publications as well as dissemination of hard copies • Virtual consultations with provincial authorities • Virtual/face-to-face consultations with local municipalities and ward offices
• Private and public WASH and health institutions workers • Local NGOs and CBOs • National & local Media	• Scope of project and related activities • Periodic updates on project status, including the	• Information boards, • Project websites • Project leaflets and brochures

	implementation of ESMF, SEP and mitigation measures • GRM procedures	• Periodic face-to-face/virtual meeting with project stakeholders • Distribution of electronic publications, and • Dissemination of hard copies (Information will be provided in Nepali and local languages)
• Individuals and communities with a focus on vulnerable groups, including poor and ethnic minorities, IPs, women • Local NGOs and CSOs	• Scope of project and related activities • Periodic updates on project status, including the implementation of ESMF, SEP and mitigation measures • GRM procedures	• Public notices • Press releases in the local media and on the project website • Information leaflets and brochures • Airing messages through community radio, • Exchange of information through emails, text messages, use of audio-visual materials • Periodic small group meetings with vulnerable and IP groups by adopting COVID protocols • Regular contacts through electronic means, such as phone calls, and emails, text messages • Information sharing from local level offices *(Information will be provided in Nepali as well as local languages as needed)*

4.4 Reporting Back

The project recognizes that enabling stakeholders to understand whether the feedback they provided during consultations has been received considered during project design and implementation are important factors to build trust with the community. Reporting back to stakeholders helps demonstrate that the project seriously takes suggestions, comments and complaints raised by the local community and if/how these have been incorporated and

addressed into the project. Understanding stakeholder concerns and addressing these early in the project design and before implementation can help to avoid any project issues during implementation and can help to secure consensus for the project from key stakeholders. The project will adopt the following mechanisms to manage stakeholder feedback and comments, and to report back to the stakeholders:

- The project will ensure that feedback and comments received through comments boxes, online platforms in the social media, project email, and dedicated telephone numbers are acknowledged by registering them in a logbook and will be addressed in an appropriate and timely manner.
- A periodic review of the implementation of the SEP will continue to incorporate new issues that have come to light, and concerns and queries raised by the stakeholders during the project implementation. It will also provide information on how the feedback has been considered and addressed by the project.

5. Implementation arrangements

This section explains the institutional arrangement that the project aims to adopt for the effective implementation of the SEP.

5.1 Organizational structure to implement the SEP

Federal level: The project will have an Intergovernmental Project Steering Committee (PSC) led by the secretary of the Ministry of Water Supplies (MoWS) at the Federal level and one of the major tasks of the committee will be to ensure collaboration and coordination between the three tiers of government and other key stakeholders. Similarly, there will be a Project Management Unit (PMU) at the DoWSSM and the PMU will be tasked with overall financial management and reporting along with channeling the resources to the implementing agencies at the local levels and will also be responsible for the implementation of Component 1. The PMU has recruited a Social Development Specialist who assumes overall responsibility for effective implementation of the SEP, monitoring consultation activities, and reporting quarterly on the implementation of the SEP and other social management plans. The Social Development Specialist will be assisted by an Environment Safeguard Specialist who leads the implementation of the environmental impact assessment and management of environmental issues.

Provincial Level: There will be an Intergovernmental Project Steering Committees (PSCs) at the provincial level with representation from federal, provincial and all participating local levels. Provincial Ministries of Physical Infrastructure and Urban Development will be responsible for providing technical supports to municipalities for the implementation of Components 2 and 3. The Soil Conservation and Watershed Management Office of the Karnali province will provide technical support on watershed management and conservation activities under Component 3.

Local Level (participating municipalities): The Municipal Social Development unit (and later the WASH units yet to be established) will be responsible for the implementation of consultation activities, managing project-related complaints and grievances, and supporting community mobilization efforts of the project. Existing staff at the social development units will be trained by the World Bank, and units without staff will be supported by the project to recruit dedicated E&S staff to be responsible for the implementation of the planned activities in this SEP. In addition, the staff will also serve as the focal persons for the GRM Level 1 at the local level. In effect, the E&S staff at the participating municipality will be responsible for managing E&S issues of the project at the local level, with technical support and guidance from the E&S specialists at the PMU. In addition to providing monthly SEP implementation and status reports to the E&S safeguard specialist at the DoWSSW, the E&S staff together with current heads of the various Water Supply Users Committees (and later WASH units when established) chief will be responsible for reporting and helping to manage sensitive incidents, such as grievances related to SEA/SH to the E&S safeguard specialist at the DoWSSW. The

organizational structure will be reviewed periodically to ensure the effectiveness of SEP implementation.

5.2 The roles and responsibilities of units/agencies and individuals

The roles and responsibilities of key agencies/units envisaged for the implementation and operation of the project (especially as they related to stakeholder consultation and engagement) are shown in the table below.

Table 5.1: Roles and Responsibility of Related Units/Agencies

Key units/agencies	Roles and responsibilities
Project Steering Committee (PSC)	• Ensuring collaboration and coordination between the three tiers of government and other key stakeholders.

PMU (DoWSSM-based)	• Planning, budgeting, and ensuring the implementation of the SEP throughout the project lifecycle.
	    o *Coordinate and monitor SEP activities with the partnering municipalities.*
	    o *Collating SEP-related activities from the partnering municipalities along with their performances and outcomes.*
	    o *Undertaking periodic monitoring of SEP, and preparation and dissemination of quarterly SEP implementation report.*
	• Ensuring necessary financial and human resources at all three levels for effective implementation of the SEP and other E&S management plans.
	• Ensuring the project activities as per the various guidelines and directives issued by the government and other related organizations, including Covid 19 management protocols.
	• Ensuring effective management and reporting of project-related complaints and grievances as per the project GRM.

Province level Intergovernmental Project Steering Committees (PSCs)	• Liaising with PMU staff to support and monitor Local Level activities. • Monitor progress of project activities in the field.
Provincial Ministries of Physical Infrastructure Development	• Providing technical backstopping and support to municipalities for the implementation of Components 2 and 3, taking into consideration community concerns
Social Development Units at Municipal Assemblies (and later WASH units when constituted)	• Lead the implementation of stakeholder consultation activities at the community level • Supporting the PMU in identifying stakeholders of the project at the local level and updating the list of stakeholders. • Mobilizing and organizing local stakeholders for consultation and project engagement activities. • Disseminating project-related information in a timely manner. • Managing and ensuring the smooth functioning of the Level-1 GRM.

	• Reporting (monthly) on SEP and GRM to PMU
Host/Local community	• Participate in consultations and information disclosure programs
	• Provide feedback on project related documents disclosed for public scrutiny
	• Use GRM to report any grievances and complaints

Table 5.2: Roles and Responsibilities of Individual/expert

Key staff/expert	Responsibilities
Project manager (PMU- DoWSSM)	• Responsible for monitoring and supervising the overall implementation of the SEP, including managing financial resources and supporting logistics, and preparing and disseminating quarterly SEP implementation reports.
E&S Safeguards specialist (PMU- DoWSSM)	• Responsible for the overall implementation of the SEP, including periodic consultations, information disclosure, and effective functioning of the GRM. • Coordinate the SEP activities among the provincial agencies and Local Levels. • Updating the SEP to accommodate any changes and take corrective actions immediately as and when required. • Preparing quarterly SEP implementation report and submit to the Word Bank office through the PMU
E&S Staff (Participating Municipalities)	• Support the PMU in the implementation of the SEP • Hold periodic consultations with stakeholders, including IP communities and vulnerable groups and prepare meeting minutes. • Disseminate project-related information to the local-level stakeholders through available means • Receive and acknowledge grievances and maintain a logbook/electronic database of grievances and status. • Support the local municipalities to ensure smooth functioning of Level- 1 grievances. • Report on the status of grievances to the E&S Safeguard Specialists at the PMU at DoWSSM and forward unsolved grievances to Level 2. • Provide data and field-level information related to SEP implementation activities to the Social Safeguard Specialist of the PMU at the DoWSSM. • Support E&S Safeguard Specialists to prepare quarterly SEP implementation reports as required.

5.3 Estimated Budget

A tentative budget for implementing activities related to Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) over the period of five years that covers the planning and preparation, and project implementation phases is provided in the table given below. The PMU- DoWSSM will review

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this plan half-yearly to determine if any changes to stakeholder classification or engagement are required. If required, the plan will be updated, and the budget items and budget will also be revised accordingly.

Table 5.3: SEP Implementation Budget

Item	Quantity	Unit Cost (US$)	Total Cost US$	Total Cost NRs (@ 120 per US$)	Remarks
Stakeholder engagement activities					
Periodic stakeholder consultations - Meetings/workshops/FGDs ((hiring of venues, refreshments etc.)	60	150	9,000	1,080,000	2 consultation meetings in a year in each 6 subprojects for 5 years
Individual and group consultations	-	Lump sum	2,000	240,000	As and when demanded/required for five years
Logistical support for IP, Dalits, and other vulnerable groups for attending consultations	-	Lump sum	2,500	300,000	As and when demanded/required for five years
Communication and coordination/facilitation (mobile, telephone, email)	-	Lump sum	3,600	432,000	US$ 10 for each month and each subproject for 5 years
Documentation of stakeholder activities and quarterly reporting	120	30	3,600	432,000	Four documentations and reporting in each year in each subproject for 5 years
Sub-total			**20,700**	2,484,000	
Information disclosure					
Project Information Centers (Basic logistics and operations)	6	500	3,000	360,000	Six centers in each six subprojects for five years
Development of communication tools, methods, and materials (Newspaper advertisements, brochures, leaflets, information booklets, posters, display boards, websites etc.)	-	Lump Sum	12,000	1,440,000	On average US$ 2,000 for each six sub-projects for 5 years

Development of community radio and TV programs	-	Lump sum	12,000	1,440,000	On average US$ 2,000 for each six sub-projects for 5 years
Awareness raising programs, resources & resource persons	6	500	3,000	360,000	On average US$ 500 per year for each six sub-projects for 5 years
Communication and coordination/facilitation (telephone, email)	-	Lump sum	3,600	432,000	US$ 10 for each month and each six subproject for 5 years
Sub-total			**33,600**	**4,032,000**	
Grievance redress system					
Meetings, documentation, and record keeping/databases and reporting	120	30	3,600	432,000	Four documentations and reporting in each year in each subproject for 5 years
Logistics for meetings Communications with complainants and other stakeholders	-	Lump sum	3,000	360,000	As and when demanded/required for five years
GRM implementation monitoring	-	Lump sum	3,000	360,000	As required for five years
Training and orientations for staff on GRM management	6	2,000	12,000	1,440,000	One in a year for each subproject for five years
Sub-total			**21,600**	**2,592,000**	
SEP Monitoring, evaluation, documentation, and reporting					
Internal monitoring	30	500	15,000	1,800,000	One in a year for each subproject for five years
Data storage and analysis		Lump sum	3,000	360,000	Onetime purchase
Report preparation	120	30	3,600	432,000	Four reporting in each year in each subproject for 5 years

Two beneficiary satisfaction surveys	2	10,000	20,000		The first one to be conducted after two years of implementation and second one in the last year of implementation.
Sub-project			**41,600**	**2,592,000**	
Administrative costs					
Transport	36	200	7,200	864,000	Two travels per year to each of the six projects for 5 years
Communications	360	10	3,600	432,000	US$ 10 per month for each six projects for the period of 5 years
Utilities	360	10	3,600	432,000	US$ 10 per month for each six projects for the period of 5 years
Other		Lump sum	3,000	360,000	Estimated for five years
Sub-total			**17,400**	**2,088,000**	
Grand total			**134,900**	**13,788,000**	

6. Grievance Redressal mechanism (GRM)

The project will put in place a responsive and functioning Grievance Redressal Mechanism (GRM) to address concerns and complaints of beneficiaries and project stakeholders by adopting an understandable and transparent process that is culturally appropriate and readily accessible to all the segments of affected communities. The project's GRM is at no cost to complainants and guarantees that there will no retribution for people who lodge complaints on project activities. Furthermore, the grievance mechanism will not impede access to judicial and administrative remedies.

6.1 Objectives of the GRM

The objectives of the GRM are

- Provide affected people with avenues for lodging complaints or resolving any dispute that may arise during the project lifecycle.
- Ensure that appropriate and mutually acceptable redress actions are identified and implemented to the satisfaction of complainants.
- Avoid the need to resort to judicial proceedings as far as possible.
- In the case of indigenous people and vulnerable people, adopt culturally appropriate and accessible means by which they can lodge complaints about redress through their customary dispute settlement mechanisms.

6.2 Grievance implementation procedure

The project will develop a written grievance procedure/manual in consultation with project impacted parties and stakeholders. It will incorporate the following steps.

- Means and ways to inform and educate stakeholders about GRM procedures
- Receive, register, and acknowledge the grievance.
- Review and investigate the grievance
- Develop resolution or escalate the grievance
- Report back on the grievance, and
- Implement, monitor, and evaluate the functioning of the GRM.

**6.3 Grievance Redressal Mechanism (GRM) System**

The main purpose of this system is to ensure there is a robust and transparent process, consisting of a sequential process of resolution available to swiftly address the complaints. A subsequent level of resolution is triggered if the complainant remains unsatisfied with the resolution made by the lower level or if it remains unable to provide a resolution within a given time. The SEP proposes the following two-tier GRM systems.

Level 1: This is based at the project locations in the participating municipalities and will serve as entry points for all complaints related to the project. Once the grievance is registered, it would come into the Level 1 of the GRM system. The Level 1 GRM committee will be led by the Chief of the existing Water Supply Users Committees (and later WASH Units when

constituted) at the partnering municipalities and supported by the E&S staff and a technical engineer at the municipalities. Together, these officials constitute the members of the four-member local level GRM committee. If required, the Level 1 GRM committee may seek support from the Judicial Committee (section 5.6 provides more information about the committee) at the local level.

Level 2: If the complainant rejects the resolution of Level 1 or the GRM Committee remains unable to make any resolution within the stipulated time, the grievance will be scaled up to level 2 of the GRM system. The Level 2 GRM committee, which will be based in the PMU of the DoWSSM, will be headed by the chief of the PMU, and supported by the Social Development Specialist at the PMU and another person assigned by the PUM head. The three-member committee can seek supports from other experts or institutions in course of investigating and resolving complaints. If complainants remain unsatisfied or reject the resolution provided by the Level 3 GRM, they will be advised to seek recourse through the courts or any formal system available.

Figure 6.1: GRM system
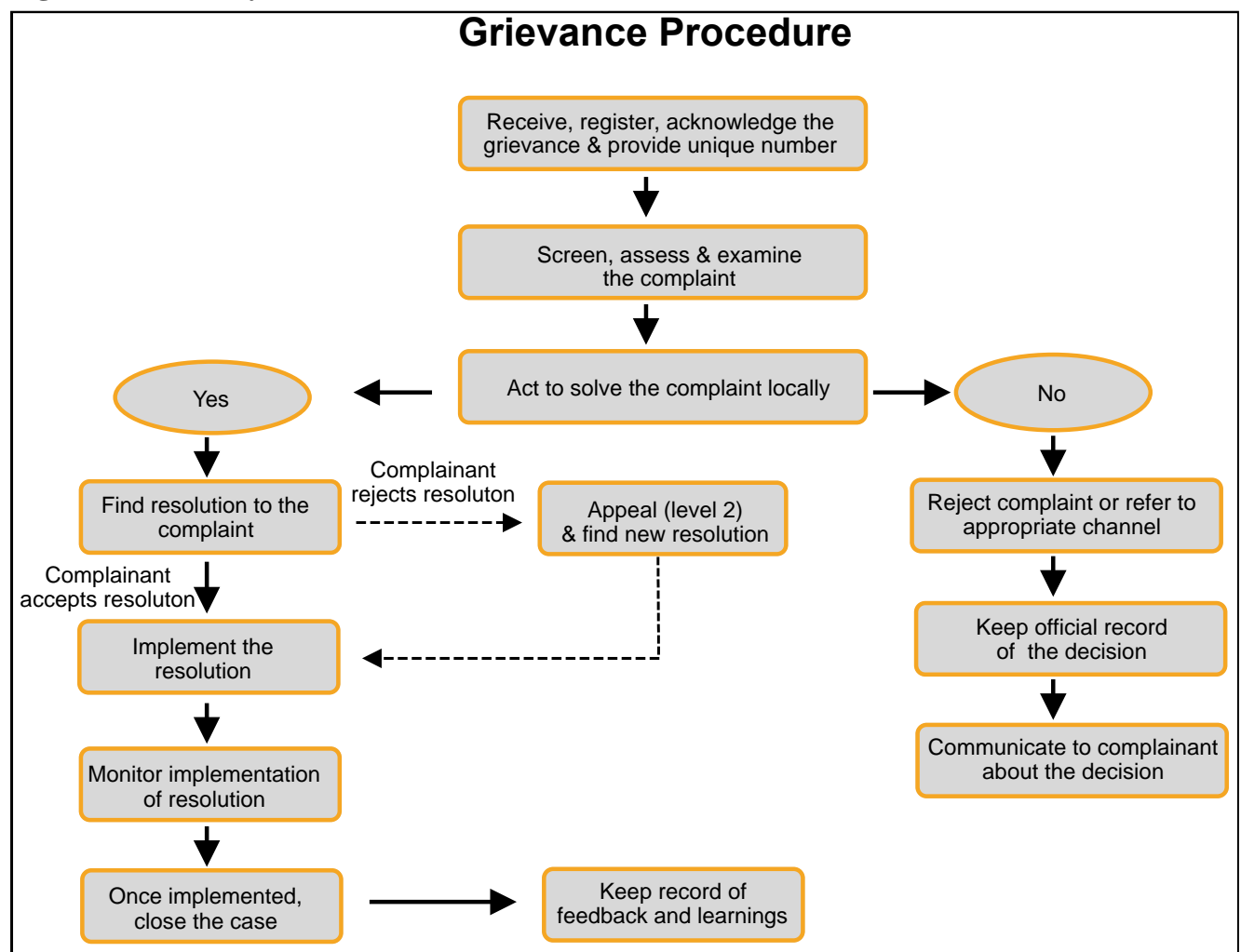
6.4 Key steps and procedures of the GRM System

Step 1: Receive, register, and acknowledge the grievance

The project will ensure the availability of a variety of methods for stakeholders to lodge grievances. Affected people and other stakeholders can lodge a grievance at Level 1 through:

- Fill out and submit online complaint forms (See Annex 4) at the Municipal Assembly. The E&S staff at the local level will assist in filling out the complaint form for complainants who are unable to read or write and/or are unfamiliar with the grievance process. In such case, the designated E&S staff will formally register the grievance by filling out the complaint form made available for the project

- Through emails and phone numbers of Municipalities (e.g., Birendranagar Right to Information Telephone number),

- Through project social media handles (i.e., Facebook)

- postal service to project offices at Federal and local levels.

Upon receipt of complaints, the E&S staff or any other person assigned for the task will provide a unique grievance number to each grievance for easy tracking. The staff will then acknowledge the receipt of the complaint within 5 working days through a phone call, text message, or a meeting with the complainant. The acknowledgment will include the grievance registration number so the complainant can use this as a reference to track the status of the complaint either by visiting the Social Development Unit at the Municipality or calling the assigned staff. If the grievance is not well understood or if additional information is required, the assigned staff will contact the complainant during this step for further clarification.

Step 2: Review and investigate the grievance

The grievance is screened, and the significance of the grievance will be assessed within 10 days of receipt. If the grievance is admissible and related to the project or triggered by the project activities, the Level 1 GRM committee will start processing the complaint. If not related to the project or not triggered by the project, the grievance will be rejected, and reasons will be properly communicated to the complainant about the decision along with an explanation.

Step 3: Develop resolution and respond to the complainant

Upon investigation, the committee will propose a resolution as soon as possible, and in consultation with the complainant and other concerned, not later than 15 days after screening and assessing the grievance at Level 1. The resolution is communicated to the complainant through the proper channel. The Level 1 GRM committee will ask the complainant for a

written acceptance of the resolution if he/she is satisfied with the resolution. In that case, the agreed set of actions will be implemented and once the set of actions are completed, the grievance will be formally closed by using a Grievance Closure Form provided in Annex 3.

Step 4: Scale-up the grievance if the complainant remains dissatisfied

If the complainant rejects the proposed resolution or the Level 1 GRM system fails to provide a resolution within the stipulated time, the Level 1 GRM system will refer the case to the grievance to the Level 2 GRM system led by the Chief of the PMU at the DoWSSM. The three-member Level 2 GRM committee, which also includes the Social Development Specialist of the DoWSSM will facilitate to reach an agreeable resolution and the committee will produce a resolution within 20 working days. If the resolution is accepted by the complainant, it will be implemented, and the grievance will be closed once the implementation is completed.

Step 5: Recourse to legal and other formal recourse

If the complainant rejects the proposed resolution, the complainant is free to utilize legal and other formal mechanisms in place at the local or national level.

Figure 5.2: Key steps and procedures
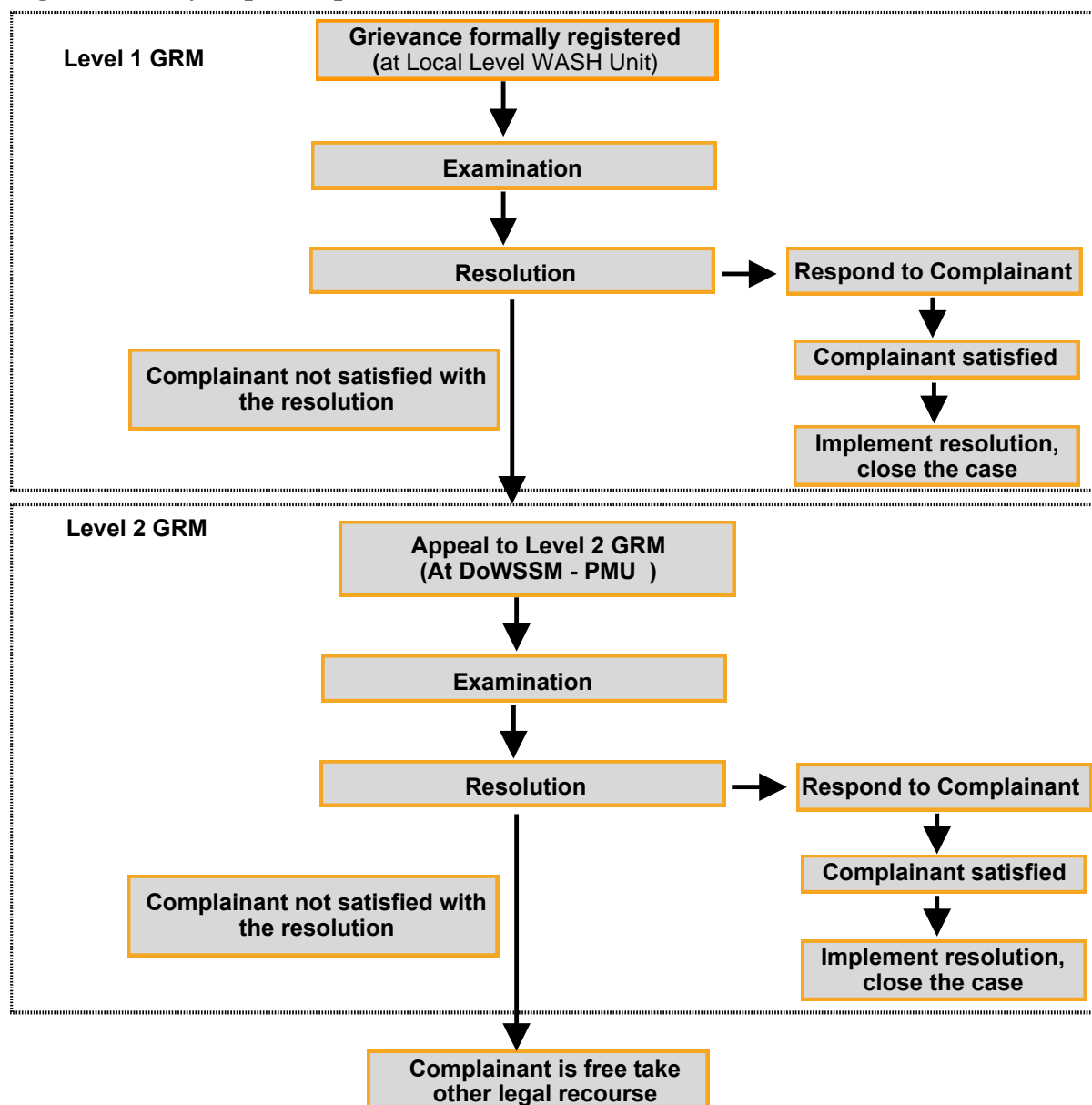
6.5 GRM in COVID-19 Crisis

In addition to the standard approach of handling and processing the grievances and complaints, due to the continued threat of COVID-19, the project will deploy modern means and tools to allow stakeholders to officially file complaints and grievances against the project activities. In addition to the project website and social media platforms that will enable the complainants to directly upload their complaints and grievances, the project will deploy a system that will allow the complainant to register grievances by directly making a call to social Safeguard specialists at the PMU. Moreover, the project will explore an option to introduce a digital grievance filing system through which complaints can be filed through the internet into a designated webpage of the project. Once the complaint or grievance is received through the website, social media, or direct calls, the E&S Safeguard specialists at the PMU will forward them to the concerned E&S staff at the participating municipalities and the staff will ensure the registration of such

complaints or grievances into the GRM system as explained Section 5.3. In addition to the registration, the E&S staff at the LL will also maintain a grievance registry and will officially close the grievance once it is solved by using the forms given in Appendix 3.

6.6 Use of the Existing Dispute Resolution Systems

In addition to the GRM system explained above, the project will also explore the possibilities of seeking support from the existing system at the local levels in course of resolving the project-related grievances. Article 117 of the Constitution of Nepal, promulgated in 2015, prescribed a three-member Judicial Committee at the local level coordinated by its Vice-Chairperson in the case of a Rural Municipality and by its Deputy Mayor in the case of a Municipality, to settle disputes under their respective jurisdictions in accordance with the law. The Local Government Operation Act, 2017 provides the operational guidance and scope of work of the Judicial Committee.

6.7 Grievances About GBV

The existing GRM put in place for the project will also be used for addressing GBV and SEA/SH-related issues and the PMU at the DoWSSM will oversee GBV related complaints. The project will place its uppermost priority on handling and managing the GBV related grievance by maintaining full confidentiality of the survivor. The PMU will put in place necessary mechanisms for confidential reporting with safe and ethical documentation of GBV issues at the canter and local level. The first responders of the grievances in relation to GBV will be the E&S staff of the participating municipalities and the staff will be trained on managing and handling such grievances. GBV referral pathway will be established and communicated to both PMU at the DoWSSM and local level. Further, the GRM will also put in place a systematic to immediately notify both the PMU and the World Bank of any GBV complaints, with the consent of the survivor. As per the requirement of the World Bank, the PMU, in support of the World Bank, will prepare and implement the SEA/SH Action Plan before the implementation of the project.

7. Monitoring and Reporting

7.1 Monitoring of Stakeholder Engagement Activities

Being a living document, the SEP will be periodically revised and updated as required during project construction and operation to ensure that the information incorporated, and the situation analyzed in the SEP is up to date consistent and with the changing ground scenario. Moreover, the periodic revision will ensure that the engagement strategies of the SEP are revised and readjusted as the project stakeholders identified and considered in the SEP change over a period. Broadly, the monitoring and tracking of the implementation of the SEP are important to:

- Ensures effective and continuous engagement with the identified stakeholders and follow-up
- Ensures a responsive and functioning GRM, and
- Minimizes slippages and oversight of important engagements aspects.

The project aims to apply two methods to monitor the overall outcomes of stakeholder engagement. These are:

1. **Review of engagement activities in the field:** The E&S staff of the participating municipalities will assess the usefulness and effectiveness of the stakeholder consultations that will be organized quarterly by using a feedback form and interviewing the participants after the activity. The feedback and comments made by the participants will be carefully examined and appropriate changes/reforms will be made in future engagement activities to enhance their effectiveness. Such changes will be communicated to the stakeholders in the next consultation.

2. **Periodic reporting**: The E&S staff present at the local level will prepare a quarterly SEP Implementation Report and submit it to the E&S officer of the PMU at DoWSSM. Once approved by the E&S officer and the chief of the PMU, the report will be disseminated to the stakeholders through periodic consultations and the project and DoWSSM websites.

7.2 Alternative means of monitoring and reporting in COVID-19 crisis

The COVID-19 crisis has limited the prospects of face-to-face public gatherings and group discussions. As such the project will also use alternative options to gauge the effectiveness of stakeholder engagement activities and to understand the required corrective actions to ensure that the activities ultimately achieve their goals. In addition to the traditional means of public gathering as mentioned above, E&S staff present at the local level will use the following alternatives means to achieve the goals of effective stakeholder engagement. These include:

- Establishing direct contacts with some of the stakeholders chosen randomly to understand their perception and effectiveness of the stakeholder engagement activities.
- Talking with representatives of IP communities, vulnerable groups including Dalits, and other marginalized communities to know their perceptions and impressions of engagement activities.
- Talking directly with the Ward Chairperson and other officials of local governments and get their thoughts about the engagement activities.
- Analyze comments and feedback posted on the Facebook and other social media accounts of the project.
- Analyze the news coverage of the project activities in the national and local media and other mass communication means.

7.3 Reporting of Stakeholder Engagement Activities

The PMU at the DoWSSM will be responsible for the effective implementing of the SEP and its periodic reporting. The designated E&S officer at the PMU will be responsible for collating the summaries and internal reports of the stakeholder engagement activities, management of GRM, inquiries, and related incidents together with the status of implementation of associated corrective/preventative actions from all the participating municipalities on the monthly basis. Based on the information, The E&S officer of the DoWSSM will lead the preparation of a quarterly monitoring report of the SEP implementation and submit it to the chief of the PMU. Once cleared by the chief of the PMU, the report will be disseminated through the project and DoWSSM websites and will also be shared with the World Bank E&S team. The quarterly report will use the following performance indicators as the template to officially inform the periodic review of the implementation of the SEP.

Table 7.1: Performance Indicators

Objectives	SEP Performance Indicators

Stakeholders are provided information about the project in a timely and culturally appropriate manner	• Means used to inform stakeholders about the stakeholder consultations
	  o Were the participants given advance notice about the meeting, including the time and venue of the meeting?
	  o Were the time and the venue appropriate to the stakeholders given the local context and settings?
	  o Were the participants communicated in advance about the meeting agenda?
	• Means used to organize consultations, such as small group meeting, video/audio conference, group chat meeting on one of the social media platforms and their usage and effectiveness.
	  o Were the COVID-19 protocols considered for the group meeting?
	• Number of consultation meetings, both face-to-face and virtual, within a specific period, particularly with the focus on women, IPs, and vulnerable people, including Dalits and religious minorities.
	• Means of dissemination and number of materials disseminated
	  o How effective were the materials used for dissemination?
	  o Comments received on disclosure materials, positive or negative.

Stakeholders have an opportunity to share their views and concerns about the Project's development	• Type of engagement opportunities given to participants in the meeting in terms of raised and comments made.
	  o How many participants shared their views and concerns?
	  o How many of them were women, IPs, or Dalits?
	  o Did all those who wanted to share their views and concerns get a chance to speak?
	• Attendance rates and nature of participation in terms of gender and indigenous people, Dalits, and vulnerable people.
	  o How many were the women of the total participants?
	  o How many were the IPs, Dalits, and other vulnerable people of the total participants?
	  o How many were the differently able people of the total participants?
	• Quality of recording of comments made by the participants maintained by the project.
	• Numbers of grievances related to the project activities and means used by the complaints to lodge their grievance.

Objectives	SEP Performance Indicators

Informed participation of the IPs and vulnerable groups	• Number and type of engagement opportunities provided to IPs, Dalits and other Vulnerable Groups and means and medium of engagement.
	  o How were the IPs, Dalits, and other vulnerable informed about such consultations?
	  o How many IPs, Dalits, and other vulnerable people shared their views and concerns in the consultations?
	  o Number of FGDs means and the medium used for engagement.
	  o Types of feedback/comments received from the IPs, Dalits, and vulnerable groups.
	  o Representation of all sub-groups.
	  o Number and types of grievances received from the IPs, Dalits, and vulnerable groups.

Positive working relationships are built and maintained over time	• Total number and type of grievances lodged by stakeholders in a reporting period (each quarter) • Methods used in lodging the grievances (in person, through forms, phone, email, and other means). • Number of satisfactorily closed out grievances. • Current status of unresolved grievance and major reasons for being unresolved. • Community attitudes and perceptions towards the GRM.
Engagement continues to be transparent, inclusive, and appropriate throughout the Project lifecycle	• Adherence to the schedule of stakeholder engagement activities. • Representation of IPs, Dalits, and other Vulnerable Groups in engagement activities. • Number and type of grievances lodged by community members. • Reasons for non or low participation of the specific group, the community of specific location, women, IPs, and Vulnerable Groups, including the Dalits, in any.

Annex 1 - Sample Grievance Form

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: _____

Brief description of grievance

Mode of submission of grievance:

☐ Verbal ☐ Written ☐ Complaint Box ☐ Phone ☐ Email ☐ Others

Signature of Complainant

Signature of Grievance Officer

Annex 2 - Sample Grievance Registration Template

No	Date of receiving incoming letter / form	Grievance Reference Number	Name / Surname of grievance originator (if not anonymous)	Gender	Type of grievance	Details of grievance	Medium of comm.	Name of staff responsible for managing the grievance	Date of grievance acknowledgement	Date of feedback provision/reference number	Present status	Remarks
1												
2												
3												
4												
5												
6												
7												
8												
9												

Annex 3 - Sample Grievance Closure Form

Grievance Closure Form **Resolution**	
Grievance Number	
Grievance registered date	
Describe the steps taken to resolve the grievance	
Describe the resolution	
Department: Mode of communication for reply (meeting/ written/ verbal/ display): Date closed:	
Signatures	
Complainant: Project representative: Date:	

Annex 4 - Grievance Redressal Online Form issued by the municipality

News   वीरेन्द्रनगर वडा न १ मा रहेका बैदेशिक रोजगारवाट फर्किएका जनशक्तिहरुको सुची   सामुदायिक औलो स्वा

Home » Contact

Contact

Office Contact Numbers:

+977-83-520128

Please fill up the below form if you have any feedback.

Name *
Write your full name.

Subject *

Type * [Grievance ▾]

Message *

[Submit]