

African Union Commission

Strengthening Economic Policymaking Capacity in Africa (P179804)

DRAFT

Abbreviated Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

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ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYM

ACBF	The African Capacity Building Foundation
ACET	African Center for Economic Transformation
AERC	African Economic Research Consortium
AU	African Union
AUC	African Union Commission
AUDA-	
NEPAD	African Union Development Agency-NEPAD
CREAD	Centre de Recherche en Economie Appliquée pour le Développement
E&S	Environmental & Social
EPI	Economic Policy Institute
ESCP	Environmental and Social Commitment Plan
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
ESS	Environmental and Social Standard
ETTIM	Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Mining
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
GRS	Grievance Redress Service
HESPI	The Horn Social & Economic Policy Institute
M&E	Monitoring & Evaluation
OIP	Other Interested Party
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PAP	Project Affected Person
PBFA	Directorate of Programming, Budget, Finance and Accounting
PDO	Project Development Objective
PEP	Partnership for Economic Policy
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
POM	Project Operations Manual
PPA	Partnership Performance Agreement
RO	Regional Organization
REC	Regional Economic Communities
REPOA	Policy Research for Development
RSC	Regional Steering Committee
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SH	Sexual Harassment
TA	Technical Assistance
UNECA	United National Economic Commission for Africa
WB	World Bank

INTRODUCTION

Background

The proposed **Strengthening Economic Policymaking Capacity in Africa Project** aims to build policymaking capacity to advance the regional integration agenda, provide a platform for policy harmonization and improve development outcomes. It aims to establish and operationalize a sustainable platform for effective cooperation and harmonization on regional policy issues between country level policymakers, regional associations and economic policy institutes based on existing regional strategies, such as the African Union's Agenda 2063. It will support a Regional Organization (RO) housed in the African Union Commission to set up and operate a functional and sustainable platform that: (i) convenes key stakeholders from governments, economic policy institutes and academia to identify and discuss pan-African priority areas for economic policy; (ii) bridges the divide between the policy research community and policymakers to facilitate research uptake and promote linkages between economic policy institutes, Regional Economic Communities (RECs) and national governments; (iii) provides technical assistance and institutional support to selected Economic Policy Institutes (EPIs) and fosters collaboration among them; and (iv) undertakes and supports resource mobilization for the platform and its beneficiaries' to support long-term financial sustainability, including setting up a facility to crowd-in resources from African governments, foundations, Development Partners and other donors. In supporting a RO to play a central role in cooperation and harmonization on regional economic policy issues between different stakeholders, the project aims to strengthen the overall evidence-to-policy ecosystem. The project will pay attention to the different actors within the system and maintain or even strengthen the relationships between them in order to ensure there is a flow of research and evidence to support better regional policymaking and policy implementation.

The World Bank's Environmental and Social Standard 10¹ recognizes the importance of open and transparent engagement with all project stakeholders, based on the recognition that effective stakeholder engagement can improve E&S sustainability of project activities, enhance project acceptance, and implementation, and allow stakeholders to contribute to project design. The key objectives of stakeholder engagement include a) an assessment of the level of interest and support of the project by stakeholders to promote effective and inclusive engagement with all project-affected parties and b) to ensure that project information on E&S risks and impacts is disclosed in a timely and understandable way. This abbreviated Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) was adopted in a manner consistent with the requirements of ESS10 as the most appropriate instrument to be developed prior to project appraisal.

The abbreviated SEP outlines the principle stakeholder engagements for the Project activities. It defines legal and policy requirements in regard to stakeholder engagements, lists stakeholder engagements that have already been undertaken, provides a stakeholder analysis of all relevant project-affected parties, and lays out the means of dissemination of information to different parties as well as means and ways to continue to consult different stakeholder groups throughout the project cycle. Furthermore, it contains a monitoring plan for the implementation of the abbreviated SEP.

¹ The World Bank, Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), 2018.

Project Development Objective

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to build the capacity of the AU to facilitate an effective and sustainable platform to strengthen policymaking in Africa.

Project Components

The project will have two main components: a first component to build the capacity of the RO to establish and operate a sustainable regional platform that will support economic policymaking on regional priority issues; and a second component that builds the capacity of the RO to strengthen the quality, relevance and uptake of policy research on regional priority issues.

Component 1: Capacity development of AUC to establish and operate a sustainable continental policymaking platform

This component will develop the capacity of the RO to create and set up the structures necessary to operate a sustainable regional platform supporting regional economic policymaking. It includes two sub-components:

Sub-component 1.1: Capacity development to establish and operate regional platform. The objective of this sub-component is to build the capacity of the RO to establish the required structures and support the development of systems necessary to administer a forum that brings together a wide variety of stakeholders. Therefore, the sub-component will finance activities such as (i) establishing a unit(s) with dedicated staff to operate the platform; (ii) developing and implementing all managerial, administrative and ICT processes required to run the platform; (iii) building and maintaining a network of Economic Policy Institutes (EPIs), RECs and policymakers; (iv) creating and maintaining a database of African and global EPIs; (v) creating and maintaining a database and online Africa Knowledge Repository of existing policy research conducted across the continent; (vi) organizing and facilitating Regional Steering Committee (RSC) meetings; and (vii) designing and implementing monitoring and evaluation strategies for the platform as well as mechanisms to draw and learn from lessons during implementation.

Sub-component 1.2: Capacity development to support sustainability of regional platform and research on regional priority issues: The objective of this sub-component is to develop the capacity of the RO to mobilize resources and establish facilities to crowd-in funds from a variety of stakeholders to support the sustainability of the regional platform over the long-term. Under this sub-component, the RO will set-up a general fund to provide a vehicle to mobilize additional resources to support the initiative and expand the number of participating EPIs. It will also explore the establishment of an endowment fund to support the sustainability of the platform. Revenues from the endowment fund will flow into the general fund and will be used to finance further research and capacity building efforts around regional economic policymaking. In addition, the sub-component will support the RO to identify and undertake innovative resource mobilization activities that can finance research on regional priority issues in a sustainable manner over the long-term. The sub-component will thus finance: (i) technical assistance to establish the general fund; (ii) recruitment of dedicated staff to support regular fundraising for the general fund; (iii) design of a resource mobilization strategy to raise funds from diverse donors such as African governments, private sector, foundations, individual and institutions donors for economic

policymaking in regional priority areas; (iv) studies necessary to establish and operate the endowment fund including feasibility studies; (v) technical assistance to design the endowment fund includes its statutes, governance, structure and funding strategies as well as identified and selection of a Fund Manager; (vi) seed contribution to the endowment fund in the amount of US\$10 million.

Component 2: Capacity development of AUC to strengthen the quality, relevance and uptake of policy research on regional priority issues

This component will support the RO to host activities on the platform developed under Component 1 to promote knowledge exchange on regional economic issues, create a forum between policymakers and EPIs to develop a shared research and technical assistance agenda, and facilitate greater policy adoption. Activities to be financed will include (i) organizing meetings of African governments, RECs, and other partners to identify and discuss regional challenges and priority areas; (ii) organizing knowledge exchange events (e.g., regional conferences and fora) that convene policymakers and researchers to align on policy needs and promote policy uptake and adoption; (iii) facilitating fellowship or secondment programs between governments and EPIs to enhance research and policy skills sets of policymakers and policy researchers respectively and narrow the research-policy gap; (iv) facilitating partnerships and twinning programs among African EPIs, global EPIs and universities to build technical capacity and expand research; (v) providing a package of support to EPIs to address common challenges including technical assistance to enhance quality and communication of research (e.g. workshops for staff and experts relating to research analysis, modeling, policy engagement and communication, and project management among others), strengthen resource mobilization efforts, and facilitate adoption of regional policies by countries; (vi) financing studies to identify the barriers that prevent women from pursuing careers in economic research and measures to improve their participation that can inform gender activities of African EPIs; and (vii) creating a peer network for female economic researchers to engage on professional topics as well as issues that impact women in the field.

Institutional Arrangements

The key implementing body under the project is the Regional Organization (RO) housed at the African Union Commission (AUC). Different departments within the AUC will be engaged in project implementation according to the project activities and their respective mandates and areas of work. The Office of the Director-General will be the central entity tasked with overall project management, coordination across AUC departments, environmental and social risk management, monitoring and evaluation and project-level reporting to the World Bank. The Directorate of Programming, Budget, Finance and Accounting (PBFA) will shoulder fiduciary responsibilities and manage the IDA funds. The Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Mining (ETTİM) department, a technical directorate in charge of economic policy and research as well as regional integration and cooperation at the AUC, will be responsible for day-to-day project implementation and operations. It will provide intellectual leadership on regional economic priorities, operate the regional platform including its administrative and ICT processes, manage the competitive selection process of EPIs, work directly with the EPIs on their work plans and oversee the implementation of their proposals, interface between EPIs and governments on policy and research needs, and convene stakeholders for regional forums, meetings and knowledge exchange events. The ETTİM Department will also organize the RSC meetings on behalf of the AUC and serve as its Secretariat. It will include a project implementation unit headed by a Project Coordinator and with dedicate staff to manage the aforementioned responsibilities.

A Regional Steering Committee (RSC) will provide strategic direction, guidance and oversight as well as facilitate regional ownership of the project. The RSC will have pan-African representation including representatives from selected African Ministries of Finance, RECs, other relevant regional bodies (such as the United National Economic Commission for Africa [UNECA] and African Union Development Agency-NEPAD [AUDA-NEPAD]), private sector and academia. The RSC will be the highest decision-making body within the institutional structure of the project. It will advise on regional priorities, assess and support the coherence of the project with such priorities, advocate for and facilitate regional collaboration on economic policy issues, endorse the selection of the beneficiary EPIs, provide high-level guidance on EPIs' institutional annual work plans, and review the implementation progress of the project, including the performance of beneficiary institutions, to ensure achievement of the PDO.

The EPIs selected competitively under the project will implement project activities primarily relating to knowledge generation, communication of research, financial sustainability and promotion of national adoption of regional policies. The beneficiary EPIs will receive grants from the RO to implement their proposals via a Partnership Performance Agreement (PPA) based on annual work plans.

The overall responsibility in regard to the implementation of stakeholder engagement as per this abbreviated SEP will sit with the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) that will be established in ETTIM. Appropriate staff with technical expertise will be recruited in the PIU.

Objectives of the abbreviated SEP

This abbreviated SEP will apply to all components of the project. It aims at providing guiding principles for the facilitation of stakeholder engagement throughout the Project's life cycle and across the two project components.

The objectives of this SEP are:

- To provide guiding principles for the identification of project stakeholders, their priorities, and concerns.
- To lay out principles for information sharing and communication to stakeholders as well as consultation of stakeholders in ways that are meaningful and accessible throughout the project cycle.
- To guide on procedures and methodologies for stakeholder consultations, documentation of the proceedings and strategies for feedback.
- To outline the establishment of an effective, transparent and responsive grievance redress mechanism for the project.
- To provide a strategy for inclusive and meaningful stakeholder participation in the monitoring of project impacts, documenting, reporting and dissemination of results among the different stakeholders.

REGULATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS

Stakeholder engagement is an inclusive process conducted throughout the project life cycle to support the development of strong, constructive, and responsive relationships that are important for successful management of a project's environmental and social risks. The World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) includes Environmental and Social Standard (ESS) 10, "Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure", which recognizes "the importance of open and transparent engagement with the project stakeholders as an essential element of good international practice". ESS10 also suggests that effective stakeholder engagement can significantly improve the environmental and social sustainability of projects, enhance project acceptance, and make a significant contribution to successful project design and implementation.

The application of these standards, by focusing on the identification and management of environmental and social risks, will support Recipients in their goal to reduce poverty and increase prosperity in a sustainable manner for the benefit of the environment and their citizens. The standards will:

- a. support Recipients in achieving good international practice relating to environmental and social sustainability;
- b. assist Recipients in fulfilling their national and international environmental and social obligations;
- c. enhance non-discrimination, transparency, participation, accountability, and governance; and
- d. enhance the sustainable development outcomes of projects through ongoing stakeholder engagement.

Stakeholder engagement is also provided for in the various forms of respective national legislation including the constitutions and legislation on environmental and social impact assessments and audits. The instruments unanimously advocate for meaningful involvement of project stakeholders in decisions that affect them, participatory planning, and transparent grievance management mechanisms.

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATIONS UNDERTAKEN TO DATE

A virtual stakeholder consultation workshop was undertaken on 8 March 2023. The selected stakeholders were participants from selected EPIs (see Annex 1), including from the Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP), the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), the Maghreb Economic Forum, the Centre de Recherche en Economie Appliquée pour le Développement (CREAD), Afrobarometer, Policy Research for Development (REPOA), and the Horn Social & Economic Policy Institute (HESPI).

Respondents indicated that EPIs face a number of challenges in performing their work, including engagement and uptake at national and regional level given the existing complex political economies; lack of governmental trust in data produced; lack of continuous funding to collect high quality data; and the need to advise on real time issues to stay relevant. Further challenges include the lack of capacity for demand-driven research; the lack of capacity to translate actionable research in palatable information; and the lack of a platform where everyone can share knowledge.

Stakeholders indicated that there is a general lack of evidence-informed policy and a lack of training and mentoring of policymakers. One stakeholder said that if you want to influence policy, you have to go beyond analytical work and publication. Generally, stakeholders agreed that there is still a significant need for research to be undertaken to inform policymaking in Africa.

Funding issues were raised in particular. It's hard for think tanks to obtain funding that allows organizations to grow and become sustainable. Sustainable organizations have built relationships with clients, from civil society, government, practitioners but also private sector and translated their knowledge. In particular, scholarship support to quality graduate programs, which produce the required capacity for economic research and policy making, were emphasized.

Stakeholders were further consulted on how they approach regional public goods, and transnational challenges. Some responded that these global forces are included in their surveys. Some also focused with their research on food security, impacts of Covid-19 on the population, employment or energy policy, as well as migration, which are all transnational issues. Others have networks across the region and partner with universities. Collaboration is key – having students think collaboratively cross-country and have problems solved at wider scale.

When asked about how collaboration between EPIs could be increased, some stakeholders suggested to build further consortia. This may be particularly important in countries that have less EPIs or capacity for research. Real partnerships would include the curation of knowledge jointly with other think tanks. A request was made to the Project for financing of capacity to increase communication. Stakeholders requested overall support, combined with targeted support where needed to local specificities, to allow the preparation of "regional goods". Furthermore, young researchers and female researchers need to be better integrated into current policy research.

STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS

The Project stakeholders are individuals or groups (parties) that can be affected by the project outcomes, either directly or indirectly and both positively or negatively (Project-Affected Parties - PAP). This section provides the identification of the stakeholder groups that are likely to influence or be affected by the Project components either positively or negatively and organizes them according to the potential impacts of the activities on them.

Project stakeholders can be classified according to : a) their roles and responsibilities in the project; b) their influence/interest in the project; c) whether they are direct or indirect beneficiaries.

The stakeholder engagement requirements for this Project, however, are limited to stakeholders that participate in the policymaking capacity development, as there is no direct contact with local communities and disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. As the Project does not finance any physical investments, there are no anticipated risks and impacts related to land acquisition, restrictions on land use and involuntary resettlement. Likewise, since the activities under each component focus on developing policymaking capacity, there will be no or limited probability of activities that require any direct interaction with wider communities. Likely stakeholders therefore include:

Direct stakeholders

1. African Union Commission
2. Board of the AU
3. The Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Mining (ETTİM) Department at the AUC
4. AUC Office of the Director-General
5. Directorate of Programming, Budget, Finance and Accounting (PBFA) at the AU
6. African Capacity Building Foundation (AU Agency)
7. Economic Policy Institutes (EPİs) (African and global)
8. Academia / Universities
9. Regional Economic Communities (RECs)
10. Individual and institutional donors

Private sector donors such as safaricom etc

Indirect stakeholders

11. Country-level policymakers
12. Other AUC Departments
13. National Governments (especially Ministries of Finance)
14. Research organizations such as Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP), etc.) United National Economic Commission for Africa [UNECA]
15. African Union Development Agency-NEPAD [AUDA-NEPAD]
16. NGOs that apply research findings
17. Media that reports on research findings

Table 1 Summary of Stakeholders Identification

Stakeholder	Category Department	Mandate/Role	Interest	Project Affected Party		Language needs	Preferred notification means (Emails, Phone, Letters)	Specific needs (accessibility, large print, daytime meetings)
Direct Beneficiaries								
AUC (Board of the AU, other AU Dept.)	Multilateral Organization	Undertaking day to day activities of the union	High	PAP		Language translators	Meetings, email, phone, internal memos	n/a
Regional Steering Committee (RSC)	Multilateral Organization	Project Steering Committee	High	PAP		Language translators	Meetings, email, phone, internal memos	n/a
African Capacity Building Foundation (AU Agency)	Multilateral Organization	Capacity Building for EPIs	High	PAP		Language translators	Meetings, email, phone, internal memos	n/a
Economic Policy Institutes (EPIs) (African and global)	Non-governmental and governmental organizations	Grant recipients	High	PAP		Language translators	Meetings, email, phone	n/a
Academia / Universities	academia	Identification of policy priorities	High			Language translators	Meetings, email, phone, website	n/a
Regional Economic Communities (RECs)	Multilateral Organization	Receive research inputs and participate in network	High	PAP		Language translators	Meetings, email, phone, website	n/a
Foundations	Private sector	Contribute to crowd-in resources	Medium			Language translators	Meetings, email, website	n/a
Private sector donors (such as safaricom etc...)	Private sector	Contribute to crowd-in resources	Medium			Language translators	Meetings, email, website	n/a
Indirect Beneficiaries								
Country-level	Governmental	Contribute to economic	High	PAP		Language translators	Meetings, email,	n/a

Stakeholder	Category Department	Mandate/Role	Interest	Project Affected Party		Language needs	Preferred notification means (Emails, Phone, Letters)	Specific needs (accessibility, large print, daytime meetings)
polymakers	organizations	polymaking					website	
Regional Associations	Governmental and non-governmental associations	Contribute to economic polymaking	High	PAP		Language translators	Meetings, email, website	n/a
National Governments (especially Ministries of Finance)	Governmental entities	Contribute to economic polymaking	High	PAP		Language translators	Meetings, email, website	n/a
Research organizations (such as Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP), etc...)	Private sector or governmental organizations	Conduct economic policy research	High	PAP		Language translators	Meetings, email, website	n/a
United National Economic Commission for Africa [UNECA]	Multilateral organization	Contribute to economic polymaking	Medium	PAP		Language translators	Meetings, email, website	n/a
NGOs	Non-governmental organization	Apply research findings	Medium	PAP		Language translators	Website	n/a
Media	Media	Reporting on research findings	Medium			Language translators	Website	n/a

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

Stakeholder engagement refers to the process of interacting and working with stakeholders identified as relevant to the project to come up with new concepts, identify challenges and discrepancies and how to address issues that may rise. This assists the realization of stakeholder needs and expectations for effective implementation of project components.

This abbreviated SEP is used to formulate schedules, strategies and general plans to ensure that there is effective, meaningful and inclusive participation of project affected persons (PAPs) throughout the entire project life cycle. It consists of planning on how information relevant to the Project will be disseminated and how consultations will take place, how issues raised will be addressed and responded to in a transparent, meaningful, timely and inclusive manner. It provides an effective outline of activities to be undertaken within a given timeframe to ensure effective stakeholder involvement and with that improve the project's sustainability and development benefits. The abbreviated SEP may be updated throughout project implementation if necessary. This may include amendments to the engagement methods or the adding of stakeholder groups. The abbreviated SEP guides on the timing and methods of engagement with stakeholders throughout the life cycle of the project as agreed between Bank and Recipient. It also provides guidance on the range and timing of information to be communicated to project-affected parties, as well as the type of information to be sought from them.

The abbreviated SEP includes a description of the project with its anticipated environmental and social impacts, as known at the time; stakeholder groups identified; a stakeholder engagement program (including topics stakeholders will be engaged on, how stakeholders will be notified, the methods of engagement, list of information/documents that will be in the public domain, languages they will be available in, length of consultation period, and opportunities to comment); indication of resources required and the responsibilities for implementing stakeholder engagement activities; and a summary description of a grievance redress mechanism.

Purpose and Timing of Stakeholder Engagement Program

The objectives of information dissemination and consultations under the Project are: (a) reception of feedback and comments as well as grievances from all stakeholders on project design and implementation; b) feedback on capacity gaps and challenges; c) feedback on potential environmental and social risks and impacts and mitigation measures; d) provision of regular information to stakeholders related to project implementation progress and any other emerging issues throughout the project cycle and e) provision of transparent and accountable mechanisms on all aspects of the project implementation.

The Project's Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) and this abbreviated SEP will be publicly disclosed to ensure that everyone is informed about social and environmental risks and respective mitigation measures.

This section outlines some of the proposed methods of stakeholder engagement throughout the project cycle. Stakeholder engagement will be undertaken on a continuous basis to inform the project affected persons of project activities and plans and will employ appropriate strategies to ensure effective and

meaningful disclosure of information to enhance increased access to project information. Different engagement methods are proposed and cover different needs of the stakeholders.

Proposed Strategy for Information Disclosure

Information disclosure to all potential stakeholders will rely on the following key methods: correspondence by phone/mail; memos, virtual meetings, letters, website, and email communication. Information will be disclosed in English or French or the respective national language, where appropriate.

Table 2 Strategy for Information Disclosure

Information to be disclosed	Target Stakeholders	Messages/ Agenda	Methods of Communication	Time Table: locations / dates	Responsibility
Project Preparation					
Abbreviated SEP ESCP	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • Board of the AU • AUC Office of the Director-General • PBFA • African Capacity Building Foundation • EPIs • Academia / Universities • RECs • Foundations • Individual and institutional donors • Private sector donors • Country-level policymakers • Regional Associations • Other AUC Departments • National Governments (especially Ministries of Finance) • Research organizations such as Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP) • • UNECA • AUDA-NEPAD • NGOs • Media 	<p>Email message to advise stakeholders of disclosure and where to access the disclosed documents.</p> <p>Disclosure of Project documentation in a culturally appropriate and accessible manner</p> <p>Describe Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)</p> <p>Present stakeholders identified and describe approach to stakeholder engagement</p>	<p>AUC website</p> <p>Correspondence by phone/email</p> <p>Memos</p> <p>Meetings (virtual)</p> <p>Letters</p> <p>Telephone</p>	<p>During project preparation</p> <p>All relevant offices</p>	<p>Project Implementation Unit (PIU)</p>

Information to be disclosed	Target Stakeholders	Messages/ Agenda	Methods of Communication	Time Table: locations / dates	Responsibility
<p>Project information Including:</p> <p>Project objectives, rationale and components</p> <p>Project benefits and beneficiaries</p> <p>Project implementation arrangements</p> <p>Research proposals</p> <p>Training and capacity building initiatives</p> <p>Events and workshops</p> <p>Policy outcomes</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • Board of the AU • AUC Office of the Director-General • PBFA • African Capacity Building Foundation • EPIs • Academia / Universities • RECs • Foundations • Individual and institutional donors • Private sector donors such as safaricom etc...) • • Country-level policymakers • Regional Associations • Other AUC Departments • National Governments (especially Ministries of Finance) • Research organizations such as Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP) • • UNECA • AUDA-NEPAD • NGOs • Media 	<p>Present the Project – objectives, rationale, components, benefits and beneficiaries, Implementation arrangements</p> <p>Indicative implementation schedule and period, project contacts.</p> <p>Set out measures, actions, plans</p>	<p>Upload on websites</p> <p>Email copies to key individuals and organizations.</p> <p>Direct meetings</p>	<p>During project preparation and throughout implementation</p> <p>All relevant offices</p>	PIU
Throughout Project Implementation					
Quarterly,		General information on	Email	Throughout	PIU

Information to be disclosed	Target Stakeholders	Messages/ Agenda	Methods of Communication	Time Table: locations / dates	Responsibility
annual progress reports	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • Board of the AU • AUC Office of the Director-General • PBFA • African Capacity Building Foundation • EPIs • Academia / Universities • RECs • Other AUC Departments • National Governments (especially Ministries of Finance) • NGOs • Media 	<p>project, activities</p> <p>Updates to Project instruments</p> <p>Inputs into Project activities</p>	<p>Website</p> <p>One to one meeting</p>	<p>project implementation</p> <p>All relevant offices</p>	
Information on GRM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • Board of the AU • AUC Office of the Director-General • PBFA • African Capacity Building Foundation • EPIs • Academia / Universities • RECs • Foundations • Individual and institutional donors • Private sector donors such as safaricom etc...) • • RSC 	Maintain website with information on GRM	<p>Website</p> <p>Phone</p>	<p>Throughout project implementation</p> <p>All relevant offices</p>	PIU

Information to be disclosed	Target Stakeholders	Messages/ Agenda	Methods of Communication	Time Table: locations / dates	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Country-level policymakers • Regional Associations • Other AUC Departments • National Governments (especially Ministries of Finance) • Research organizations such as Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP) • • UNECA • AUDA-NEPAD • NGOs • Media 				
Results of research prepared under the Project	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Wider public • AUC • Board of the AU • AUC Office of the Director-General • PBFA • African Capacity Building Foundation • EPIs • Academia / Universities • RECs • Foundations • Individual and institutional donors • Private sector donors such as safaricom etc...) • RSC • Country-level policymakers • Regional Associations 	Results of research prepared under the Project	Website Workshop events Email communication Social Media platforms	Throughout project implementation All relevant offices	PIU and research partners

Information to be disclosed	Target Stakeholders	Messages/ Agenda	Methods of Communication	Time Table: locations / dates	Responsibility
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other AUC Departments • National Governments (especially Ministries of Finance) • Research organizations such as Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP) • • UNECA • AUDA-NEPAD • NGOs • Media 				

Proposed Strategy for Consultation

This plan proposes the overall consultative processes of the project with its different stakeholders.

Table 3 Strategy for Consultation

Topic of Consultation	Target Stakeholders	Expected outcomes	Suggested Method of consultation	Timetable: location and dates	Responsibility
Project Preparation					
Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • Board of the AU • ETTIM • AUC Office of the Director-General 	Inputs into Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM).	Correspondence phone/email	by One off activity as part of project preparation	PIU
Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • PBFA • African Capacity Building Foundation • EPIs • Academia / Universities • RECs • Foundations • Individual and institutional donors • Private sector donors • RSC • Country-level policymakers • Regional Associations • Other AUC Departments • National Governments (especially Ministries of Finance) • Research organizations • UNECA • AUDA-NEPAD 	Inputs into stakeholders' identification and approach to stakeholder engagement.	Meetings (virtual) Telephone	All relevant offices Frequency: one time	

Topic of Consultation	Target Stakeholders	Expected outcomes	Suggested Method of consultation	Timetable: location and dates	Responsibility
Final Project design / overall project activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • Board of the AU • ETTIM • AUC Office of the Director-General • PBFA • African Capacity Building Foundation • EPIs • Academia / Universities • RECs • Foundations • Individual and institutional donors • Private sector donors • RSC • Country-level policymakers • Regional Associations • Other AUC Departments • National Governments (especially Ministries of Finance) • Research organizations • UNECA • AUDA-NEPAD 	<p>Inputs into project design - objectives, rationale, components, benefits and beneficiaries, Implementation arrangements.</p> <p>Inputs into indicative implementation schedule and period, project contacts.</p>	<p>Correspondence by phone/email</p> <p>Meetings (virtual)</p> <p>Telephone</p>	<p>One-off activity as part of project preparations</p> <p>All relevant offices</p> <p>Frequency: one time</p>	PIU
Throughout Project Implementation					
Project design overall project activities: Capacity development initiatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • Board of the AU • ETTIM • AUC Office of the Director-General • PBFA • African Capacity Building Foundation • EPIs 	Inputs into project activities	<p>One to one meetings</p> <p>Email</p> <p>Meetings (virtual)</p> <p>Meetings (virtual) with</p>	<p>Throughout project implementation</p> <p>All relevant offices</p>	PIU

Topic of Consultation	Target Stakeholders	Expected outcomes	Suggested Method of consultation	Timetable: location and dates	Responsibility
<p>Operation of regional platform</p> <p>Research on regional priority issues</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Academia / Universities • RECs • Foundations • Individual and institutional donors • Private sector donors • RSC • Country-level policymakers • Regional Associations • Other AUC Departments • National Governments (especially Ministries of Finance) • Research organizations • UNECA • AUDA-NEPAD 		organizations	Minimum frequency: quarterly with all groups	
SEP and GRM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • Board of the AU • ETTIM • AUC Office of the Director-General • PBFA • African Capacity Building Foundation • EPIs • Academia / Universities • RECs • Foundations • Individual and institutional donors • Private sector donors • RSC • Country-level policymakers • Regional Associations • Other AUC Departments • National Governments (especially 	<p>Updates to Project E&S instruments</p> <p>Inputs into activities</p> <p>GRM</p> <p>Stakeholder engagement modalities</p> <p>types of stakeholders</p>	<p>Email</p> <p>Telephone</p> <p>Meetings (virtual) with organizations</p> <p>GRM mechanisms</p>	<p>Throughout project implementation</p> <p>All relevant offices</p> <p>Minimum frequency: quarterly with all offices</p>	PIU

Topic of Consultation	Target Stakeholders	Expected outcomes	Suggested Method of consultation	Timetable: location and dates	Responsibility
	Ministries of Finance) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Research organizations • UNECA • AUDA-NEPAD 				
M&E	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AUC • Board of the AU • ETTIM • AUC Office of the Director-General • PBFA • African Capacity Building Foundation • EPIs • RECs • RSC 	Inputs into monitoring and evaluation of project	Email Telephone Meetings (virtual)	Throughout project implementation All relevant offices Minimum frequency: biannually	PIU

Engagement with Disadvantaged and Vulnerable Groups

The engagement requirements will be limited to stakeholders participating in the Project, i.e. there is no direct contact with communities including disadvantaged or vulnerable groups. However, the SEP will ensure that special considerations apply where marginalized or vulnerable groups are identified. Disadvantaged and vulnerable groups refer to those who may be more likely to be adversely affected by the project impacts and/or more limited than others in their ability to take advantage of project benefits. Such individuals or groups may also more likely be excluded from consultation processes and may require specific assistance. For example, female researchers may be excluded from research initiatives undertaken by entities funded through the Project. To include female researchers and to ensure that research also focuses on women as a vulnerable group, the Project will create a peer network for female economic researchers to engage on professional topics as well as issues that impact women in the field; and it will finance studies to identify the barriers that prevent women from pursuing careers in economic research and measures to improve their participation that can inform gender activities of African EPIs.

Timelines

Information disclosure and consultations are especially relevant throughout the early stages of the project, but also throughout the project implementation phase. Activities under each of the two Components will include further consultations prior to their commencement to ensure transparency and accountability on project modalities, and to allow stakeholder voices to form the basis of the concrete design of every intervention and consultations will continue throughout project implementation.

Review of Comments

The PIU will compile all comments and inputs originating from the consultations to ensure that the project has general information on the perception of stakeholders and their concerns, and for the Project to remain on target. It will be the responsibility of all implementers to respond to comments and inputs, and to keep open a feedback line to all stakeholders.

The World Bank will facilitate training on environmental and social standards soon after the project becomes effective to ensure that all implementing staff are equipped with the necessary skills.

ESTIMATED COSTS

The PIU will be in charge of managing and implementing the abbreviated SEP in accordance with the respective Project activities. Adequate resources for the implementation of stakeholder engagements will be covered by the budget assigned under the Project management activities.

Table 4 Indicative Budget for implementation of the abbreviated SEP

Stakeholder Engagement Activity		%	Total Cost (USD)
E&S Focal Point			
Project Manager (10 % of time for implementation of SEP for 4 years)			Staff costs
Consultation and disclosure			
Virtual consultation sessions			5,000
Establishment and maintenance of website			10,000
Translation Services			20,000
Grievance redress mechanism			
Dissemination of information on GRM			10,000
TOTAL			45,000

GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISMS

Purpose

The objectives of the GRM include:

- i. Ensure prompt, consistent, and respectful receipt, investigation, and response to complaints.
- ii. Ensure proper documentation of complaints and implementation of actions.
- iii. Contribute to continuous improvement in Project performance through lessons learned.
- iv. Ensure compliance with laws and regulations and reduce exposure to litigation.

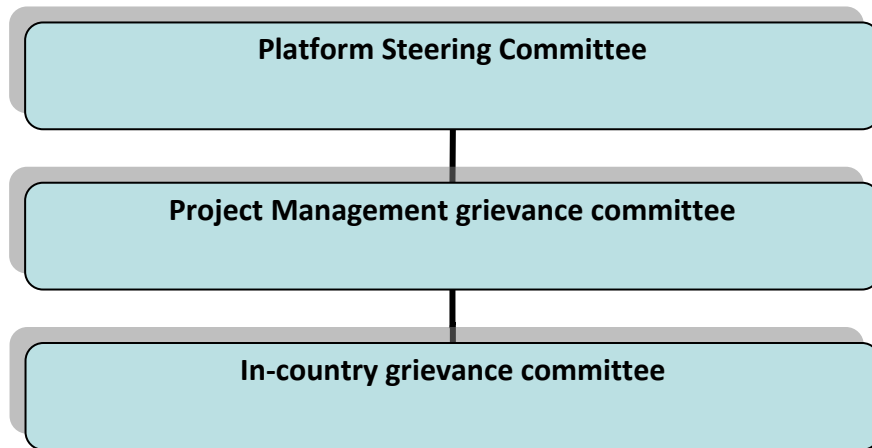
Grievance Process

The PIU will ensure information on the GRM is disseminated among all project stakeholders, as listed above in the stakeholder engagement plan. The information will include i) means of submitting a grievance, including names and contact details of the PIU E&S focal person, and the GRM focal point persons for beneficiary research institutions; (ii) the process for grievance handling; (iii) the time allowed for handling grievances; (iv) the right to anonymity; and (v) the right to seek redress through other channels. Information should make clear that the stakeholder will not be asked to pay to have their grievance accepted.

Grievance Redress Structure

Complaints received on the project will be managed through a three-tier bottom-up grievance approach. This will involve an in-country grievance committee, Project Management grievance committee and the Platform Steering Committee.

Figure 1 Grievance Redress Structure



In-country Grievance Resolution Committee

The in-country GRC will be hosted by the beneficiary research institution of the respective countries. Each Country GRC will comprise of a four-member committee made up of the head of the institution, the GRM focal point, and two other staff members from the institution. For cases involving technicalities and/or a conflict of interest with a GRC member, the committee may also choose to include one or more project staff or reputable and independent third parties on the committee deliberations. The in-country GRCs are expected to handle all grievance on their project activities in the country. The country level GRM focal point through the head of the institution are required to immediately notify the PIU E&S focal point on all cases relating to major incidents, accidents, and SEA/SH cases within 24 hours. Such cases would require reporting to the World Bank. In addition, the country level GRC is required to escalate project related grievances that remain unresolved at the Country level to the Project Management GRC for redress.

Project Management Grievance Committee

The Project Management Grievance Committee (GC) will be hosted by the PIU and will comprise of the PIU E&S focal person, and representatives from the following: AUC Director General Office, Economic Development, Trade, Tourism, Industry and Mining (ETTİM) department, and the Directorate of Programming, Budget, Finance and Accounting (PBFA). This committee shall mediate all unresolved complaints from activities of beneficiary research institutions, as well as complaints that may be received directly at the PIU level through projects complaint lodging points. In some cases, the committee may choose to include one or more project staff or reputable and independent third parties on the Panel. In addition, the Project Management GRC is

required to escalate project related grievances that remain unresolved at the PIU level to the Platform Steering Committee for advice.

Platform Steering Committee

A high-level grievance redress panel that will assist in the resolution of complaints on the project would be the Platform Steering Committee (PSC). The PSC is the key governance body for the project. The PSC will have pan-African representation including representatives from selected African Ministries of Finance, RECs, other relevant regional bodies (such as the United National Economic Commission for Africa [UNECA] and African Union Development Agency-NEPAD [AUDA-NEPAD]), private sector and academia. The PSC will be the highest decision-making body within the institutional structure of the project. It will advise on continental priorities, assess, and support the coherence of the project with such priorities, advocate for and facilitate regional collaboration on priority policy issues, endorse the selection of the beneficiary think tanks, provide high-level guidance on think tanks' institutional annual work plans, and review the implementation progress of the project, including the performance of beneficiary institutions, to ensure achievement of the PDO.

The PSC takes all grievances seriously and will investigate all cases referred to it. All grievances referred to it will be recorded and discussed in the PSC meetings, bearing in mind requests for confidentiality. The PSC, through its secretariat, the ETTIM department, will require the PIU to prepare a proposed response to each grievance, which after discussion and approval, will be implemented. At subsequent PSC meetings, ETTIM will report on the progress of implementation.

Step 1: Grievance Uptake /Receipts/Acknowledging of complaints

The project provides the following means for stakeholders to file a grievance:

1. Online mechanism: An online mechanism will allow stakeholders to leave a message and request a call back from the Project. The mechanism will be clearly visible on the website.
2. Email address - an email address will be set up by the PIU and posted on the Project website and through other information dissemination means listed above.
3. Email address or online mechanism of beneficiary research institution. Each beneficiary research institution will be required to outline their GRM on their websites and appoint a GRM focal point person.

The project will establish a register of all grievances received through the filling points above to aid monitoring of complaint resolution status and reporting on GM performance. A grievance logbook will be used to maintain an electronic and manual database of all grievances received. Complaints can be submitted in any language applicable to the project locations either verbally or in writing to all designated lodging points.

Registration of complaints: The GRM Focal Persons for beneficiary research institutions shall officially register all complaints received and further inform the GRC at the country level within 24 hours of any complaint lodged. The grievance submission should be dated and signed by the complainant or the representative, except when the complaint was made verbally through phone calls from a distant location or required to be anonymous. At the project management level, the E&S Focal point shall also inform the Project Management GRC within 24 hours after lodging any complaints received directly of unresolved complaint escalated from the Country levels. The project will acknowledge receipt of the complaint by letter within 3 working days of receipt.

SEA/SH-related Grievance: Given the sensitive nature of GBV-related complaints, the GRM provides different ways to submit grievances and applies a survivor-centered approach. All grievance uptake channels can be used to report on SEA/SH-related grievances. The PIU E&S focal person and GRM focal point persons of the beneficiary research institution will also be trained in the handling and processing of SEA/SH-related grievances, including the requirement for referrals of the survivor to GBV services.

Confidentiality: The grievance recipients and anyone handling the SEA/SH-related grievances must maintain absolute confidentiality in regard to the case. Maintaining confidentiality means not disclosing any information at any time to any party without the informed consent of the person concerned. There are exceptions under distinct circumstances, for example, a) if the survivor is an adult who threatens his or her own life or who is directly threatening the safety of others, in which case referrals to lifesaving services should be sought; b) if the survivor is a child and there are concerns for the child's health and safety potentially perpetrated through its custodians. The survivors need to be informed about these exceptions.

Informed Consent: The survivor can only approve a case's processing when he or she has been fully informed about all relevant facts. The survivor must fully understand the consequences of actions when providing informed consent for a case to be taken up. Asking for consent means requesting the permission of the survivor to share information about him/her with others (for instance, with referral services and/or IPs), and/or to undertake any action (for instance, investigation of the case). Under no circumstances should the survivor be pressured to consent to any conversation, assessment, investigation, or other intervention with which she/he feels comfortable. A survivor can also at any time decide to stop consent. Where possible, the consent form can be used (in cases of direct person-to-person reporting). By signing this form, the survivor can formally agree (or disagree) with further processing the case. The form will clearly state how the information will be used, stored, and disseminated. If a survivor does not consent to share information, then only non-identifying information can be released or reported on.

Step 2: Determining and implementing the resolution action

When a grievance is recorded as per the above-mentioned registration procedures, the GRC will be called into action to investigate the case and further hold mediation meetings with interested parties to resolve the issue. Minutes of meetings will be recorded.

The GRC will first investigate the foundation of the grievance and then determine the resolution action in consultation with the complainant and concerned parties if necessary. This is expected to be completed within 7 working days after receipt/registration of the grievance. Any redress action considered after the mediation process will also be implemented within 10 working days of receipt of complaints. The Project will implement the resolution either directly or through a third party, which will be done in consultation with the complainant.

Step 3: Verifying the implementation status of agreed resolution action

The Project will review complaints regularly to ensure progress is being made towards resolution. The respective GRC will contact the complainant to confirm that the resolution action is carried out. If the complainant is satisfied with the resolution implemented, the GRM Focal Person will close the case and require the complainant to sign a statement to acknowledge satisfaction. Verification would be completed within 7 days of execution of the resolution action. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the resolution proposal or action, additional steps may be taken to resolve the issues, or the GRC may decide to escalate the complaint to the next tier of the GRC. Alternatively, if the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution offered, the complainant may choose to appeal the decision through the E&S or GRM focal point person.

Step 4: Recourse or Alternatives

Two alternative or recourse actions are considered, amicable mediation and settlement or appeal to court.

2nd Tier Amicable Mediation and Settlement

If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the country level GRC, he/she can bring it to the attention of the GRM Focal Person. The Country level GRC may remediate the case or forward it to the Project Management GRC for further action. If the complainant is dissatisfied with the outcome of the resolution proposal or action, additional steps may be taken to resolve the issues, or the GRC may decide to escalate the complaint to the next tier of the PSC. The PSC may also decide to resolve the complaint or set up an appropriate mediation team to resolve the issue in consultation with the PIU and the complainant.

For cases involving technicalities and/or conflict of interest with a GRC member, GRC may decide to appoint an individual mediator or Independent Appeals Panel that is neutral and independent of the Project. The selection of the mediator or individuals comprising the Independent Appeals Panel will be conducted in consultation with the complainant and other key stakeholders to ensure trustworthiness of the process.

Appeal to Court

If the complainant remains dissatisfied with the all the mediation effort of the GRM, the complainant has the option to pursue appropriate recourse via judicial process in the respective country. The project will allow any aggrieved person the right of access to Court of law. Courts of law will be a “last resort” option, in view of the above mechanism

Step 5: Monitor, Evaluate and Provide Feedback

Recording: The PIU will record all complaints and ensure their status is updated in internal recordings. Public records will be provided on the status, timeframe, feedback, resolution of complaints, and summary reports; however, the principle of anonymity and confidentiality may be requested or required in some instances. The information on complaints will be used for the project to improve its effectiveness.

Monitoring: The PIU has developed indicators and a methodology for monitoring the steps of the GRM value chain, tracking grievances, and assessing the extent to which progress is made to resolve them. The PIU may amend indicators as necessary. The following indicators and targets will be applied:

Table 5 Indicators

Indicator	Target
Number of GRM awareness campaigns conducted (Number)	
Percentage of grievances responded to within the stipulated timeline (Percentage)	
Percentage of grievances resolved (Percentage)	
Percentage of grievances referred/ escalated timely (Percentage)	

Reporting: The PIU will report on all GRM cases and their status, and on the above indicators, as well as provide a trend analysis to the World Bank every quarter – as part of the reporting obligations. Reporting will follow the above listed indicators.

Evaluation: The PIU will evaluate the GRM by analyzing grievance data to reveal trends and patterns, share GRM analysis in management meetings, and suggest corrective actions on project implementation approaches to address specific trends of grievances.

World Bank Grievance Redress Service

Individuals who believe that they are adversely affected by a World Bank (WB) supported project may submit complaints to existing project-level grievance redress mechanisms or the WB’s Grievance Redress Service (GRS). The GRS ensures that complaints received are promptly reviewed in order to address project-related concerns. Project affected communities and individuals may submit their complaint to the WB’s independent Inspection Panel which determines whether harm occurred, or could occur, as a result of WB’s non-compliance with its policies and procedures. Complaints may be submitted at any time after concerns have been brought directly to the World Bank’s attention, and Bank Management has been given an opportunity to respond. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank’s corporate Grievance Redress Service (GRS), please visit <http://www.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/products-and-services/grievance-redress-service/>. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank Inspection Panel, please visit www.inspectionpanel.org/

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT MONITORING AND EVALUATION

Inclusive and participatory monitoring and evaluation is also necessary to minimize misconceptions and misunderstandings about the Project and maintain a positive perception about it.

Stakeholder engagement monitoring involves collecting data, assessing the level of engagement, and using insights from the data collection to adjust strategies and tactics for engaging effectively with stakeholders. This will be responsibility of the PIU.

Monitoring will verify:

- i). Compliance and effectiveness of the abbreviated SEP and application of the recommended standards, stakeholder engagement and implementation of the GRM.

Annual reviews of the project and the implementation of the E&S instruments will be conducted at the end of each year. The monitoring reports for E&S implementation will be prepared by the PIU E&S Focal point and will be used as a monitoring and review tool to track effectiveness. In the review process, the PIU will play the lead role in coordinating the process with key stakeholders.

Management Functions and Responsibilities

Adequate institutional arrangements, systems and resources will be put in place to monitor the implementation of the abbreviated SEP. The main monitoring responsibilities will be with the PIU. This will be led by the Project Manager. The PIU Project Manager will be overall responsible for the implementation of the abbreviated SEP, as well as for monitoring and inspections for compliance with the SEP. The Project's M&E Plan will include monitoring indicators for the measurement of the performance of the SEP.

The PIU will collect all reporting inputs, as well as its own findings, and produce an overall progress report, which will contain a distinct section of stakeholder engagement, and which will be provided to the World Bank. The project will follow a quarterly reporting cycle. These quarterly reports will further be shared with all stakeholders, as defined in the abbreviated SEP.

Monitoring and Evaluation

The programme will establish and maintain a database and activity file detailing all consultation, disclosure of information and workers' grievances collected throughout the program, which will be available for review on request. Stakeholder engagement shall be periodically evaluated by the PIU. The following indicators will be used for evaluation:

- i). GRM indicators as listed above
- ii). Level of involvement and participation of stakeholders including project affected people (disaggregated by gender).
- iii). Incidents and accidents

Reporting

The PIU will prepare and regularly avail important information on the project status to stakeholders (based on information need) including project implementation progress, actions on commitments made to various stakeholders and any new or corrected information since the previous report. The Table below outlines some of the reports, target audience, method of correspondence and timelines.

Table 6 Methods and frequency of reporting to stakeholders

Reporting Party	Reporting Method	Stakeholder	Reporting Information	Frequency
PIU	Official Correspondence Correspondence by email or postal mail Website and social media	All stakeholders	Project progress Plans for next steps Issues and changes	Quarterly

Annex 1: Stakeholders Consulted

Virtual stakeholder workshop 8 March 2023

Attendants:

- Stephen Wainaina, Partnership for Economic Policy (PEP)
- Edward Brown, African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET)
- Mavis Owusu Gyamfi, ACET
- Nabil Barkati, Maghreb Economic Forum
- Khaled Menna, Centre de Recherche en Economie Appliquée pour le Développement (CREAD)
- Dianah Muchai, African Economic Research Consortium (AERC)
- Scholastica Odhiambo, AERC
- Mark Korir, AERC
- Joe Asunka, Afrobarometer
- Jamal Mmsami, Policy Research for Development (REPOA)
- Ali Issa Abdi, The Horn Social & Economic Policy Institute (HESPI)

Others:

- Barassou Diawara, The African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF)
- Mamadou Biteye, ACBF
- Sylvain Boko, ACBF