

REPUBLIC OF UZBEKISTAN

MINISTRY OF FINANCE

Uzbekistan Financial Sector Reform Project

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

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ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ADB	-	Asian Development Bank
AQR	-	Asset Quality Review
DRF	-	Disaster Risk Finance
ESF	-	Environmental and Social Framework
ESuF	-	Export Support Fund
ESMS	-	Environmental and Social Management System
ESS	-	Environmental and Social Standard
CA	-	Central Asia
CBU	-	Central Bank of Uzbekistan
CLO	-	Community Liaison Officer
CBU	-	Central Bank of Uzbekistan
GBV	-	Gender-Based Violence
GDP	-	Gross Domestic Product
GM	-	Grievance Mechanism
GOU	-	Government of Uzbekistan
GRC	-	Grievance Redress Commission
GRS	-	Grievance Redress Service
IAIS	-	International Association of Insurance Supervisors
IMDA	-	Insurance Market Development Agency
ISR	-	International Monetary Fund
M&E	-	Monitoring and Evaluation
MSME	-	Micro, small and medium enterprises
MOF	-	Ministry of Finance
MIFT	-	Ministry of Investments and Foreign Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan
NDC	-	Nationally Determined Contribution
OIPs	-	Other Interested Parties
PA	-	Protected Area
PAPs	-	Project-affected Parties
PDO	-	Project Development Objectives
PIU	-	Project Implementation Unit
SAMA	-	State Assets Management Agency of the Republic of Uzbekistan
SEP	-	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SH	-	Sexual Harassment
SOCB	-	State-owned commercial bank
SOE	-	State-owned enterprise
SOP	-	Series of Projects
UBA	-	Uzbekistan Banking Association
UN	-	United Nations
UFSRP	-	Uzbekistan Financial Sector Reform Project
WB	-	The World Bank

1. INTRODUCTION/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

This Preliminary Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is prepared by the Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan for the Uzbekistan Financial Sector Reform Project in accordance with the World Bank Environmental and Social Standard on Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure (ESS10). It defines a program for stakeholder engagement, including public information disclosure and consultation, throughout the entire project cycle, outlines the ways in which the project team will identify and communicate with stakeholders, and includes a mechanism by which people can raise concerns, provide feedback, or make complaints about the project and any activities related to it.

The involvement of the local population particularly relevant stakeholders is essential to the success of the project to ensure smooth collaboration between project staff and local communities and to minimize and mitigate environmental and social risks related to the proposed project activities. The project stakeholder engagement is key to communicating timely information of project services and scope to all stakeholders and reaching out to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. Also, in the context of infectious diseases (COVID 19), broad, culturally appropriate, and adapted awareness raising activities are particularly important to properly sensitize the communities to the risks related to infectious diseases.

The project is consistent with the Uzbekistan Second Systematic Country Diagnostic (improving the allocation of finance) and the new draft CPF 2022-2026 Objective 1.3 on Enhancing the Productive Contribution of Land and Capital to Growth.

The proposed project recognizes the importance of environmental and social issues that are addressed within the framework of the Bank's new approach towards Environmental and Social Safeguard Standards (ESSs). ESS10 of the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) - corresponds to engagement with stakeholders. This plan provides a detailed overview of stakeholder's identification, mapping and engagement that are related to the Project, as well as Project arrangements for identification, mapping, and engagement of relevant stakeholders in the process of project preparation and implementation.

The project location is primarily Tashkent, the capital city. The project does not finance any new construction, rehabilitation, or renovation of existing infrastructure. However, the project funds could be mobilized if needed to fund upgradation of IT infrastructure which could result in E-waste management. Thus, the project will prepare a detail check list to ensure the E-waste is properly managed. The direct project beneficiaries are SOCBs themselves, the government agencies, and officials (MOF, MIFT, IMDA, Export Promotion Agency), Banking and Finance Academy, who will benefit from enhanced tools, capacities, and a new operating environment supporting market-oriented reforms. Indirect benefits for private banks will come from the reforms focused on leveling the playing field among private banks and SOCBs.

1.1. Project components and activities

The project development objective is to support the authorities in restructuring and/or privatizing state-owned banks, increasing financial resilience to disasters, and expanding finance for exporting MSMEs. The project consists of the following four components:

- **Component 1: State-owned banks modernization, commercialization, and privatization.**

1.1: Consultancy support and institutional capacity building for MOF to support the ownership function over SOCBs.

1.2: Consultancy services to support SOCB restructuring .

- 1.3: Investments in SOCB modernization.
- 1.4: Assistance to the Banking and Finance Academy.
- **Component 2: Financial preparedness to disasters and strengthening insurance sector stability.**
 - 2.1: National disaster risk financing strategy.
 - 2.2: Capacity building for IMDA.
- **Component 3: Export and trade financing instruments.**
- **Component 4: Project Implementation and Management.**

1.2. Objectives of Stakeholder Engagement Plan

ESS10 of World Bank's ESF requires the government to prepare and implement a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). Stakeholder engagement is an inclusive process conducted throughout the project life cycle to ensure that consultation and communication, including grievance redress are maintained throughout the project life cycle. Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is to define a program for stakeholder engagement, including public information disclosure and consultation, throughout the project life cycle. The SEP outlines the ways in which the implementing agencies, and contractors will communicate with stakeholders and includes a mechanism by which people can raise concerns and provide feedback about the project activities. The SEP is a useful tool for managing communications between the project and its stakeholders, including the beneficiaries.

The detailed objectives of the SEP can be summarized as follows:

- Outline the stakeholder engagement requirements of the Republic of Uzbekistan legislation and World Bank E&S Standards.
- Provide guidance for stakeholder engagement, including the timing and methods of engagement with stakeholders throughout the life cycle of the project.
- Identify key stakeholders that are affected, and/or able to influence the project.
- Describe the measures that will be used to remove obstacles to participation, and how the views of differently affected groups will be captured.
- Identify effective ways and methods to disseminate project information through different venues accessible to the different types of stakeholders, as per needs of the Stakeholders.
- Guide Implementing Agencies (IAs), contractor and the supervision consultant building mutually respectful, beneficial, and lasting relationship with stakeholders.
- Establish project-level grievance redress mechanism(s).
- Define roles and responsibilities for the implementation of the SEP.

1.3. Methodology

The involvement of stakeholders throughout the Project's lifecycle is essential to its success. These same stakeholders will remain involved during project implementation and monitoring of results. Their engagement is key to contribute to the Project accountability and sustainability and the provision of feedback loop to improve implementation and results. The SEP will also help increase buy-in of the project by its stakeholders, ensure a smooth collaboration between Project staff and targeted stakeholders, and address environmental and social risks related to Project activities.

In accordance with best practice approaches, MoF and other implementing agencies will apply the following principles to their stakeholder engagement activities:

- ***Openness:*** *Public consultations throughout Project preparation and implementation Project lifecycle will be carried out in an open manner, free of external manipulation,*

interference, coercion, or intimidation. Venues will be easily reachable, and not require long commutes, entrance fees, or preliminary access authorization.

- **Cultural appropriateness:** *The activities, format, timing, and venue will respect local customs and norms.*
- **Informed participation and feedback:** *Information will be provided and widely distributed in advance to all stakeholders in an appropriate format, and provide opportunities to stakeholders to provide feedback, and will analyse and address stakeholder comments and concerns.*
- **Inclusivity:** *Consultations will engage all segments of the local society, including disabled persons, the elderly, and other vulnerable groups. If necessary, the implementing agencies will provide logistical assistance to enable participants with limited physical abilities and those with insufficient financial or limited transportation means to attend public meetings organized by the Project.*
- **Gender sensitivity:** *Consultations will be organized to ensure that both females and males have equal access to them. As necessary, the implementing agencies will organize separate meetings and focus group discussions for males and females, engage facilitators of the same gender as the participants, and provide additional support to facilitate access of facilitators.*

In addition, MoF will ensure that consultations are meaningful as required by the ESS10. More specifically, meaningful consultation is two-way process which relays on the following principle: :

- Begins early in the project planning process to gather initial views on the project proposal and inform project design.
- Encourages stakeholder feedback, particularly as a way of informing project design and engagement by stakeholders in the identification and mitigation of environmental and social risks and impacts.
- Continues an ongoing basis, as risks and impacts arise.
- Is based on the prior disclosure and dissemination of relevant, transparent, objective, meaningful and easily accessible information in a timeframe that enables meaningful consultations with stakeholders in a culturally appropriate format, in relevant local language(s) and is understandable to stakeholders.
- Considers and responds to feedback.
- Supports active and inclusive engagement with project-affected parties.
- Is free of external manipulation, interference, coercion, discrimination, and intimidation; and.
- Is documented and disclosed.

2. REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

2.1. Relevant National Laws and Regulations

The key national legislation for consultations and stakeholder engagement is the regulations relating to access to information, any legal requirements related to public consultations plus existing channels for grievances.

Constitution

The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan (adopted on December 8, 1992) includes a chapter on the Economic and Social Rights of the citizens. According to it, everyone is entitled to: “Have the right, both individually and collectively, to submit applications and proposals, and to lodge complaints with competent state bodies, institutions or public representatives. Applications, proposals, and complaints shall be considered in the procedure and within the time-limit specified by law” (Chapter VIII, Article 35).

Environment, Community Health, and Safety

The national ESA procedure is regulated by the Law "on Environmental Expertise "(2000), updated on 14.09.2017, and Cabinet of Ministers Resolution № 541 of 07.09.2020: "On Approval of the Regulation on State Environmental Expertise". The Regulation includes information on the procedure for mandatory public discussions and hearings on draft environmental impact assessments for proposed activities belonging to Environmental Impact Categories I and II prior to the State Environmental Expertise.

Public participation in the ESA process. The Constitution of the Republic of Uzbekistan (arts. 50.55) lays the foundation for the participation of citizens and public associations in environmental management. Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan of 09.12.1992. (Updated on 18.04.2018) "On nature protection" in Articles, 12-13 regulates the right of citizens to unite in public organizations for nature protection, to request and receive information about the state of the environment and measures taken for its protection, as well as the authority of NGOs established. Legislation in the field of ecology and environmental protection provides for public participation as a) an individual citizen or a group of citizens; b) through citizens' self-governance bodies and c) through non-governmental non-profit organizations.

Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan #ZRU-410 dated September 22, 2016, on the introduction of amendments and additions to the law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “**On Labor Protection**”. The purpose of this Law is to regulate relations in the field of labor protection. Labor protection legislation consists of this Law and other legislative acts. If an international treaty of the Republic of Uzbekistan establishes rules other than those provided by the legislation of the Republic of Uzbekistan on labor protection, then the rules of the international treaty are applied. This Law applies to:

- employees who are in labor relations with enterprises, institutions, and organizations (hereinafter referred to as organizations), as well as with individual employers.
- students of higher educational institutions, students of secondary specialized, vocational educational institutions, students of other educational institutions undergoing industrial practice.
- military personnel recruited to work in organizations.
- citizens doing alternative service.
- persons serving a sentence under a court sentence during the period of their work in organizations determined by institutions for the execution of punishment, as well as persons who are subject to an administrative penalty in the form of administrative

arrest, persons involved in other types of work, including those organized in the interests of society and state.

Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan #ZRU-445 dated September 11, 2017 “**About appeals of individuals and legal entities**”. The purpose of this Law is to regulate relations in the field of appeals of individuals and legal entities to state bodies and state institutions, as well as to their officials. This Law also applies to organizations with state participation and citizens' self-government bodies.

Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan on guarantees and freedom of information access as of April 24, 1997, #400-I governs the relations arising in the implementation process of the constitutional right of everyone freely and to unimpeded seek, receive, research, to transfer and distribute information.

Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan on principles and warranties of freedom of information as of December 12, 2002, #439-II. The main objectives of this Law are to ensure compliance with the principles and guarantees of freedom of information, the exercise of the right of everyone to seek, receive, research, disseminate, use and store information, as well as ensure the protection of information and information security of the individual, society and the state freely and unimpededly.

Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan on the appeals of individuals and legal entities as of December 03, 2014 #378 governs grievance redress procedure in Uzbekistan. This Law obliges state authorities to deal with appeals and provides a clear framework to handle the case. The appeals can be in the form of applications, proposals, and complaints and submitted in three ways: oral, written, and digital format. The application or complaint shall be considered within fifteen days from the date of receipt in the state authority, which is obliged to resolve the issue on the merits, as well as require additional study and (or) check, a request for additional documents - up to one month. No project-specific GM is warranted under the national legislation. However, it is allowed to apply to a) conciliation commission; b) Labor Inspection under the Ministry of Employment and Labor Relations; and c) court.

3. BRIEF SUMMARY OF PREVIOUS STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES.

The Uzbek authorities have participated actively in the preparation of this project. Initial discussions at the concept stage included high-level management from the MOF and CBU. The First Deputy Finance Minister, Deputy Governor of the CBU, Deputy Governor of MIFT, and the Director of the IMDA participated in the discussions and provided guidance throughout the process.

Following consultations with the MOF, it was decided to limit the consultations at this stage to key stakeholders, taking into consideration that further consultations will take place at the appraisal stage in accordance with the ministry's regulations and in coordination with the World Bank regulations. The desk review of the project documents identified the project's stakeholders/project-affected parties are:

- Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan (MOF)
- Ministry of Investments and Foreign Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan (MIFT)
- State-owned commercial banks (SOCBs),
- Banking and Finance Academy
- Central Bank of Uzbekistan (CBU)
- State Assets Management Agency of the Republic of Uzbekistan (SAMA)
- Insurance Market Development Agency (IMDA),
- Export Promotion Agency (EPA)
- Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs)

A meeting with the focal points in each ministry, national or governmental entity identified as the project's key stakeholders/project-affected parties took place on March 1-18, 2021 via Zoom. During the meeting, the head of the IBL PIU Director briefed the stakeholders about the project including its objectives, activities, and outcomes, and the GM to be established for the project and made functional including complaints pertaining to SH/SEA. MoF will conduct a more focus stakeholder consultation meeting on the project ESF instrument prior to effectiveness to ensure views and feedback of the stakeholders are incorporated before the commencement of the project activities.

4. STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS

4.1. Introduction

ESS10 recognizes two broad categories of stakeholders: “Project-affected parties” and “Other interested parties”. The latter includes “*those likely to be affected by the project because of actual impacts or potential risks to their physical environment, health, security, cultural practices, wellbeing, or livelihoods. These stakeholders may include individuals or groups, including local communities*”. They are the individuals or households most likely to observe changes from the environmental and social impacts of the project. Project affected parties are described below.

- **Project-affected parties (PAPs)** – persons, groups, and other entities within the project area of influence that is directly or indirectly, positively, or adversely affected (actually or potentially) by the project and/or have been identified as most susceptible to change associated with the project, and who need to be closely engaged in identifying impacts and their significance, as well as in decision-making on mitigation and management measures.
- **Vulnerable Groups** – persons who may be disproportionately impacted or further disadvantaged by the project(s) as compared with any other groups due to their vulnerable status, and that may require special engagement efforts to ensure their equal representation in the consultation and decision-making process associated with the project(s).
- **Other interested parties (OIPs)** – individuals/groups/entities who consider or perceive their interests as being affected by the project and/or who have the potential to influence the project outcomes and the process of its implementation in some way.

4.2. Stakeholder identification: project-affected parties

One of the primary goals of the SEP is to identify stakeholders on which the project interventions can have positive and negative impacts on people’s lives and the sustainability of livelihoods. Thus, a list of key stakeholder groups has been identified by the MOF in the following levels as:

High:

- Ministry of Finance of the Republic of Uzbekistan (MOF), including PIU.
- *SOCBs including in total 12 banks, such as:*
National Bank of Uzbekistan, Agro Bank, Xalq Bank, Mikrokredit Bank, UzPromstroy Bank, Asaka Bank, Ipoteka Bank, Qishloq Qurilish Bank, Aloqa Bank, Turon Bank, Poytaxt, and UzAgroExport Bank.
- Ministry of Investments and Foreign Trade of the Republic of Uzbekistan (MIFT).
- Insurance Market Development Agency (IMDA).
- Export Promotion Agency and Export Support Fund.
- Banking and Finance Academy.

Medium-High:

- State Assets Management Agency of the Republic of Uzbekistan (SAMA).
- Uzbekistan Banking Association;
- Central Bank of Uzbekistan (CBU).
- Micro, small, and medium enterprises (MSMEs).
- Current prospective students of Banking and Finance Academy.

- International Financial Institutions (IFI), including IMF, which are supporting banking and insurance market reforms in Uzbekistan.

Medium:

- Current and potential clients of banks and insurance companies.
- Insurance Companies.
- Private or privatized commercial banks.
- International financial consulting and audit companies.
- Donors supporting financial sector reforms in Uzbekistan.

4.3. Stakeholder identification: other interested parties

“Other interested parties” (OIPs) refers to individuals, groups, or organizations with an interest in the project, which maybe because of the project location, its characteristics, its impacts, or matters related to the public interest. These parties may include numerous government ministries and agencies as MOF operates with many different government bodies and the given project will affect them directly or indirectly.

The project’s OIPs include:

- Civil society groups, research centers/ institutes, and NGOs interested in monitoring the financial performance of the UZ.
- Local Government Units including ministries and committees.
- State owned enterprises.
- Local and foreign investors interested in investing in Uzbekistan.
- Private firms, entrepreneurs, youth, and women groups who would benefit from competitive economic opportunities.
- Mass media and associated interest groups, including local and national printed and broadcast media, digital/web-based entities, and their associations.
- International development partners engaged in the socio-economic development sector.

4.4. Disadvantaged/Vulnerable Individuals or Groups

Disadvantaged/ vulnerable individuals or groups are potentially disproportionately affected and less able to benefit from opportunities offered by the project due to specific difficulties to access and/or understand information about the project and its environmental and social impacts and mitigation strategies. The vulnerability may stem from a person’s origin, gender, age, health condition, economic deficiency, and financial insecurity. These groups may not be aware of the stakeholder engagement activities and the GM process.

The MoF website www.mf.uz will be used to disclose project documents including the SEP, project updates and information, and project GM in Russian/Uzbek language. Where the use of internet options are not available, conventional methods will be used for informing vulnerable groups and engaging them. For the current phase, the involvement of vulnerable groups is limited to women participants from the relevant ministries or entities. Further consultations to identify vulnerable groups will be conducted during project implementation.

The following mechanisms will be used to disclose information to vulnerable groups:

1. Utilize social media and conventional media outlets for any announcement concerning the project. This includes the official Facebook pages of the ministries and official newspapers.
2. Publish all information about the project including the GM process in the Russian/Uzbek language.

3. If public gatherings including workshops or meetings are to be held, the meetings should take place in suitable locations that women can easily access which also have suitable access for handicapped or people with disabilities (if any). These meetings are often more convenient to be held at public venues or in women civil society organizations (if any).

4.5. Stakeholder Segmentation/ Prioritization

The identified project stakeholders were segregated by their areas of influence. The stakeholders of high and substantial significance are described in the table 4.1 below.

Table 4.1. Stakeholder segmentation

Stakeholder	Level	Description	Area of influence	Interest	Influence level
MOF	National	Overall Project Oversight, Coordination and M&E	Provide oversight and control of the disbursement of project funds to the project implementing unit (PIU) and subprojects. Monitor and evaluate the compliance of financial reporting of project funds by the PIU. MOF will directly benefit from Components 1 and 2 which will help MOF effectively carry out its oversight function over SOCB transformation and privatization in line with the Banking Sector Reform Strategy, as well as development and implementation of DRF strategy.	High	High
MOF PIU	National	Overall implementation of the project	Fiduciary (Procurement process/ Financial Management) and E&S safeguards.	High	High
MIFT, EPA, ESuF	National	MIFT will provide Component 3 technical Oversight	MIFT, EPA and ESuF will benefit from component 3 because of improved operations and instruments of EPA and ESuF created under MIFT.	High	High
SOCBs	Subnational	Component 1 direct beneficiaries	SOCBs will be direct beneficiaries receiving consultancy and ICT investment support needed for their transformation (for SOCB remaining in public hands with dual commercial and social mandates) and further privatization (for those SOCBs which are marked for privatization).	High	Medium
Banking and Finance Academy	Subnational	Component 1 direct beneficiary	Banking and Finance Academy will receive consultancy support to develop and roll out financial sector training programs,	High	Medium-High

			including Tot and certification programs, in line with its development concept and action plan approved by the Presidential Decree 365, dated June 8, 2020.		
IMDA	National	Component 2 direct beneficiary	IMDA will benefit from consultancy support to strengthen its regulatory and supervisory framework. IMDA, together with MOF, will have influence on development and implementation of the DRF strategy.	High	High
SAMA	National	SAMA may be the beneficiary of the Component 1 in cases determined by the MOF.	Provide support in privatization of state-owned banks.	Medium-High	Medium
Uzbekistan Banking Association	Local	Uzbekistan Banking Association will indirectly benefit from overall transformation and privatization of state-banks, which are members of the Association.	Representing interests of member banks and banking system at large.	Medium-High	Low
CBU	National	CBU, as the banking sector oversight authority, will strongly benefit from improved governance and operations of the state-owned banks as a result of their transformation and privatization.	Regulation and supervision of banks, and fostering financial system development, competitiveness and stability.	Medium-High	Medium
Micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs)	Local	MSMEs will benefit from enhanced access to adequate range and diversity of financial services offered by the banking system, notably trade and export financing instruments.	Participate in providing feedback to the project reach and effectiveness.	Medium-High	Low
IFIs working on financial	International	IFIs will indirectly benefit from Component 1 as the	IFI support is instrumental in timely and adequate transformation of the SOCBs,	Medium-High	Medium

sector reforms in Uzbekistan		MOF capacity on SOCB transformation and privatization is improved, as well as greater capacity of IMDA to regulate and supervise insurance market.	while their stake in equity of SOCBs may give a positive signal for perspective buyers of SOCBs.		
Current prospective students of Banking and Finance Academy	Local	Graduates from the Banking and Finance Academy will benefit from improved employability in the banking and broader financial sector.	Existence of highly qualified experts in the financial sector will ensure its sustainable and sound growth in the future. Graduates from the Banking and Finance Academy will participate in providing feedback on training effectiveness.	Medium	Low
Current and potential clients of banks and insurance companies	Local	Individuals and groups who will benefit from improved financial services from banks and insurance companies.	Participate in providing feedback to the project.	Medium	Low
Insurance Companies	Local	Insurance companies will indirectly benefit from clear and sound guidance from the IMDA, as well as business opportunities to develop insurance products, including catastrophe insurance.	Participate in providing feedback to the project.	Medium	Low
Private or privatized commercial banks	Local	Will indirectly benefit from level playing field and conditions of competitive neutrality vis a vis SOCBs.	Participate in providing feedback to the project.	Medium	Low
International financial consulting and audit companies	Local	Will indirectly benefit from increased demand and improved client engagement.	Participate in providing feedback to the project.	Medium	Low

Donors supporting financial reform in Uzbekistan	International	Will benefit from overall development and stability of the financial sector, and leverage on core transformation of the financial sector to further develop reform programs.	Participate in providing feedback to the project.	Medium	Medium
Disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals or groups and other project parties	Local	Individuals/groups who may have less opportunities to benefit from project activities	Participate in stakeholder meetings to highlight special needs of vulnerable groups.	Low	Low

5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

5.1. Purpose of Stakeholder Engagement Program

MoF will apply the following approach to engage stakeholders:

- Identify and liaise with the relevant local actors including authorities and inform them about the project and its specific implemented components, thereby gaining acceptance and support to ensure an enabling environment for project implementation within the selected target sites.
- Strengthen links with the local actors by initiating and sustaining dialogue to receive their support in gaining project acceptance and facilitation of access, communicating project goals and rules within their communities or relevant audiences including the targeted beneficiaries and any other stakeholders.
- Inform the relevant actors, including but not limited to beneficiaries and communities, about the Project
- Identify vulnerable groups of beneficiaries with socio-cultural barriers that prevent them from benefiting from the Project, and support them with differentiated measures, such as outreach home visits.

5.2. SEP Scope and Structure

This document constitutes the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) to be implemented throughout the life of the proposed UFSRP. The SEP identifies project stakeholders and describes how these stakeholders will be engaged through meaningful consultations throughout the project lifecycle. Also, the contractors and consultants employed during the implementation of a project are important stakeholders in a project. As they are not identified during the preparation of a project-specific SEP, they are not consulted. It is important to consider SEP a living document and include the contractors and other workers in stakeholders' engagement process once they are identified. This SEP might also be further revised during the project implementation if deemed necessary, any changes should be officially communicated between the client (MoF) and the World Bank, and the revised version of the SEP should be publicly disclosed.

The process of stakeholder engagement will follow the following steps as set out in this SEP:

- (i) stakeholder identification and analysis;
- (ii) planning the strategy, timing, and how the engagement with stakeholders will take place.
- (iii) Timely disclosure and dissemination of project related information.
- (iv) consultation with stakeholders through different available platforms.
- (v) addressing and responding to grievances; and
- (vi) .

5.3. Current Stage of the Project

The UFSRP project is currently at the planning phase and is in the process of finalizing all required environmental and social management plans and documents as required by the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). Ministry of Finance (MOF) with the technical support from the World Bank, will prepare a detail a draft of environmental and social

management documents such as the Environmental and Social Management Framework Checklist (ESMF), which has set out the principles, rules, guidelines, and procedures to assess environmental and social risks and impacts, and mitigation measures. Along with a comprehensive ESMF checklist, a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Labor Management Procedure, and Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) have also been prepared. Consistent with the objective of engaging stakeholders throughout the life cycle of the project, stakeholder engagement activities at this stage will focus on:

- Disclosing project information including alternatives;
- Informing stakeholders about the status of the Project.
- Seeking stakeholder inputs on various environmental issues, management measures, and benefit enhancers; and
- Obtaining stakeholder insights that would help the evaluation of Project alternatives.

5.4. Planned activities on stakeholder engagement

Following the identification and analysis of the project stakeholders, the project will design and implement a comprehensive plan for stakeholder engagement, as outlined in table 5.1. The table presented below describes the three stages of engagement and the relevant activities and targeted stakeholders. This table should be read together with suggested considerations for adapting engagement activities to the COVID-19 context.

5.5. COVID-19 implications and considerations for stakeholder engagements

The Project activities are performed all over the country therefore the Project team shall have the SEP preparation program. Work on engagement with the Project stakeholders shall be performed horizontally and vertically. The horizontal direction suggests stakeholder engagement at the national level. It is assumed that activity at a horizontal level will be aimed at raising awareness and coordinating efforts in the financial sector of the country. While the vertical direction provides for the application of a cascade approach which would enable the establishment of relations between the Project and the project-affected parties. Furthermore, the cascade approach will be applied to build capacity at each level of engagement under the Project. Stakeholder engagement activities shall ensure the provision of specific groups of stakeholders with the relevant information and opportunities for expressing their opinions on topics that are important for them

Table 5.1 below describes the proposed stakeholder engagement program throughout the project cycle including the pre-implementation and implementation phase and post-implementation phase. The MoF is in the process of recruiting a Social Officer (SO) who will oversee implementing the SEP, coordinating with the project's beneficiaries, and managing the GM database. The project aims to ensure that the project's various stakeholders have full access to the project's information and can voice their concerns about topics that matter to them at any time.

Table 5.1: Stakeholder Engagement Program

Project Stage	Target Stakeholders	Topic (s) of Engagement	Method(s) used	Location/ frequency	Responsibility
Preparation; Detailed Design and Pre-Implementation phase	Project Affected Parties (PAPs)	<p>Project information disclosure i.e., Project scope and rationale</p> <p>Project E&S principles.</p> <p>Receive feedback on the project’s potential impact, expectations, and concerns</p> <p>Receive Feedback on specific needs (capacity needs, future staff, trainings)</p> <p>Grievance Mechanism (GM) provision</p> <p>SEP disclosure.</p> <p>Introduction of project activities, information about time, date, venue of trainings</p>	<p>Formal meetings</p> <p>(Formal and/ or bilateral)</p> <p>Official letters (correspondence)</p> <p>Email</p>	<p>Via Zoom, In-person, (as needed)</p> <p>MOF website</p>	<p>MOF PIU</p> <p>Consultant on Social Safeguards</p>
Implementation Phase	Project Affected Parties (PAPs)	<p>Project Status</p> <p>Update on project-specific activities (time, date, venue)</p> <p>Information on specific capacity building trainings,</p> <p>Disclose project GM</p> <p>E&S aspects</p> <p>Reports; including a number of grievances received within the reporting period (monthly, quarterly, or annually) and the</p>	<p>Formal meetings</p> <p>(Formal and/ or bilateral)</p> <p>Official letters (correspondence)</p> <p>Emails</p> <p>Satisfaction surveys</p>	<p>Monthly meetings with all Stakeholders (in person or via Zoom)</p> <p>MoF website</p> <p>Reports to be submitted on monthly basis or periodically (as agreed) throughout the implementation phase</p> <p>Disclosure of project information to public to take place according to</p>	<p>MOF PIU</p> <p>Project SO</p>

		number of those resolved Satisfaction with project activities		MoF citizen budget calendar Feedback and satisfaction with project activities including capacity building trainings to take place at the end of each activity/ Feedback to be used for future activities	
	Other Interested Parties (OIPs)	Announcement of employment opportunities (consultants, trainers) GM mechanism	Public announcements in accordance with official recruitment and/ or procurement s guidelines	Official newspapers, MoF website and social media platforms (Facebook) Stakeholders' websites Recruitment websites	MOF PIU Project SO
Post Implementation Phase	Project Affected Parties (PAPs) Other Ministries are indirectly affected by the project.	Project's outcomes, overall progress, and major achievements Satisfaction with SEP activities and Grievance mechanism process. Satisfaction with project activities	Formal meetings Reports (including the Number of public grievances received within the reporting period and number of those resolved within the prescribed timeline	In-person or via Zoom (bilateral or group) Six months after project stability	MOF PIU Project SO

	Other Interested Parties (OIPs)	Project activities, outcomes, GRM process including a number of received grievances and number of resolved ones,	Formal meetings Mass/Social Media Communication	Press releases Disclosure of project information in accordance with MoF citizen budget calendar and World Bank requirements	MOF PIU
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6. RESOURCES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

6.1. Implementation Arrangements

The PIU under the MOF will shoulder the overall responsibility for engaging with the stakeholders and will provide all the required resources for the successful implementation of the SEP and other ESF related documents. A dedicated social and environmental officer will be recruited prior to commencement of the project activities, who will ensure and oversee the implementation of the project. A person recruited from the market will steer the SEP in the PIU. To implement the various activities envisaged in the SEP, the PIU will need to closely coordinate with MOF's internal departments/ units such as Department for appeals. The PIU will be headed by a Project Coordinator who will be responsible for day-to-day strategic oversight of project implementation, monitoring progress, and ensuring overall project alignment with stated objectives and results, including effective and efficient disbursement of project funds as per Project legal agreement. The Project Coordinator will act as the focal point for communication with the World Bank team on project-related issues and will report to the MOF.

6.2. Roles and Responsibilities

The PIU under MOF will be responsible for carrying out stakeholder engagement activities, while working closely together with other entities, such as local government units, media outlets, individual farmers, etc. The stakeholder engagement activities will be documented through biannual progress reports, to be shared with the World Bank. The nature of the project requires partnership and coordination mechanisms between national and local stakeholders.

Table 8.1. Responsibilities of key actors/stakeholders in SEP Implementation

Actor	Stakeholder Responsibilities
PIU with support of MOF	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Planning and implementation of the SEP and other relevant plans. • Leading stakeholder engagement and public consultations activities. • Management and resolution of grievances. • Coordination/supervision of contractors (if any) on Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) and SEP activities. • Monitoring of and reporting on social performance to the Government and the World Bank.
MOF territorial departments	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inform PIU of any issues related to their engagement with stakeholders. • Inform about complaints to the PIU Grievance Mechanism Focal Point. • Transmit and resolve complaints caused by the project interventions in close collaboration with and as directed by PIU and by participating in the local Grievance Resolution Committee. • Informational support to the implementation of various plans (e.g. SEP, Labor Management Plan, etc.).
Project-affected parties	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Invited to engage and ask questions about the Project at public consultations meetings and through discussions where it is of interest or of relevance to them. • Lodge their grievances using the Grievance Mechanism defined in the SEP. • Help the Project to define mitigation measures;

Other project stakeholders	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Engage with PIU regarding project design.• Raise concerns to help the project to be inclusive.
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6.3. Estimated Budget

MOF will be responsible for carrying out stakeholder engagement activities for the project. The stakeholder engagement activities will be documented as part of the project progress reporting requirements, and as indicated in the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP). The costs are covered under MOF budget lines.

7. GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

7.1. Description of Grievance Mechanism

The main objective of a Grievance Mechanism (GM) is to assist to resolve complaints and grievances in a timely, effective, and efficient manner that satisfies all parties involved. Specifically, it provides a transparent and credible process for fair, effective, and lasting outcomes. It also builds trust and cooperation as an integral component of broader community consultation that facilitates corrective actions. Specifically, the GM:

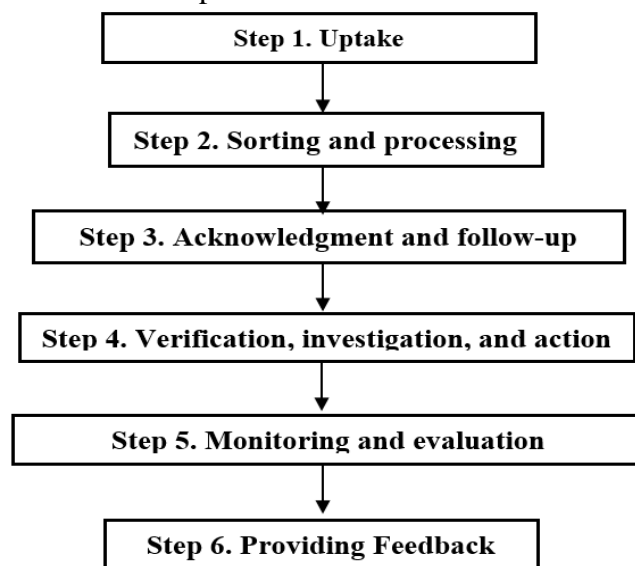
- Provides affected people with avenues for making a complaint or resolving any dispute that may arise during the implementation of projects;
- Ensures that appropriate and mutually acceptable redress actions are identified and implemented to the satisfaction of complainants; and
- Avoids the need to resort to judicial proceedings.

The PIU will operationalize a project-specific GM to address all citizen complaints and requests related to the project. Day-to-day implementation of the GM and reporting to the World Bank will be the responsibility of the PIU. The new Social Specialist will be the key nodal officer for GM in the PIU. The system and requirements (including staffing) for the grievance redress chain of action – from registration, sorting, and processing, and acknowledgment and follow-up, to verification and action, and finally feedback – are incorporated in the GM. The more sensitive grievances such as Gender-Based Violence (GBV) including Sexual Exploitation and Abuse / Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) are described in section 7.4 separately. To ensure management oversight of grievance handling, the PIU M&E will be responsible for monitoring the overall process, including verification that agreed resolutions are implemented.

7.2. Grievance resolution process

Information about the GM will be publicized as part of the Public/community communication (e.g., through websites, social media). Brochures and posters will be displayed in public places offices, project offices, MOF outlets and notice boards, etc. Information about the GM will also be posted online on the MOF website. The overall process for the GM will be comprised of six steps, as described in figure 7.1 below.

Figure 7.1: Grievance resolution process



Step 1: Uptake. Project stakeholders will be able to provide feedback and report complaints through several channels: contacting PIU by mail, telephone, email, social media, SMS, and Telegram messages.

Step 2: Sorting and processing. Complaints and feedback will be compiled by the Social Specialists at PIU and recorded in a register. These are assigned to the respective individuals/agencies to address. They are expected to discuss/ deliberate with the complainant and arrive at a resolution, within 15 days of receipt.

Step 3: Acknowledgement and follow-up. Within seven (7) days of the date a complaint is submitted, the responsible person/ agency will communicate with the complainant and provide information on the likely course of action and the anticipated timeframe for resolution of the complaint. If complaints are not resolved within 15 days, the responsible person will provide an update about the status of the complaint/question to the complainant and again provide an estimate of how long it will take to resolve the issue.

Step 4: Verification, investigation, and action. This step involves gathering information about the grievance to determine the facts surrounding the issue and verifying the complaint's validity and then developing a proposed resolution, which could include changes of decisions concerning eligibility for mitigation, assistance, changes in the program itself, other actions, or no actions. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the process can include site visits, document reviews, a meeting with the complainant (if known and willing to engage), and meetings with others (both those associated with the project and outside) who may have knowledge or can otherwise help resolve the issue. It is expected that many or most grievances would be resolved at this stage. All activities taken during this and the other steps will be fully documented, and any resolution logged in the register.

Step 5: Monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring refers to the process of tracking grievances and assessing the progress that has been toward resolution. The PIU will be responsible for consolidating, monitoring, and reporting on complaints, inquiries, and other feedback that have been received, resolved, or pending. This will be accomplished by maintaining the grievance register and records of all steps taken to resolve grievances or otherwise respond to feedback and questions.

Step 6: Providing Feedback. This step involves informing those to submit complaints, feedback, and questions about how issues were resolved or providing answers to questions. Whenever possible, complainants should be informed of the proposed resolution in person (communicating by telephone or other means).

If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, she/he will be informed of further options, which would include pursuing remedies through the World Bank, as described below, or through avenues afforded by the Republic of Uzbekistan legal system. On a monthly basis, the PIU will report to MOF on grievances resolved since the previous report and on grievances that remain unresolved, with an explanation as to steps to be taken to resolve grievances that have not been resolved within 30 days. Data on grievances and/or original grievance logs will be made available to World Bank missions on request, and summaries of grievances and resolutions will be included in periodic reports to the World Bank. Grievance Logs will include at least the following information:

- Individual reference number;
- Name of the person submitting the complaint, question, or other feedback, address and/or contact information (unless the complaint has been submitted anonymously);

- Details of the complaint, feedback, or question/her location and details of his/her complaint;
- Date of the complaint;
- Name of the person assigned to deal with the complaint (acknowledge to the complainant, investigate, propose resolutions, etc.);
- Details of the proposed resolution, including person(s) who will be responsible for authorizing and implementing any corrective actions that are part of the proposed resolution;
- Date when the proposed resolution was communicated to the complainant (unless anonymous);
- Date when the complainant acknowledged, in writing if possible, being informed of the proposed resolution;
- Details of whether the complainant was satisfied with the resolution, and whether the complaint can be closed out;
- Date when the resolution is implemented (if any).

The MOF will offer its district and local channels. The PIU will enable (i) local level offices, (ii) district level as GM focal points. By this arrangement, the project will be able to address effectively and efficiently all grievances raised at the grass-root level, which will have a countrywide scattered pattern including those in remote areas. To manage the project GM, it will include the following successive tiers of extra-judicial grievance review and resolution:

- The first tier will be the village local self-governments at the grassroots, who are responsible for helping members of the community and other social work (conflict resolution, overall community upkeep, etc.). They have the primary responsibility for identifying the households and/or individuals requiring social assistance. Unresolved grievances will be elevated to Grievance Redress Commission (GRC).
- PAPs will have an option of submitting grievances to PIU directly. This will be the second tier, which will form a GRC under the leadership of PIU and includes one or more senior district and local level office managers and one village leader. GRC will resolve issues that could not be resolved by the local government or those that came directly. The GRC will deal with issues before referring to the legal recourse.

To promote the transparent and efficient implementation of the project, the PIU will accept and investigate queries from any Project-affected parties, including anonymous queries.

Table 7.2. Grievance Redress and Feedback Mechanism

To whom is the complaint filed	Form of submission	Complaint management procedure	Time for consideration of complaints
<p>THE FIRST LEVEL <u>Office of local MOF offices</u> Address: [tbd] Tel.: [tbd] Fax: [tbd] E-mail address: [tbd] Officer responsible for maintaining the GM Log: [tbd]</p>	<p>Verbal Written In electronic format</p>	<p>1. Local MOF offices register complaints/proposals in the Log for registration of complaints and proposals; 2. Maintain and monitor the process of reviewing and responding to complaints; 3. Monthly they are reporting in writing to the PIU, to the Social Specialist on the status of work with complaints.</p>	<p>3 days</p>
<p>THE SECOND LEVEL GRC at PIU level PIU MOF: [tbd] Address: [tbd] Tel: [tbd] Fax: [tbd] E-mail address: [tbd] Officer responsible for maintaining the GM Log: [tbd]</p>	<p>in written form in electronic form</p>	<p>1. PIU office registers a complaint in the Log for complaints and proposals; 2. Maintain and monitor the process of reviewing and meeting the complaints; 3. Consideration of the complaint may require additional verification of the issue, including the collection of additional documents. 3. Report monthly in writing to the MOF (depending on the nature of the issue) on the status of work with complaints.</p>	<p>5 days 15 days</p>

7.3. Monitoring and reporting on grievances

The PIU will be responsible for:

- Analyzing the qualitative data on the number, substance, and status of complaints and uploading them into the project databases established by PIU;
- Monitoring outstanding issues and proposing measures to resolve them;
- Preparing quarterly reports on GM to be shared with the WB.

Biannual reports to be submitted to the WB shall include a section related to GM which provides updated information on the following:

- Status of GM implementation (procedures, training, public awareness campaigns, budgeting, etc.);
- Qualitative data on the number of received grievances (applications, suggestions, complaints, requests, positive feedback), highlighting a number of resolved grievances;
- Quantitative data on the type of grievances and responses, issues provided, and grievances that remain unresolved;
- Level of satisfaction by the measures (response) taken;
- Any correction measures taken.

Handling of sensitive grievances

GBV including SEA/SH) issues require some additional measures:

- Gender sensitivity will be sought in the employment of Stakeholder engagement and communication specialists who will work in the region.
- Stakeholder engagement and communication specialists will be informed about GBV issues.
- In addition to the socio-cultural characteristics and non-violent communication ways in the training of workers, GBV will also be on the agenda. Worker training will include the following information on GBV:
 - Definition of violence against women in national and international documents,
 - Types of violence (physical, sexual, economic, emotional),
 - Legal sanctions.
- The grievance mechanism will be accessible and ensure the confidentiality of personal information.
- Information activities will be carried out to inform women about the mechanism. The following types of information are presented in these studies:
 - Women's rights
 - Self-protection in cases of violence and sexual abuse
 - Emergency phone numbers
 - Contact information of the institutions and organizations they can apply to
 - Grievance mechanism and privacy policy
- The confidentiality principle of the grievance mechanism will be repeated in all information materials.

The project will utilize additional mitigation measures proportional to risk. The contractor will be responsible for developing the workforce management procedure, health, and safety plans as well as SEA/SH protocols which will apply to their own and subcontractor employees who work on the Project. These procedures and plans will be submitted to MOF and PIU for review and approval before the contractors are allowed to mobilize to the field of construction. All contractors will be required in the contract to commit against the use of child and forced labor, introduce mitigation measures against SEA/SH, and MOF/PIU staff in charge of contractor supervision will monitor and report the absence of forced labor and cases of SEA/SH. All personal data and complaints received by the GM will be treated in a confidential manner unless the complainant consents to the disclosure of their personal information. Especially, the confidentiality of sensitive issues and complaints related to SEA/SH raised by communities will be followed.

7.4. GBV including SEA/SH grievances

The GM system will include special pathways for the GBV complaints and grievances, including grievances on sexual harassment and sexual exploitation and abuse, and labor-related grievances. Channels to accept and respond to GBV grievances, while ensuring high confidentiality, will be communicated to the project's affected parties during the consultation meetings and throughout project implementation. Training will also be provided by a GBV expert for the E&S officer on detection of cases of gender-based violence and handling of inquiries, complaints, and grievances related to GBV.

Once an E&S officer is hired, his/ her email address and telephone number will be communicated to the project's affected parties during consultations and through different stakeholder engagement methods. The E&S officer will be responsible for managing this type of complaint with high priority, seriousness, data protection, and privacy through channeling the complaint to the Head of PMU and following up on it.

The following sexual harassment and sexual abuse grievance procedures mechanism will be followed:

- I. Accept the grievance/ complaint through the GM available channels, including anonymous grievances;
- II. Provide the complainant with the option of anonymity;
- III. Upon agreement from the victim directorate to the MOF and other respective ministries (Ministry of Mahalla, Ministry of Employment, Ministry of Justice, Ministry of Internal Affairs);
- IV. Follow up with the complainant, if they have provided their consent, to ensure just and proper care is provided to them and obtain feedback from relevant ministries regarding the case for filing and closure;

7.5. Existing GM at MOF

Along with the World Bank requirements on development and implementation of grievance mechanism for each Bank finance project, a grievance redress procedure is also required according to national legislation. In Uzbekistan a grievance redress procedure is regulated by the law “On Citizens’ Applications” and the “Law on the order of submission of appeals of physical and legal entities” (#378, December 03, 2014). Moreover, the MOF provides an internal grievance mechanism for physical and legal entities to raise reasonable workplace concerns. The grievance mechanism procedures are described in the following local regulations as well: *Law of the Republic of Uzbekistan “About appeals of individuals and legal entities” #445 dated on 11.09.2017* and order #82 of the Minister of Ministry of Finance dated 16.05.2018.

Table 7.3. Channels for accessing information and submitting grievances¹

Description	Contact details
Grievance Redress Committee – 1 st tier	district and local MOF offices Mr. Musaev Abdugafur
Grievance Redress Committee – 2 nd tier	Project Implementation Unit Mr. Kalandarov Fozil
Address:	Istiklol Street #29, Tashkent, Uzbekistan
Telephone:	+99871 203 00 50
Hotline:	+99871 203 00 50
Web-platform:	www.mf.uz/uz/?option=com_content&view=article&id=258
Social media platforms:	Telegram bot "murojaat_mf_bot"
Anonymous complaints are also entertained by any of the above channels	

7.6. Workers’ Grievance Mechanism

The MOF shall provide clear grievance mechanisms for partners, workers, employees, and contractors including consultants and experts who will be employed or engaged in connection with the Project. The MOF will inform the workers about the available tools to lodge grievances such as telephone numbers and email. The E&S officer will receive, and handle complaints related to workers’ grievances. The E&S officer staff will be responsible for managing and sorting complaints related to workers and employees (contracted and long-term employees) and for recording and tracking the resolution of grievances in the complaints log.

The worker’s grievance mechanism will include:

¹ Contact details will be updated as soon as the PIU will be established

- a procedure to receive grievances such as comment/complaint form, suggestion boxes, email, a telephone hotline
- stipulated timeframes to respond to grievances;
- a register to record and track the timely resolution of grievances;
- an assigned staff/office/department to receive, record, and track the resolution of grievances.

The worker's grievance mechanism will be described in staff induction trainings, which will be provided to all project workers. Information about the existence of the grievance mechanism will be readily available to all project workers (direct and contracted) through notice boards, the presence of "suggestion/complaint boxes", and other means as needed. MOF will monitor the registration and resolution of grievances, and report these in the progress reports

7.7. World Bank Grievance Redress System

Communities and individuals who believe that they are adversely affected by a project supported by the World Bank may also complaints directly to the Bank through the Bank's Grievance Redress Service (GRS) (<https://www.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/products-and-services/grievance-redress-service>). A complaint may be submitted in English, Uzbek or Russian, although additional processing time will be needed for complaints that are not in English. A complaint can be submitted to the Bank GRS through the following channels:

- By email: grievances@worldbank.org
- By fax: +1.202.614.7313
- By mail: The World Bank, Grievance Redress Service, MSN MC10-1018, 1818 H Street Northwest, Washington, DC 20433, USA
- Through the World Bank Uzbekistan Country Office in Tashkent: 107B Amir Timur Street, Block C, 15th floor, 100084, Tashkent, Uzbekistan, tashkent@worldbank.org, Tel. +998 71 120-2400

The complaint must clearly state the adverse impact(s) allegedly caused or likely to be caused by the Bank-supported project. This should be supported by available documentation and correspondence to the extent possible. The complainant may also indicate the desired outcome of the complaint. Finally, the complaint should identify the complainant(s) or assigned representative/s and provide contact details. Complaints submitted via the GRS are promptly reviewed to allow quick attention to project-related concerns.

In addition, project-affected communities and individuals may submit complaints to the World Bank's independent Inspection Panel, which will then determine whether harm occurred, or could occur, as a result of the World Bank's non-compliance with its policies and procedures. Complaints may be submitted to the Inspection Panel at any time after concerns have been brought directly to the World Bank's attention, and after Bank Management has been given an opportunity to respond. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank Inspection Panel, please visit www.inspectionpanel.org.

8. MONITORING AND REPORTING

8.1. Involvement of stakeholders in monitoring activities

The ESCP and SEP require regular consultations with stakeholders to obtain feedback on the effectiveness of facilitation measures and gather suggestions for further improvements. The results of stakeholder engagement will be reported back to stakeholder groups, MOF board meetings, and if needed other communication channels. Such can include media, written reports, press releases, etc. These consultations will also be used to gather information about the project's progress in meeting the results indicators as noted in the project results framework. The bi-annual ESCP compliance monitoring reports would be prepared and submitted by the PIU Environment and Social specialists throughout the project life. The PIU will also submit bi-annual reports on the project progress to the World Bank.

The World Bank will also provide implementation support and supervision during the project implementation period. Implementation support and supervision missions will be undertaken at least every six months and will monitor and report on progress made under the project through the implementation status and results reports (ISRs).

8.2. Reporting back to stakeholder groups

The bi-annual report will provide relevant information to be included in the Project ISR Reports. The project also supports the MOF's efforts to increase its capacity in communications and outreach by hiring experienced communications professionals to design and implement training on project components, education campaigns, and provide a feedback loop.

Information on public engagement activities undertaken by the Project during the project's life cycle may be conveyed to the stakeholders in two possible ways:

- Publication of a standalone annual report on the project's interaction with the stakeholders.
- A number of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will also be monitored by the project on a regular basis, including the following parameters:
 - Frequency of public engagement activities;
 - Number of public grievances received within a reporting period (e.g., monthly, quarterly, or annually) and number of those resolved within the prescribed timeline;
 - Number of press materials published/broadcasted in the local, and national media