



GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM (GRM)

Project Management Unit (PMU)
Managing Watersheds for Enhanced Resilience of Communities to Climate
Change in Nepal (MaWRiN) Project



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Introduction of Project:

Project Description:

The Managing Watersheds for Enhanced Resilience of Communities to Climate Change in Nepal (MaWRiN) Project¹ aims to ensure the longer-term resilience of local and indigenous communities against climate emergencies with three interconnected components: 1) Enabling Environment for Mainstreaming Climate Change, 2) Enhance Resilience of Communities to Climate Change and 3) Monitoring, Evaluation and Knowledge management. Funded by the Global Environment Facility (GEF), the project is implemented through tripartite agreement between the World Wildlife Fund (WWF) (WWF GEF Agency) and the Ministry of Forests and Environment, Government of Nepal (Project Executing Agency), and the Ministry of Forests and Environment, Bagmati Province (Project Executing Partner).

The project area i.e. Maru watershed covers two major rivers, i.e., Maru and Kyan in the midwestern part of Sindhuli District, within the Churia belt of Nepal. The watershed is highly vulnerable to climate change, with higher exposure to multiple hazards such as landslides, floods, forest fire, and droughts and higher sensitivity to indigenous and local people in terms of livelihood depends on subsistence agriculture.

Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF):

The ESMF identifies and outlines the main principles, procedures, and mitigation measures for addressing environmental and social impacts linked with the entire scope of the project in accordance with the laws and regulations of Nepal and with WWF Safeguards Integrated Policies and Procedures (SIPP). An ESMF is an essential prerequisite to address potential adverse social and environmental impacts that may occur during the project implementation and provides a framework for how the project will follow Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) policies and mitigate any risks during implementation.

¹ <https://mawrin.bagamati.gov.np/>



The ESMF aims to identify and mitigate social and environmental risks, outline legal frameworks, define roles and responsibilities, and recommend measures to enhance positive impacts. It establishes procedures for risk assessment, monitoring, grievance redress, capacity building, and budgeting to ensure effective and transparent project implementation.

The Process Framework (PF), under the ESMF, is applied in cases where access to natural resources is restricted. It ensures that affected communities are properly consulted, their consent is obtained, and appropriate compensation and mitigation measures are in place to address their needs, concerns, and potential livelihood impacts, thereby avoiding long-term adverse effects. The Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) defines the principles, procedures, and institutional arrangements for engaging Indigenous Peoples. It also strengthens the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) by ensuring inclusivity, transparency, and meaningful participation in addressing project-related concerns. Given that the MaWRiN project will directly affect communities living within and around project areas, an effective and responsive GRM is essential to systematically receive and address stakeholders' inquiries, suggestions, concerns, and complaints.

Introduction of GRM:

The GRM is formal and transparent institutional arrangement that enables individuals, communities, or any affected stakeholders to raise concerns, complaints, or provide feedback related to a project, policy, or organizational activity. It provides a structured way to ensure that these issues are acknowledged, assessed, and resolved in a timely, fair and consistent manner. The MaWRiN Project GRM is aligned with the requirements of the WWF Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs) and helps prevent conflicts by offering people a safe and accessible way for communities to express concerns and seek their mitigation. It also enhances accountability, strengthens relationships with



communities, and improves overall project performance by identifying issues early and enabling corrective action.

Objectives:

- To resolve complaints and concerns promptly and effectively at the most local level possible through reconciliation, with clear and transparent procedures for escalation and appeal when needed.
- To establish accessible, safe, and user friendly grievance channels for communities and stakeholders, ensuring transparency, trust, and accountability throughout the process.
- To systematically record, track, and analyze grievances and responses in order to identify recurring issues, address root causes, and support continuous improvement of project implementation.

GRM Scope:

The GRM will offer multiple, easily accessible entry points for submitting grievances and suggestions. Project affected persons and groups may raise concerns in person or through mail, email, phone calls, or complaint boxes. All channels will be context appropriate, available in local languages such as Nepali, and widely communicated through written and verbal means, including project materials and public spaces. Information on the GRM will be shared during every meeting or consultation with project stakeholders, including communities, local NGO partners, government partners, or others.

Clear and standardized procedures will guide grievance handling, with dedicated Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) at PMU. GRC and personnel involved with adequate understanding of Indigenous Peoples issues and social safeguards to assess complaints and recommend actions. Every grievance will be formally recorded, responsibilities clearly defined, and timelines strictly followed. Responses will normally be provided within ten working days as mentioned below. Complainants will be kept informed



of progress, and wherever feasible, issues will be resolved at the lowest appropriate level, closest to the affected person. Grievances falling outside the project mandate will be referred to the relevant authorities, with clear feedback provided to the complainant.

Complainants will be informed of their right to challenge project decisions. If they are dissatisfied with the project's response, they may submit an appeal to the Ministry forest and Environment, Bagamati Province. At any stage, affected persons and groups retain the right to seek resolution through the judicial system if they are not satisfied with the GRM outcome. In addition, complainants may at any time use the grievance mechanism of the WWF GEF Agency. As the project is financed by the GEF, the GEF Conflict Resolution Commissioner is also available as an independent alternative avenue for grievance resolution.

Grievance Redress Committee:

The MaWRiN Project will establish three tiers of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) as mentioned below to address grievances that may arise during the project period. The three-tier GRM system includes the following:

- 1st tier (at the PMU level)
- 2nd tier (at the Ministry of Forests and Environment (MoFE), Bagmati Province level)
- 3rd tier (at the Ministry of Forests and Environment (MoFE), Federal level)

1. First Tier GRC (at the PMU Level)

The first tier of the GRC have been developed at the PMU level to ensure that concerns and grievances from affected individuals, households, and communities are addressed in a timely, transparent, and satisfactory manner. Grievances arising at the site level will be initially collected by field staff and formally communicated to the PMU-level GRC, in accordance with the defined roles and responsibilities of the committee. However, complainants may submit complaints at any tier through multiple channels. All grievances



received at the PMU level will be formally registered, and the GRC will maintain a secure database and documentation system containing complete information on each submission, actions taken, and responses provided.

PMU level GRC and their roles and responsibilities:

- Technical Team Leader- All submitted feedback and grievances shall be examined, and the necessary steps toward resolution will be undertaken. Should the matter remain unresolved, coordination with the concerned authorities will be initiated with the team.
- MEL & Communication Officer- Receives and compiles feedback and grievances from both field and PMU levels; categorizes, processes, and documents all cases; and maintains an updated, accessible central database and reporting system. Also work as GRC focal points at PMU level.
- Program Associate- Collects first-hand feedback and grievances at the field level, ensures proper documentation, and formally communicates submissions to the PMU-level GRC for action.
- Safeguards and GESI Expert (Invitee as required) - Provides technical input and recommendations during grievance investigation, assessment, and decision-making processes when relevant expertise is needed.

2. Second Tier GRC (at the MoFE, Bagmati Province Level)

The second tier of the Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) will be established at the provincial level to address grievances that cannot be resolved at the PMU level or that require higher-level review, policy guidance, or coordination across agencies and cost centers. Grievances may be escalated to this level by the PMU GRC upon recommendation of the Project Coordination Committee (PCC), chaired by the Chairperson of the District Coordination Committee, or may be submitted directly by complainants through established channels. All cases received will be formally registered,



reviewed, and documented, with decisions clearly communicated to both the complainant and the PMU.

Provincial-Level GRC: Roles and Responsibilities

- Project Steering Committee (PSC), chaired by the Provincial Secretary, will provide overall leadership in reviewing escalated grievances, ensures due process, and facilitates coordination among relevant provincial authorities to reach resolution. The committee examines the technical aspects of complaints, verifies compliance with applicable policies and standards, and recommends corrective actions where necessary. It also ensures that grievance handling aligns with environmental and social safeguards, GESI considerations, and relevant legal provisions.
- MoFE, Bagmati Province focal unit will maintain records of all grievances received, decisions made, and actions taken; ensures timely communication with the PMU and complainants; and supports monitoring, follow-up, and reporting on grievance resolution progress.

3rd Tier GRC (at the MoFE, federal level)

The third tier of the Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) will operate at the federal level to address grievances that remain unresolved at the provincial level or that involve broader policy, regulatory, or institutional issues requiring federal oversight. This tier functions as the highest administrative mechanism within the project framework, ensuring transparency, fairness, and consistency with national policies, legal provisions, and applicable standards. Complaints may be escalated from the provincial GRC or submitted directly by complainants through appropriate channels. All grievances received will be formally registered, thoroughly reviewed, and resolved through a transparent decision-making process, with outcomes communicated to all concerned parties, including the complainant and relevant project authorities.



MoFE Federal-Level GRC: Roles and Responsibilities

- Project Focal Points at the Ministry will provide strategic oversight and leadership in the review and resolution of escalated grievances, ensuring compliance with national laws, policies, and institutional requirements. Registers grievances, maintains comprehensive documentation and records of decisions and actions taken, coordinates meetings and communications among concerned parties, and monitors the implementation of agreed corrective measures to ensure timely closure of cases.

Eligibility for Filing Grievances:

Project-affected people, workers, or stakeholders who believe they have been, or may be, negatively affected by the MaWRiN project due to non-compliance with its Environmental and Social Safeguard Policies may submit grievances, complaints, or suggestions to the PMU through various established channels, including SMS or in-person submissions. Such grievances may relate, but are not limited, to the following issues:

1. Allegations of fraud, malpractice, or corruption by project staff or other stakeholders involved in project activities
2. Environmental and/or social harm caused by project activities, whether ongoing or completed and
3. Complaints or grievances from permanent or temporary workers engaged in project activities.

Grievances can be submitted in the complainant's native language and should include relevant details about the issue.

- Complainant's name and contact information
- If not filed directly by the complainant, proof that those representing the affected people have authority to do so
- The specific project or program of concern, activity of concern including location



- The negative impact that is or may be resulting from the project
- Any other relevant information or documents
- Any actions taken so far to resolve the problem if any
- Proposed potential solutions

GRM Operating Guidelines:

1. Informing communities about GRM:

- Awareness raising sessions supported by context appropriate IEC material on project activities, staff behavior protocols, quality standards, ESSF, GRM, will be made part of all community consultations throughout the project time and will be regularly delivered to all stakeholders particularly target communities in at all project sites/activities.
- All sessions will be in the Nepali/local language of the area, and the local communities will also receive orientation on how to file and lodge complaints.

2. Mechanism for Handling Complaints:

The MaWRiN Project PMU level GRM serves as the most local level platform for addressing complaints related to project activities. Even grievances that are outside the immediate scope of MaWRiN will be logged, assessed, and directed to the appropriate channels, ensuring that complainants receive clear guidance on where to raise their concerns. To address the potential issue of grievances being submitted directly to cost centers (Division Forest Office - Sindhuli, Division Forest Office – Marin, Soil and Watershed Management Office, Ramechhap) and local authorities, the MaWRiN Project will coordinate through the following process.

- Submission of Complaints: People can submit complaints in person, in writing, or online (<https://mawrin.bagamati.gov.np/grievance>) following Grievance Redress Form. **Annex- A.**
- Agreements with Cost Centers: If the project related grievances are directly submitted to the Cost Centers, it will be directed to the PMU GRC and help manage and resolve complaints.



- **Coordination with District and Local Authorities:** Project will coordinate with local and district offices for solutions.
- **Training and Capacity Building:** Staff and officials are trained to handle complaints properly.
- **Stakeholder Awareness:** All project stakeholders will be fully informed of their rights, and the detailed grievance redress procedures will be communicated publicly through an effective outreach strategy using print materials (brochures in Nepali, Tamang, and English), electronic media, and FM radio.
- **Regular Communication and Reporting:** Updates are shared about complaints and their resolution following the schedule outlined below.
- **Feedback through Perception Surveys:** Surveys or small assessments will be conducted if people are satisfied and help improve the process.

Communication Channels for Grievances:

To ensure that grievances can be submitted by all stakeholders, including both men and women, communication channels should be accessible, safe, and inclusive:

1. In-Person Submissions:

Grievance desks or PMU Office where men and women can submit complaints directly. Separate spaces or timing may be provided to ensure women feel comfortable reporting issues.

2. Telephone:

Dedicated phone numbers that are accessible to both men and women. Female staff may be available to receive calls from women if needed.

3. Suggestion/Complaint Boxes:

Secure boxes in PMU Office where both men and women can submit written complaints anonymously.

4. Community Meetings/Consultations:



Separate or mixed forums where men and women can raise concerns comfortably. Women-only sessions may be organized in contexts where cultural norms limit their participation in mixed meetings.

5. Local Leaders or Community Representatives:

Trusted local leaders, women's groups, or community facilitators can help men and women submit grievances safely.

6. Social Media/Websites -Online Platforms:

Official social media channels and online forms are accessible to all stakeholders, with measures to ensure confidentiality.

Grievances should be directed to any of the following means:

- **Website:** mawrin.bagamati.gov.np
- **Email:** mawrin.mofe@bagamati.gov.np
- **Phone:** +977-47-590009
- **Post:** Project Management Unit (PMU), Kamalamai Municipality-6, Shantinagar, Sindhuli Madi

Medium	Working Hours
Office Number	{09:00 AM to 5:00 PM (Summer), 09:00 AM to 4:00 PM (Winter) Monday to Friday}
Websites	All time available
Social media	All time available
Complaint Boxes	All time available
Individual Consultations	As arranged
Stakeholders and Community Meetings/ Consultations	As scheduled
Email/Post	All time available



The GRC will respond within 10 business days of receipt, and complaints filed and included in project monitoring.

Grievance Review Process:

- **Step 1:** All complaints received from the project area, whether verbal or written, will be formally registered and tracked.
- **Step 2:** Receipt of the complaint will be acknowledged within two working days, including information on the process and expected timeline for handling the case.
- **Step 3:** Focal point PMU GRC will assess the eligibility of the complaint and provide a response as to whether it is eligible, in accordance with eligibility criteria within **5 business days** after receiving the complaint. The eligible grievance will be communicated with Safeguards Specialist, WWF GEF.
- **Step 4:** Once grievance is verified as eligible, the GRC will record and categorize and categorize the grievances based on nature and urgency as (a) Comments, suggestions, or inquiries; (b) Complaints about nonperformance or safeguard-related issues; (c) Allegations of legal violations or corruption during project implementation; (d) Complaints against project authorities, officials, or community representatives; and (e) Other issues not covered under the above categories. After categorization, the GRC will develop an appropriate investigation plan. A response will be provided within **5 business days after step 1, or within 10 business days** depending on the GRC's assessment of the complaint's seriousness.
- **Step 5:** The GRC will then investigate the grievance. Based on the decision, the team will then work with the affected parties to develop and implement an action plan.
- **Step 6:** A summary of the complaint raised, actions taken, conclusions reached, follow-up plan and timeframe for completion will be documented and communicated as agreed between the parties.



- **Step 7:** The PMU will provide support to clarify, assess, and resolve issues as needed, including addressing any conflicts that may arise within the team, and will involve external experts when appropriate.
- **Step 8:** The grievance that is not resolved at PMU level will be escalated to the higher tiers if not resolved at PMU level with 2 days with proper documentation.

Monitoring:

Agreed action plans will establish timeframes for regular process monitoring towards resolution of the grievances/complaints. The GRC will coordinate the monitoring by organizing periodic checks bringing together the affected parties for meetings or other communication on the status of action plans, until they are completed. PMU will assess the effectiveness of this complaint's resolution process on a semi-annual basis and identify any need for improvement.

Non- Retaliation:

PMU will not tolerate any form of retaliation against those who report concerns in good faith. Any PMU employee who engages in such retaliation will be subject to disciplinary action up to and including termination of employment. It Will take all feasible actions to protect complainants against retaliation. Anyone who has made a report of suspicious conduct of PMU employees and subsequently believes they have been subjected to retaliation of any kind should immediately report it by the same channels as noted herein.

In addition to the project-specific GRM, a complainant can submit a grievance to the WWF GEF Agency, and this contact information will be shared at the same time, with the same frequency and in the same manner and language as the project-level GRM.

WWF GEF Agency Grievance Mechanism:

Project-affected communities and other interested stakeholders may raise a grievance at any time to the WWF GEF Agency. Contact information of the WWF GEF Agency will be made publicly available.



A grievance can be filed with the Project Complaints Officer (PCO), a WWF staff member fully independent from the WWF GEF Agency, who is responsible for the WWF Accountability and Grievance Mechanism and who can be reached at: Email: SafeguardsComplaint@wwfus.org.

Mailing address:

Project Complaints Officer Safeguards Complaints
World Wildlife Fund
1250 24th Street NW
Washington, DC 20037

Stakeholders may also submit a complaint online through an independent third-party platform at <https://report.whistleb.com/sw/wwf>.

GEF Conflict Resolution Commissioner

Any project stakeholder wishing to learn more about the GEF service, raise an issue, file a complaint, or ask for facilitation are encouraged to send an email or write a letter to:

Mr. Peter Lallas
GEF Conflict Resolution Commissioner
E-mail: plallas@thegef.org

Mailing Address:

Mr. Peter Lallas
Global Environment Facility
The World Bank Group, MSN N8-800
1818 H Street, NW
Washington, DC 20433-002



ANNEX: COMPLAINT FORM (उजुरी फारम)

A. Basic INFORMATION (आधारभूत विवरण)

1. Name of Person /Organization filing the complaint (उजुरी दर्ता गर्ने व्यक्ति/संस्था को नाम):
2. Mobile or Phone Number (मोबाइल वा फोन नम्बर):
3. Gender (लिङ्ग): Male (पुरुष) Female (महिला) Others (अन्य)
4. Age (उमेर):
5. Disability (If any): Yes (हो) No(होइन)
6. Email Address (उपलब्ध भए इमेल ठेगाना):
7. Place for Filing the Complaint (गुनासो दर्ता गरिएको स्थान):

B. Categorization of Feedback / Grievance (प्रतिक्रिया / गुनासोको वर्गीकरण)

1. Requests for information about project activities and interventions etc.
(परियोजनाको गतिविधि तथा पहल सम्बन्धी जानकारीको अनुरोध)
2. Request for Assistance from the project like include their area (परियोजना बाट सहयोगको अनुरोध (जस्तै आफ्नो क्षेत्र समावेश गर्नु आदि)
3. Concerns over the project activities (quality, timeliness, involvement of communities, exclusion of some groups, etc.) (परियोजना गतिविधि सम्बन्धी चासो (गुणस्तर, समयमा काम, समुदायको सहभागिता, केही समूहको बहिष्कार आदि)



4. Serious Concerns (fraud, fund embezzlement, demanding favors in return of project services etc.) गम्भीर चासो (ठगी, कोष दुरुपयोग, परियोजना सेवाको बदलामा लाभ माग आदि)
5. GBV Issues (gender-based violence) लैङ्गिक हिंसा सम्बन्धी मुद्दा

C. DESCRIPTION OF THE COMPLAINT (गुनासोको विवरण)

1. Who were involved? Against whom is the complaint? (को-को संलग्न थिए? यो गुनासो कसको विरुद्ध हो? व्यक्ति वा घटना सम्बन्धी विवरण):
2. What happened? Or what do you suspect has happened? (के भएको थियो? अथवा यहाँलाई के भएको शंका लागेको छ?):*
3. Where did the incident happen? (District, Municipality, Ward, Location) घटना कहाँ भएको थियो? जिल्ला, पालिका, वडा, स्थान:
4. When or during what period did the incident occur? (घटना कहिले वा कुन अवधिमा भयो?):
5. How did you find out about the incident? Who else knows? Since when? (घटनाबारे कसरी थाहा भयो? अरुलाई थाहा छ? कति समय भयो?):
6. Name of witnesses (if any) and contact details (साक्षी-नाम र सम्पर्क विवरण भएमा):
7. Expected response/action from the project (परियोजना बाट कस्तो कारवाही वा समाधानको अपेक्षा?):
8. Are you connected to our organization in any way? (के तपाईं प्रत्यक्ष/अप्रत्यक्ष हाम्रो संस्थासँग आबद्ध हुनुहुन्छ?):



9. Yes (हो) No (होइन)

10. Full Description of the Complaint (पूरा विवरण, स्थान, मिति, कारण, घटनाक्रम, संलग्न व्यक्ति, परिणाम):

11. Supporting Documents (सहायक कागजातहरू)

C. DECLARATION (मन्जुरी-नामा)

I hereby declare that the information provided above is true and correct to the best of my knowledge. (म माथि उल्लेखित विवरण सत्य भएको प्रमाणित गर्दछु।)

Yes, I accept. (हो, म स्वीकार गर्छु)

Date (मिति):

Signature (दस्तखत):