

Draft

**The Kyrgyz Republic
State Water Resources Agency**

**Support for Preparation of
WATER SECURITY AND WATER QUALITY PROJECT**

Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

October 05, 2020

Contents

- 1. Introduction..... 3**
 - Project background 3*
 - Purpose, scope and structure of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan 4*
- 2. Project Preparation Grant Description 4**
 - Activities/Components 4*
 - Implementing Agency 5*
- 3. Stakeholder Identification and Analysis..... 5**
 - Key Definitions 5*
 - Project Stakeholders 6*
- 4. Stakeholder Engagement Plan..... 7**
- 5. Grievance Redress Mechanism 9**
 - Grievance Resolution 9*
 - WB's Grievance Redress Service..... 10*
- 6. Resources and Responsibilities for SEP implementation..... 10**
 - Management functions and responsibilities 10*
 - Resources 10*
- COVID-19 Considerations 11*

1. Introduction

Project background

A water-secure and sustainable future for the Kyrgyz Republic entails managing water resources, delivering water services and building resilience to external shocks, such as extreme weather events but also pandemics. In a post COVID-19 era, investments in water security measures can play a central role in the Republic's recovery, medium-term development and future resilience to outbreaks. This includes (i) the modernization of irrigated agriculture for enhanced food security, job creation and protection of climate-vulnerable rural farming, (ii) water and sanitation service delivery essential for outbreak resilience, productivity and water quality protection, and (iii) protection and restoration of landscapes and green infrastructure vital for flood and drought management and rural livelihoods development. Water security investment measures, such rehabilitation of irrigation & drainage systems, landscape restoration and reforestation, water and sanitation infrastructure, and flood protection, will generate employment for thousands of local workers, helping to kick-starting the local economy in a post-COVID19 era.

The proposed project consists of three components.

Component 1: Infrastructure Investments for Water Security will contribute to implementation of a river basin management plan and will finance goods, works and services (design and supervision) to improve access and quality of water and environmental services. Tentatively this component will have three sub-components: Component 1.1: Irrigation and Drainage Rehabilitation and Modernization; Component 1.2: Drinking Water and Sanitation Development; Component 1.3: Landscape Management.

Component 2: Institutional Strengthening for Service Delivery and Integrated water management will finance activities (goods and services) designed to strengthen water resources planning, development and management in the selected river basin, operation and maintenance of water infrastructure. This component will strengthen the capacity of SWRA, river basin management offices, river basin councils in selected basin(s), WUAs, and water utilities (vodokanals, municipal enterprises,). Specific activities will include investments in information systems for better water management (e.g. water information system support, flood monitoring, dam safety monitoring) and will be further defined based on institutional and capacity assessments carried out during project preparation.

Component 3: Project Management will support project management, monitoring and evaluation, fiduciary and environmental and social management, beneficiary satisfaction surveys, grievance redress mechanism, communications and awareness activities, project and entity audits, feasibility studies of future investments, trainings and other operating costs.

The Kyrgyz Republic has received a Recipient Executed Trust Fund (RETF) grant to support the preparation of **Water Security and Water Quality Project (WSWQP)** to be financed by the funds of the International Development Association (IDA). The RETF for the total amount of **425,500 US\$** is financed by the Europe and Central Region Capacity Building (ECAPDEV) Trust Fund. This Project Preparation Grant (PPG) will be implemented by **the State Water Resources Agency (SWRA)**.

The development objective of the PPG is to facilitate the preparation of the Water Security and Water Quality project and to strengthen the capacity of the SWRA in preparation of investment projects and early implementation activities. The Water Security and Water Quality Project aims to increase access to climate-resilient water and environmental services and to leverage water resources for economic development in selected basin(s). The proposed project will be the first at-scale realization of the

Government's new vision on basin-level integrated water management, bringing multiple investments streams together in support of social, economic and environmental outcomes. It is fully aligned with the Government's Roadmap for Water Reform requiring the implementation of River Basin Development Plan. It also aligns with the Government's Program for Drinking Water and Sanitation 2026 and its commitments and national program to reduce land degradation.

The PPG will be used to support the SWRA conduct the technical studies, environmental and social assessments, fiduciary assessments, capacity building of local stakeholders and consultations that are key for preparation of **Water Security and Water Quality Project (P173734)**. The grant will enhance capacities of the implementing agency for project preparation and readiness to implement and will ensure a timely and solid preparation before the Project is approved.

Purpose, scope and structure of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan

The allocation of the grant requires development of the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), following the World Bank's new approach of Environmental and Social Standard 10 (ESS10). The scope and level of detail of the SEP is commensurate with the nature and scale, potential risks, and impacts of the PPG. Accordingly, the scope of this SEP extends only to stakeholders affected by the activities of this PPG and the arrangements to be engaged with the said stakeholders during the project preparation.

The purpose of the present SEP is to outline the key stakeholders of the grant supporting preparation of **Water Security and Water Quality Project** and its associated stakeholder engagement action plan, identify the methods of stakeholder engagement and establishment of a constructive dialogue between the parties, and introduce responsibilities in the implementation of stakeholder engagement activities. The intention of the SEP is to ensure broad and active participation of stakeholders and establish a constructive dialogue in a timely manner during the process of developing the project.

Specifically, SEP serves the following purposes:

- I. stakeholder identification and analysis;
- II. planning how the engagement with stakeholder will take place;
- III. disclosure of information;
- IV. consultation with stakeholders;
- V. addressing and responding to grievances;
- VI. monitoring and reporting on SEP.

This SEP will be disclosed by SWRA, which is the implementing agency of the PPG and Water Security and Water Quality Project and open to feedback and consultation. Feedback from stakeholders will be incorporated in the final version of SEP.

2. Project Preparation Grant Description

Activities/Components

The proposed activities financed with this PPG will provide assistance and training to the implementing agency of the main project and produce analytical reports which are key for the project preparation. The PPG will comprise of three main parts Part 1. Preparation of critical project documentation to ensure readiness, Part 2. Development of performance improvement plans for service providers, Part 3. Capacity building for project preparation and early implementation, as described below:

The expected results from the PPG implementation are: i) increased capacity of the implementing agency for implementation readiness; and ii) informed and timely preparation of the Project. The PPG will also help to use innovative technologies to prepare and consult about project activities while travel might be restricted by COVID 19. Lastly, the PPG will enable the training and capacity building of local stakeholders.

Part 1: Preparation of the critical WSWQP documentation

- (i) feasibility study for selected water supply, wastewater collection and treatment, drought/flood resilience measures;
- (ii) environmental and social impact assessments, as well as environmental and social instruments, as may be required by the Environmental and Social Standards; and
- (iii) detailed engineering design, bidding documents to be prepared for the first batch of priority investments in water supply and sanitation, and flood protection.

Part 2: Development of performance improvements plans for selected water supply and irrigation service providers

- (i) assessment of the service providers' performance (technical, financial, energy audits);
- (ii) development of costed performance improvement plan/business investment plans; and
- (iii) development or review of management, operation and maintenance plans and contracts for water user associations, and service contracts, including tariff determination, for water utilities.

Part 3: Capacity building for project preparation and early implementation

- (i) trainings and other capacity building activities for SWRA, PIU and regional level basin administration on project implementation and Environmental and Social Standards;
- (ii) support for Incremental Operating Costs of PIU for project preparation, consulting services for strengthening PIU capacities on Environmental and Social Standards and Grant audit; and
- (iii) conducting of a baseline study in the WSWQP project area.

Implementing Agency

The SWRA established in July 2019 will lead the project implementation and has a capable PIU for the National Water Resources Management Project and Agriculture Productivity and Nutrition Improvement Project. SWRA now covers a broad mandate for drinking water supply and sanitation services, irrigation development and service delivery of main hydraulic infrastructure, as well as water resources management, planning, allocation and monitoring. SWRA's PIU will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation of the project, procurement, financial management, disbursement, Environmental and Social Standards management, progress monitoring, reporting, and will coordinate all activities with relevant national, basin-level and local stakeholders (such as local municipalities, towns, water user associations, and water supply and sanitation service providers)

3. Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

Key Definitions

Project stakeholders are defined as individuals, formal or informal groups and organizations, and/or governmental entities whose interests or rights will be affected, directly or indirectly, by the Project, both positively and negatively, who may have an interest in Project, and who have the potential to influence the Project outcomes in any way.

As per the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework, Environmental and Social Standard 10 (ESS10) on Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure, stakeholders may be categorized into:

- **Affected Parties** – stakeholders that are affected or may be affected by the project;
- **Other Interested Parties** – other parties who may have an interest in the project;
- **Disadvantaged/Vulnerable Individuals or Groups** - individuals or groups who may require special engagement efforts due to their vulnerable status.

Affected Parties

The Project has multiple stakeholders from government, private sector, research sector, civic society and the general public. For the purposes of this SEP document, stakeholders who are likely to be directly affected by, and involved in the implementation of the policy, are classified as Affected Parties. These include, among others, land users, farmers, water service providers and water user associations, local government, local communities.

Other Interested Parties

Other Interested Parties include individuals/groups/entities that may not experience direct impacts from the Project but who consider or perceive their interests as being affected by the Project and/or who could affect the project and the process of its implementation in some way. Other interested parties include, among others, government institutions that may be involved in various ways in the project, as well as academia, civil society, international organizations, the media and the general public.

Disadvantaged/Vulnerable Individuals or Groups

As a special category of stakeholders, the SEP also identifies Vulnerable Groups, i.e., individuals or groups who may require special engagement efforts due to their vulnerable status¹ to ensure their equal representation in the consultation and decision-making process associated with the Project. In the context of the present project, it may be groups who for various reasons (e.g. disability) find it particularly difficult to access information about and register their views on the project and its impacts.

Project Stakeholders

The ECAPDEV grant funded activities will include preparation of feasibility study, environmental and social assessments, detailed engineering design, among others. The scope of PPG stakeholder identification is commensurate to activity boundaries. Therefore, project stakeholders are limited in number and disclosure and consultations will be appropriate to nature of activity. The PPG Stakeholders are identified as follows:

- **Project Affected People**
Wider public: communities, land users, farmers, water users associations etc. including disadvantaged / vulnerable individuals or groups.
- **The State Water Resources Agency**
The other ministries and agencies which are associated with the water and environmental sector policy are the Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy, Ministry of Agriculture, Food Industry and Land Improvement, Ministry of Emergency Situations, State Agency on Local Self-Government and Interethnic Relations, State Agency on Antimonopoly Regulation, the State Committee for

¹ Vulnerable status may stem from an individual's or group's race, national, ethnic or social origin, color, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, property, age, culture, literacy, sickness, physical or mental disability, poverty or economic disadvantage, and dependence on unique natural resources.

Industry, Energy and Subsoil Use, the State Agency for Environmental Protection and Forestry, the State Agency for Land Resources and State Inspectorate on Environmental and Technical Safety.

- **The Extended Structure of the SWRA**

In the overall jurisdictional structure of the SWRA there are more than 60 entities (subordinate under SRWA and departments), which are based in Bishkek and in all other major localities in the country.

- Water Resources and Off-Farm Canal Management Departments (Djalal-Abad, Batken, Issyk-Kul, Talas, Naryn, Osh, Chui);
- Main Water Management Departments;
- Water Reservoirs department;
- Ameliorative Hydrogeological Expedition;
- Directorate of water management objects under construction;
- Design and engineering and technological institute “Water automation and metrology”;
- Department of Drinking Water and Wastewater Disposal; and
- Water Information Centre.

- **Other interested parties**

International Financing Institutions: The World Bank (including ongoing projects), Asian Development Bank (ADB), European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), Islamic Development Bank, EU, etc.’

Civil Society: Community Based Organizations, Non-governmental Organizations’

Development organizations: UNDP, UNEP.

4. Stakeholder Engagement Plan

The SWRA will consult with public and all relevant stakeholders on key project-related activities (as outlined below). SWRA will provide information on project design, feasibility study, technical, environmental and social assessments, and request stakeholders’ and public feedback on project interventions. The results of such consultations will be agreed with participants and documented. The feedback, opinions and suggestions received by the stakeholders will be duly considered.

Table 1. Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Grant funded activities	Stakeholder engagement method ²	Target Stakeholders	Objective of stakeholder engagement activity	Responsibilities
<i>Preparing technical assessment for the Water Security and Water Quality Project</i>	<i>Expert and key informant Interviews</i>	<i>River Basin Irrigation Departments, relevant water management stakeholders (Water User Associations and their members), local authorities, relevant</i>	<i>Prioritization of project areas: to identify priority project areas based on predefined criteria such as: status of land degradation, proximity to protected areas, proximity to</i>	<i>SWRA (through consultant firm)</i>

^{2 2} This is subject to the coronavirus situation in the Kyrgyz Republic, and restrictions put in place by government. The team will review the COVID-19 situation and if appropriate will apply alternative ways as described below in this document as well as in the *Technical Note for public consultations and stakeholder engagement in WB-supported operations when there are constraints on conducting public meetings* (as of March 20, 2020).

		<i>Ministries and state committees, communities, land users, farmers.</i>	<i>hydropower dams, poverty concentration areas, proximity to roads with regional importance, existing level of water services.</i>	
<i>Preparing environmental and social assessment for the Water Security and Water Quality Project</i>	<i>Consultations, interviews, surveys</i>	<i>Communities, land users, farmers, River Basin Irrigation Departments, relevant water management stakeholders.</i>	<i>To prepare an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment. Preparation of environmental and social due diligence and risk mitigation, and a social assessment of the proposed project's potentially affected people.</i>	<i>SWRA (through consultant firm)</i>
<i>Preparing a communication strategy</i>	<i>Awareness raising activities</i>	<i>Wider public and stakeholders</i>	<i>To create awareness and motivation to support project activities in wider public and stakeholders and prepare a communication strategy for the project.</i>	<i>SWRA and consulting firm</i>
<i>Preparing Gender Action Plan</i>	<i>Expert and key informant Interviews, consultations, surveys</i>	<i>Women and stakeholders</i>	<i>To create awareness and inform on the Gender gaps present.</i>	<i>SWRA (through consultant firm)</i>
<i>Consultations</i>	<i>Face-to-face/virtual workshops. Digital consultation platforms. Draft technical, environmental and social assessment results will be shared with public/stakeholders.</i>	<i>Wider public and stakeholders</i>	<i>To inform the design of the proposed project activities and goals. To share design of the proposed project. Enabling key stakeholders to provide their opinion, feedback, suggestions on the technical, environmental and social assessments. Integrate and address raised suggestions, opinions and considerations in the assessments. Further modification and improvement of the assessments and project design based in received feedback</i>	<i>SWRA and consulting firm</i>

5. Grievance Redress Mechanism

The SWRA will respond to concerns and grievances of project-affected parties related to the environmental and social performance of the PPG in a timely manner. The PIU at SWRA will be responsible for managing the stakeholder GM. The grievance mechanism will be proportionate to the potential risks and impacts of the project and will be accessible and inclusive.

- (a) The grievance mechanism is expected to address concerns promptly and effectively, in a transparent manner that is readily accessible to all project-affected parties, at no cost and without retribution. The mechanism, process or procedure will not prevent access to judicial or administrative remedies. The PIU will inform the project-affected parties about the grievance process in the course of its community engagement activities, and will make publicly available a record documenting the responses to all grievances received; and
- (b) Handling of grievances will be done in a culturally appropriate manner and be discreet, objective, sensitive and responsive to the needs and concerns of the project-affected parties. The mechanism will also allow for anonymous complaints to be raised and addressed.

The GM will be accessible to the full range of project stakeholders, including project-affected parties, community members, civil society, media, and other interested parties. Stakeholders can use the GM to submit complaints, feedback, queries, suggestions, or even compliments related to the overall management and implementation of the project.

Appeals and complaints may be filed by visiting, calling or sending a letter or e-mail, or dropping a grievance to a reception at the SWRA or PIU. Receipt of an appeal/request in writing or by e-mail, must be acknowledged by letter or e-mail, within 3 working days, by the SWRA or PIU. An appeal or complaint can be submitted through the following channels:

Responsible specialist:	Samara Orozalieva, Public Communications and Social Specialist
Address:	Toktonaliev, 4A, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic
Telephone:	+996 312 544972
E-mail:	apnip@elcat.kg
Web-platform:	https://apnip.water.gov.kg/

Grievance Resolution

The Grant Coordinator (and/or E&S specialist), further the PIU Director, will serve as Grievance Focal Point(s) who will register the submitted grievance in the Grievance Log and review within 7 (seven) calendar days, including the information verification, cross-checking, and analysis, and follow-up with the applicant as needed. As necessary, the Grievance Focal Point will involve the other relevant units' specialists in this activity. Based on the conducted review, the Grievance Focal Point will prepare his/her Recommendation Report to the PIU Director. Complaints that can be resolved through / at the level of the PIU Grievance Focal Point will no longer be passed on to the Coordinator.

Grievance Log: It is important that all complaints are recorded in writing and maintained in a database. Complaints received should be assigned a number that will help the assigned specialist to track progress via the database. The database should at least contain relevant information on the date of submission, sphere of issue, responsible party, deadline for the problem solving and feedback (positive or negative).

WB's Grievance Redress Service

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) (<http://projects-beta.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/products-and-services/grievance-redress-service>). A complaint may be submitted in English, Kyrgyz 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 Kyrgyz Republic Country Office in Bishkek: 210 Moskovskaya Street, Bishkek, Kyrgyz Republic, bishkek@worldbank.org, Tel. +996 312 625262

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.

6. Resources and Responsibilities for SEP implementation

Management functions and responsibilities

A team, based at SWRA/PIU, will manage the ECAPDEV grant and going forward, the main project. The World Bank has agreed to provide financing through the ECAPDEV Trust fund. The Grant management team and SWRA have the responsibilities to implement the SEP, as detailed in the SEP activities table (Table 2) above, and to comply with the timelines specified in that document. Grant management team (going forward, the PIU) will have overall responsibility to update, adopt, and implement Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), including various engagement mechanisms, their tentative timelines, roles and responsibilities, and resources allocated for implementing the SEP activities.

The SEP will be updated to reflect any major changes to the project related activities and to its schedule, if any. The stakeholder engagement activities will be documented through quarterly progress reports, to be shared with the World Bank.

Resources

The stakeholder engagement activities described in this document are a core part of the Project implementation. They will be included under the separate budget line as a part of the grant budget. The SEP will be continuously updated throughout the project implementation period, as required.

COVID-19 Considerations

The key approaches and mechanism of the implementation of SEP is highly dependent on COVID-19 situation in the country and the established regime of quarantine. COVID-19 outbreak in the country started in March 2020 and dramatically changed the situation enforcing social distancing, isolation and lock down. With the evolving situation, the Government imposed strict restrictions on public gatherings and meetings. The general public has also become increasingly concerned about the risks of transmission, particularly through social interactions. Currently, the Government is gradually opening up the economy, however, the situation is unpredictable.

Given the preliminary timeframe of the Project, the consultations will be held at the end of 2020. If the future situation requires, alternative ways may need to be adopted to manage consultations and stakeholder engagement in accordance with the established regime of quarantine to prevent the virus transmission. These alternate approaches that will be practiced for stakeholder engagement may include having consultations in small groups if smaller meetings are permitted, else making reasonable efforts to conduct meetings through online channels (e.g. webex, zoom, skype etc.), diversifying means of communication and relying more on social media, chat groups, dedicated online platforms, mobile apps (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp groups, project weblinks/websites etc.). Accordingly, the format of some of the activities enlisted in this SEP which assume face to face contact (e.g. focus group discussions, round table discussions, etc.) may be transferred to “virtual” platforms through broad usage of ICTs and internet resources.