Government of Sri Lanka

Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI)

INTEGRATED RURBAN DEVELOPMENT AND CLIMATE RESILIENCE PROJECT (IRDCRP)

Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

Last update 18 November 2026



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Acronyms and Abbreviations

AM	Accountability Mechanism
AP	Affected Person/Party
ARAP	Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plan
ASMP	Agriculture Sector Modernization Project
BP	Business Plan
CBA	Cost Benefit Analysis
CBO	Community-based Organization
CBSL	Central Bank of Sri Lanka
CC	Community Centre
CE	Citizen Engagement
CER	Contingent Emergency Response
CMC	Cascade Management Committee
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
CS	Chief Secretary
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
CSIAP	Climate Smart Irrigated Agriculture Project
DAD	Department of Agrarian Development
DAU	Digital Agriculture Unit
DCC	District Coordinating Committee
DDP	Deputy Director Planning
DDR	Due Diligence Report
DGRC	Divisional Grievance Redress Committee
DO	Divisional Officer
DOA	Department of Agriculture
DPD	Deputy Project Director
DS	Divisional Secretary
DSC	District Steering Committee
DSD	Divisional Secretariat Division
DWC	Department of Wildlife Conservation
E&S	Environmental and Social
EA	Economic Analysis
ERD	External Resources Department
ESCAMP	Ecosystems Conservation and Management Project
ESCOP	Environmental and Social Codes of Practices
ESCP	Environmental and Social Commitment Plan
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
ESG	Environmental and Social Guideline
ESHS	Environmental, Social, Health and Safety
ESIA	Environmental and Socia Impact Assessment
ESMP	Environment and Social Management Plan
ESO	Environmental and Social Officer
ESR	Environmental Screening Report
ESS	Environmental and Social Standards
FD	Forest Department

FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FO	Farmer Organization
GAP	Good Agriculture Practices
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GIS	Geo Information System
GND	Grama Niladhari Division
GoSL	Government of Sri Lanka
GRC	Grievance Redressal Committee
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
GRS	Grievance Redressal Service
GVC	Global Value Chain
IA	Implementing Agency
ID	Irrigation Department
IDA	International Development Association
IE	Irrigation Engineer
IEC	Information, Education and Campaign
IMD	Irrigation Management Division
IP	Indigenous People
IPPF	Indigenous Peoples Policy Framework
IRDCRP	Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project
IWWRMP	Integrated Watershed and Water Resources Management Project
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
LA	Land Acquisition
LDSP	Local Development Support Project
LGA	Local Government Authority
LMP	Labor Management Plan
LRP	Livelihood Restoration Plan
LSA	Livelihood Support Assistance
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MASL	Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka
MoALLI	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation
MoDE	Ministry of Digital Economy
MoE	Ministry of Environment
MoFAOR	Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resources
MoFPED	Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development
MoIED	Ministry of Industry and Entrepreneurship Development
MoPAPCLG	Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government
MoPCI	Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure
MoRDSSCE	Ministry of Rural Development, Social Security and Community Empowerment
MoTCFSCD	Ministry of Trade, Commerce, Food Security and Co-operative Development
MoWCA	Ministry of Women and Child Affairs
MSME	Micro, Small and Medium Enterprise
NDC	National Determined Contribution
NEA	National Environment Act
NGO	Non-government Organization
NGRC	National Grievance Redress Committee

NIRP	National Involuntary Resettlement Policy
NPD	National Planning Department
NPSC	National Project Steering Committee
OFC	Other Field Crops
OHS	Operational Health and Safety
OP	Operational Policy
PA	Provincial Authority
PA	Productive Alliance
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PAP	Project-Affected Persons
PBC	Performance Base Condition
PD	Project Director
PDO	Project Development Objective
PG	Producer Group
PGRC	Provincial Grievance Redress Committee
PID	Provincial Irrigation Department
PMU	Project Management Unit
PS	Producer Society
PSC	Provincial Steering Committee
RP	Resettlement Plan
RPF	Resettlement Policy Framework
RTI	Right to Information
SAC	Social Audit Committee
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SEA/SH	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/ Sexual Harassment
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SH	Sexual Harassment
SL	Sri Lanka
SOP	Series of Projects
SSR	Social Screening Report
STEP	Systematic Tracking of Exchange in Procurement
TA	Technical Assistance
TBD	To Be Decided
TOR	Terms of Reference
USD	United States Dollar
VAC	Violence Against Children
VAW	Violence Against Woman
VLDC	Voluntary Land Donation Criteria
WB	World Bank
WBG	World Bank Group

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Executive Summary

The project development objective to increase productivity, market access, and climate resilience of agri-food producers in selected areas. The proposed project is the first in a series of projects over a nine-year, two-phased program with the overall aim of supporting green, resilient, and inclusive rural growth in Sri Lanka. The first project will scale and replicate successes from recent and ongoing World Bank-financed operations, and incorporates findings from technical assistance, sector analytics and ongoing country diagnostics and assessments. The project contributes significantly to climate adaptation and mitigation, with a strong emphasis on adaptation, through a range of interventions in climate-smart agriculture, water management, ecosystem protection, sustainable technology adoption, and enhanced market access. The specific mechanisms for achieving these climate contributions are outlined within the project's components. The overall responsibility for project implementation, including management and coordination will lie with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI) through a Project Management Units (PMU). In addition, agencies under the purview of Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource (MOFAOR), Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure (MOPCI), Department of Agrarian Development (DAD), Livestock and Irrigation Department (ID), Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka (MASL), Irrigation Management Division (IMD), Department of Agriculture (DoA) under MoALLI in close coordination with Chief Secretaries (CS) and Provincial Authorities (PA), Field Officers (FO) or other relevant stakeholders will support the implementation.

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) was prepared jointly by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI), Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource (MOFAOR), Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure (MOPCI), and with technical assistance from the World Bank. It will be applied to all investments under the proposed Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Program Series of Projects 1 (P505241) consisting of a series of projects.

Stakeholder engagement is a mandatory requirement of the WB in line with the World Banks Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), particularly Environmental and Social Standard (ESS) 10 (Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure). It seeks to ensure that all stakeholders – especially the individual and groups affected or likely to be affected by the project – are identified early and engaged in a timeframe that enables meaningful consultations with them on project design, and throughout the project's life cycle.

Stakeholder analysis identifies three groups of stakeholders: (a) individuals or groups including vulnerable groups who are affected or likely to be affected by the project identified as 'Project Affected Parties' (PAPs), and (b) individuals or groups who may have an interest in the project, identified as 'Other Interested Parties' and (c) disadvantaged / vulnerable individuals or groups. It also outlines the methods and timelines for their engagement at different stages of the project. In addition, it describes the types of information that will be disclosed to the stakeholders during consultations, and how their views are considered in addition to the project-specific Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM).

The stakeholders for the Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP) in 2024 includes a diverse range of individuals, groups and institutions. Key Stakeholders comprise relevant government agencies such as Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation, In addition, agencies under the purview of Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource (MOFAOR), Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure (MOPCI), Irrigation Department (ID), Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka (MASL), Irrigation Management Division (IMD), Department of Agrarian Development, Department of Agriculture and other relevant government institutions. Additionally, project affected parties include poor farmers/ smallholder farmers/ young entrepreneurs/ fishermen and state workers. Farmers/fishermen those who represent Producer Groups/ Societies,

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Fishermen Society/ Fisheries Society/ cucumber Society/ Fisheries Co-op Federation/ Inland Fisheries Society/ Fisheries Federation/ Producer Associations, and District Federations. Specific attentions are given to female farmers, differently able farmers, youngster and other disadvantaged or vulnerable groups to ensure their active participation and engagement. These stakeholders will be engaged through structured consultations and provided with project-related information tailored to their needs, with mechanisms in place to incorporate their feedback into project design and implementation.

Program for Stakeholder Engagement documents the process of information disclosure and meaningful consultations at various stages of the project to make them aware of the project and the grievance redress mechanism. The implementing agencies will engage in reporting to stakeholders and obtaining their feedback to help the project to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the project-induced risks and impacts that could emerge during the process of project design and implementation. During the stage of subproject design, consultation will be intensive and broad-based.

The program for stakeholder engagement outlines for the Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project a structured approach to involving stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle to ensure their awareness, active participation and feedback. During the project design stage, the project has conducted intensive and broad-based consultations with key stakeholders, including affected communities, government agencies and vulnerable groups, to identify needs, priorities and concerns. Regular information sharing sessions will be held using culturally appropriate and accessible methods, such as community meetings, Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), and printed material in local languages.

The GRM will be actively promoted as a channel for stakeholders to voice their concerns and received timely resolutions. Stakeholder engagement will continue during project implementation, with periodic updated provided on progress and challenges through stakeholder forums and reports. Feedback from this integration will be integrated into decision-making to mitigate risks, enhance project outcomes, and ensure that the interests of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups are adequately addressed.

Community Consultations during the project preparation/design phase were specifically focused on gathering input for project design in the areas where previous Bank-financed projects are being implemented. These consultations, which are ongoing, played a critical role in shaping the project by incorporating feedback from stakeholders about their needs and priorities

Grievance Redress Mechanism will provide a convenient procedure to receive and resolve complaints and concerns of affected persons timely and effectively, and to the satisfaction of all stakeholders concerned. The project will provide PAPs with enhanced opportunities for grievance redress through an accessible and inclusive procedure that is transparent, inclusive, culturally appropriate, and readily accessible to all PAPs, at no cost and without retribution. The GRM procedure includes details as how to lodge grievances, time taken, steps to follow, and the appeal process to be invoked where the proposed resolution is not to the satisfaction of the complainant.

A comprehensive GRM is currently being established to ensure effective resolution of grievances and concerns raised by stakeholders. The GRM operated through GRC will be formed at four levels: a) GN level/ SAC level/ CBO level/ sector level in the ground, b) Divisional/ District Level, c) Provincial Level, d) National Level. At the GN/ SAC level, GRC should be composed of Social Safeguard Officer from the Project, GN, and members of the SAC. This localized structure facilitates the immediate resolution of grievances, making it a particular mechanism for addressing community level concerns promptly. If the grievance cannot be resolved or if the PAP is not satisfied with the solution, they can escalate it to the next level divisions/ district, provincial and national level GRC.

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Grievances can be resolved at the Divisional/ District Coordinating Committees' meeting, Provincial Steering Committees' meeting and National Steering Committees. They can be submitted through various channels, including verbal communication, letters if agriculture/ irrigation related (80/5, 'Govijana Mandiraya', Rajamalwatta Lane, Battaramulla), telephone (general: 011-2034300), SAC, suggestion boxes at the ASC level, Gmail (until PMU establish email: argrpmoapi8@gmail.com~~),~~ if fishery sector related New Secretariat, Maligawatta, Colombo 10. If it is related to the plantation sector related, 11th Floor, Sethsiripaya 2nd Stage, Battaramulla, telephone (general: 0112 186 160), etc. The grievances may relate to environmental issues, GBV, technical matters, land issues, livelihoods, contract management, labor influx related, administration, project design, exclusion and benefits distribution related etc. These grievances will be recorded by the focal person and monitored closely to resolve those in timely manners.

The SEP budget includes only indicative costs estimated for the purpose of SEP budget planning. Once the subprojects are worked out and stakeholders are identified, the scope and activities will be known, and the SEP budget will be updated accordingly.

Project Management Unit (PMU) will be responsible for SEP implementation in close coordination with the implementing ministry, departments and the provincial authorities. Comments and feedback about SEP activities can be obtained from the officials responsible for E&S from the relevant agencies. Any changes to the project personnel tasked with SEP responsibilities will be updated and disclosed. The PMU will be responsible for monitoring SEP activities. The respective departments implementing SEP activating will prepare and submit monthly reports on the progress of SEP implementation during project implementation. The PMUs will provide overall guidance (recording, reporting formats and technical guidance) in monitoring SEP implementation.

The SEP was disclosed before Project Appraisal on the website of MoALLI and Irrigation Department. Based on feedback from the public, the SEP will be updated and re-disclosed on the same channels. The SEP will serve as a living document and will be updated depending on the changing project situations and adjustments to the scope of the Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project.

1. Project Description

1.1 Country/Sector Context

Sri Lanka is a middle-income country with a population of 22 million. It is in a critical situation due to long standing structural weaknesses and weak management, ill-timed tax benefits, loss of public assets and income, wasteful public expenditures, and impact of Covid-19 pandemic. As a result, poverty has increased in terms of both severity and the number of poor and vulnerable population. Poverty is estimated to have grown to 25.9% of the population in 2023 compared to 11.3% in 2019.[1] The country had declared bankruptcy, inability to service the loans taken, and is engaged with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in a process of debt restructuring and economic revival. Available predictions indicate a timeframe of 20 to 30 years for economic revival. While the consequences of the crisis and the hardships related to the process of IMF-led adjustments affect all sectors of the economy, the rural sector, where most of the population lives is more severely affected than their counterparts in the urban and estate sectors.

For the past several decades, the World Bank (WB) has been supporting the Government of Sri Lanka (GoSL) through various projects to address some of the main problems including impacts of climate change affecting the rural economy where agriculture – irrigated and rain-fed – is the predominant source of livelihood. Recent project support focused on such aspects as irrigation infrastructure improvement and development including rural roads, agricultural modernization, irrigation water resources and watershed management, and climate smart irrigated agriculture, all with stakeholder engagement, gender mainstreaming, and organizational capacity enhancement as well as emergency responses included. In the above context, the GoSL is keen to spur rural growth urgently for the benefit of the people, especially the livelihoods of rural people, via a new Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP) formulated by combining the successes gained in the different projects all implemented in the rural sector though with project-specific purposes.

This Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) was prepared jointly by the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI), Irrigation Department (ID), Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka (MASL), Irrigation Management Division (IMD), Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource (MOFAOR), Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure (MOPCI), with technical assistance from the World Bank in line with the World Banks's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), particularly ESS 10 (Stakeholder Consultation and Disclosure). It will be applied to all investments under the proposed Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP), which consists of a series of projects. This is a living document to be updated depending on the changing project situations and adjustments to the scope of the project.

The project was approved on April 10, 2025, and became effective on September 8, 2025. Following the Government of Sri Lanka's declaration of a national emergency in response to Cyclone Ditwah on November 28, 2025, the World Bank activated a **US$30 million, 18-month Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC)** under the IRDCRP to support emergency recovery and rehabilitation efforts. The CERC financed the rehabilitation of damaged irrigation infrastructure, cash transfers to affected farmers, and recovery assistance for livestock producers, including emergency nutrition and disease prevention services.

All CERC-financed activities are being implemented in accordance with the environmental and social requirements of the updated ESG and provisions of the updated CERC Manual. ESG and

[1] World Bank (2024) "Sri Lanka Development Update 2024: A Bridge to Recovery". Washington DC: Washington.

CERC Manual have been updated to incorporate the simplified CERC screening approach (ESCOPs for subprojects below LKR 25 million; simplified ESMPs for larger interventions). The updated CERC Manual is in use.

To reflect the CERC activation, the project was restructured on **August 31, 2026**. The **Additional Financing (AF)**, initiated in October 2026, replenishes the **US$30 million** reallocated to the CERC following Cyclone Ditwah and restores Components 1-3 to their originally approved scope and financing levels. The AF does not introduce any new activities, new types of investments, or new geographic areas and therefore returns the project to its original design and scope.

1.2 Project Development Objective and Project Components

The World Bank is supporting this long-term commitment through a Series of Projects (SOP) which envisions a two-phased[2] project over a nine-year period that incorporates learning, institutional development for multisector solutions and adjusts the implementation approach as needed across phases. The first project in the SOP builds on current and recently closed World Bank and other sector engagements to scale and address the most pressing development challenges rapidly, especially as Sri Lanka emerges from the economic crisis. Across the two phases of the SOP, the project will look to deepen investments in the enabling environment, boost market linkages, and further invest in coordinated efforts for climate resilience to bring greater competitiveness and private sector engagement in the agriculture, plantation, livestock, and fisheries sectors. This will support Sri Lanka's objectives of increasing agriculture exports and ensuring a sustainable and climate-resilient agri-food production system. The table below lays out the current two-phase project, as currently envisioned.

Table 1: Support Across Phases of the Series of Projects

Component	**Ongoing projects now-2026**	**Phase 1: 2025–31** US$120 million	**Phase 2: 2028–34** US$250 million	
	Features: *On-going successful activities that secure rural livelihoods, jobs, market opportunities from local rural enterprises, and natural resources*	**PDO:** To increase productivity, market access, and climate resilence of small and medium agri-food producers in selected areas.	**PDO:** To scale up sustainable, resilient, and inclusive landscape management and increase rural incomes in project areas	**Project Development Objective:** to strengthen integrated landscape management and increase
Component 1: Promotion of Climate-Smart Production, Value Addition, and Inclusive	• Agriculture Sector Modernization Project (ASMP, recently closed) • Smallholder Agribusiness Partnership Project (funded	Build on current engagements and strengthen market integration with productive partnerships approach for smallholder inclusion	++ Expand productive partnerships to additional value chains and to the whole country Scale and expand agri-finance to	

[2] The triggering of SOP2 will depend on the successful completion of the first round of productive partnership financing and substantial implementation, the framework agreement between the agencies for irrigation and agricultural investments and completion of the mid-term review of the SOP1.

Component	Ongoing projects now-2026	Phase 1: 2025–31 US$120 million	Phase 2: 2028–34 US$250 million	
Access to Markets	by IFAD) • IFC investments and technical assistance in coconut and cinnamon sector, value chain financing and agri-businesses	Spur private provision of agri-services targeting youth and women	support productive partnerships Improve climate resilience through cold chain management Scale private provision of rural services	incomes for small and medium agri-food producers in selected areas
Component 2: Integrated Management of Natural Resources for Climate Resilience	• Climate Smart Irrigated Agriculture Project (CSIAP, ongoing) • Ecosystem Conservation and Management Project (ESCAMP, recently closed) • Integrated Watershed and Water Resources Management Project (IWWRMP, on-going)	Continue and deepen integrated cascade management, irrigation and water management improvements with climate smart agriculture practices Improvement of water use efficiency and productivity in selected major, medium and minor schemes with climate smart practices	++ Scale and deepen cascade management approaches Crowd in climate financing for mitigation and adaptation Scale and replicate integrated water resources management and water use efficiency approaches to strengthen resilience	
Component 3: Strengthening the Enabling Environment for Sectoral Growth	• Climate Smart Irrigated Agriculture Project (CSIAP, on-going) • Agriculture Sector Modernization Project (ASMP, on-going)	Investing in data quality and availability for policy making Priority investments in strengthening adaptable quality infrastructure	++ Continued investments to streamline and integrate systems for exports	

The **Project Development Objective** is to increase productivity, market access, and climate resilience of agri-food producers in selected areas.

Project components. The project has five components financed through a US$100 million IDA credit, US$20 million in contributions from the GoSL, and US$25 million[3] mobilized from in private capital, including from small and medium producers and producer organizations. The project contributes significantly to climate adaptation and mitigation, with a strong emphasis on

[3] To be decided (subjected to change after the discussions)

adaptation, through a range of interventions in climate-smart agriculture, water management, ecosystem protection, sustainable technology adoption, and enhanced market access. The specific mechanisms for achieving these climate contributions are outlined within the project's components.

Component 1: Promotion of Climate-Smart Production, Value Addition, and Inclusive Access to Markets

- **Subcomponent 1.1: Capacity building and development of horizontal and vertical alliances**: This subcomponent focuses on the formation and strengthening of organized producer groups or companies, facilitating productive partnerships, and preparing business plans.
- **Subcomponent 1.2: Improved market integration for increased climate-smart production and value addition**: This subcomponent supports the implementation of business plans through blended financing arrangements, promoting climate-smart and energy-efficient technologies3.
- **Subcomponent 1.3: Strengthening private sector provision of agri-services through youth entrepreneurship**: This subcomponent promotes business opportunities for women and youth along the value chain, providing training, capacity building, and blended credit4.

Component 2: Integrated Management of Natural Resources for Climate Resilience

- **Subcomponent 2.1: Improving Cascade Management and On-Farm Water Use Efficiency**: This subcomponent focuses on the restoration and rehabilitation of small hydraulic infrastructure, enhancing water availability and productivity5.
- **Subcomponent 2.2: Irrigation and Water Resources Management**: This subcomponent aims to improve productivity of irrigated agriculture through improved water resources management and strengthening capacity of farmer organizations6.
- **Subcomponent 2.3: Boosting Climate-Smart Agriculture Practices**: This subcomponent promotes the adoption of climate-smart agriculture practices tailored to specific agro-ecological contexts7.

Component 3: Strengthening the Enabling Environment for Sectoral Growth

- **Subcomponent 3.1: Better quality and availability of agriculture data**: This subcomponent aims to improve the availability and quality of public data for decision-making in the agriculture sector.
- **Subcomponent 3.2: Quality Infrastructure Improvements**: This subcomponent supports the national quality infrastructure for food safety and trade in food and agriculture products.
- **Subcomponent 3.3: Enhancing provision of agricultural Crop Insurance**: This subcomponent supports the expansion of agricultural crop insurance provision.

Component 4: Project Management, Monitoring & Learning This component supports the overall management, implementation, and supervision of project interventions, capacity building, and monitoring and evaluation throughout the project's life.

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Component 5: Contingent Emergency Response Component This component provides immediate response to an eligible crisis or emergency as needed.

Target Locations:

The Project targets 16 of 25 total districts[4], selected for (i) potential value chain development in high value crops, livestock and aquaculture; and (ii) high vulnerability to climate change, especially in changes to rainfall patterns and increasing frequency of drought and flood throughout the country's dry zones; and (iii) overall higher poverty rates, with this situation expected to worsen as the population grows and rainfall in the region diminishes further to due to climate change. Component 2 will directly benefit around 150,000 people with improved sustainability of natural resources management in targeted cascade landscapes.

Implementing Agencies and their Roles and Responsibilities

Project Implementing Agencies	Roles and Responsibilities
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands, and Irrigation	Formulating and implementing policies for agriculture, livestock and irrigation to enhance climate resilience and rural development. Involvement in strategic decision making.
Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource (MOFAOR)	Formulating and implementing policies for agriculture, livestock and irrigation to enhance climate resilience and rural development. Involvement in strategic decision making. Oversight of policies and programs related to fisheries, livestock and rural industries.
Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure (MOPCI)	Formulating and implementing policies for agriculture, livestock and irrigation to enhance climate resilience and rural development. Involvement in strategic decision making. Oversight of policies and programs related to plantation industries.
Provincial Chief Secretariats	Supporting implementation and monitoring of rural development projects at the provincial level.
Irrigation Department (ID)	Managing and maintaining irrigation infrastructure critical for agricultural productivity and water management
Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka	Managing and maintaining irrigation infrastructure and water management and support Farmer organizations on agriculture technologies
Department of Agrarian Development	Support farmer organizations, implementing agrarian development schemes.
Department of Agriculture	Support farmer organizations with Agriculture technologies and research.
Irrigation Management Division (which is located under the MOALLI)	Support and enhancing capacity of farmer organizations, implementing major and medium schemes

The overall responsibility for project implementation, including management and coordination will lie with the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI), Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource (MOFAOR), Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure (MOPCI) through a Project Management Units (PMU). In addition, Department of Agrarian Development (DAD), Irrigation Department (ID), Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka (MASL),

[4] These districts maximize the convergence of investments in value chain development, climate smart agriculture and water resources management investments. The 15 districts include Jaffna, Kilinochchi, Mannar, Mulaitivu, Anuradhapura, Polonnaruwa, Kuneragala, Puttalam, Trincomalee, Batticaloa, Ampara, Kandy, Matale, Nuwara Eliya, Moneragala, and Hambantota.

Irrigation Management Division (IMD), Department of Agriculture (DoA) under MoALLI and institutions coming under the preview of the fishery and plantation sector ministries in close coordination with Chief Secretaries (CS) and Provincial Authorities (PA), Field Officers (FO) or other relevant stakeholders will support the implementation.

The district-level authority of the respective agency will assume the responsibilities of the PIU. For example, agriculture-related activities will be implemented by the district office of the provincial agriculture department. Similarly, irrigation improvement projects under the jurisdiction of various authorities will be executed by DAD, PID, or ID through their district/division operational mechanisms.

1.3 Potential Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

As the AF finances activities that were assessed during preparation of the parent project and does not introduce new types of investments or additional sources of environmental risk, the Environmental Risk Rating remains Substantial, unchanged from the parent project.

The environmental and social risk rating for the project is considered substantial.

The environmental risk rating for the project is assessed as Substantial due to: i) sensitive locations: Under Component 2 some irrigation schemes are near or within protected areas such as forest reserves and wildlife parks. Activities like desilting, spill raises, and disposal of materials could affect biodiversity. ii) simultaneous sub-projects: multiple, geographically dispersed sub-projects require strong inter-agency coordination and integration of environmental and social (E&S) due diligence with procurement and implementation activities. iii) large-scale rehabilitation: medium to large irrigation canal rehabilitation and downstream work and removal of trees, which may cause environmental impacts. Key issues include biodiversity impacts from **canal** rehabilitation, potential disturbance during construction, and risks such as poaching, accidental forest fires, and occupational health and safety (OHS) hazards in remote locations. Community-based aquaculture and fisheries value chains may raise concerns related to siting, waste management, and sustainability. General construction-related risks include habitat damage, pollution, soil erosion, and disturbances to wildlife from noise, light, and human activity. These risks are manageable through early planning, screening, and adherence to the mitigation hierarchy.

In terms of social risks and impacts, the project may face livelihood impacts due to disruption of access to water for cultivation when water levels are reduced in reservoirs or water distribution is halted in canals during rehabilitation. There may be temporary and/or permanent displacement due to risks of inundation of land and clearance of reservations of irrigation canals. Additionally, there is a risk of exclusion of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups from decision-making and other project benefits due to a lack of equitable processes for beneficiary selection and elite capture. Protests from local communities may arise in case of unsatisfactory quality of construction/ rehabilitation work and disputes around land tenure rights. Furthermore, there are risks of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) due to labor influx. To mitigate these risks, the project will apply a 'negative list' to exclude activities that require land acquisition and involuntary resettlement. Optimal design and engineering solutions will be adopted to avoid and minimize resettlement and livelihood impacts, with any residual impacts addressed through the implementation of Livelihood Support Assistance (LSA) plans. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) will ensure strategies are in place to engage all parties, address grievances, and avoid risks of community disputes during project implementation. Transparent beneficiary selection criteria and processes will be established to address the exclusion of women and other vulnerable groups from equitably participating in and benefiting from the project. An Environmental and Social Management Guidelines has been developed, including: a "negative list" and sub-project

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screening criteria; and impact management tools, monitoring mechanisms, and technical guidance on mitigation measures. Additionally, Codes of Conduct will be enforced for all project workers and CBO members to address risks of SEA/SH. If the subprojects are located far from residential areas, the participation of women and vulnerable groups may be minimal. Therefore, it is crucial to adopt appropriate strategies from the outset of the subproject activities to ensure gender equality, social inclusion, and an inclusive decision-making process.

Project's SEA/SH rating: The SEA/SH risk of the project is rated as 'moderate' determined by the World Bank's SEA/SH Risk Rating tool for Social Protection. The project supports construction activities and there can be risks associated with labor influx. Additionally due to the components around increasing economic opportunities for women there can be risks of SEA/SH through trainings, seeking technical support. Further there could be SEA/SH risks due to misuse of authority especially during selection of beneficiaries and during home visits, especially in homes without any male presence. There is also a probability of women with disabilities and elderly women would be more prone SEA/SH. To mitigate these risks, a codes of conduct for construction workers and behavioral standard clearly stating zero-tolerance for Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) with consequences will be adopted and communicated to all project actors. Any SEA/SH related incidents that are reported to the GRM will be referred to a qualified service provider to respond while maintaining survivor confidentiality.

1.4 E&S Performance of the Project as of September 2026

Environmental and Social (E&S) performance of the Project is Satisfactory.

Key instruments, including the Environmental and Social Guidelines (ESG), Gender Action Plan (GAP), and the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), were disclosed at Appraisal. The Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) and the Labor Management Procedures (LMP) are being finalized for disclosure. The Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) Manual for project-affected parties and project workers has been prepared and is being operationalized. The PMU is currently staffed with a Senior Environmental Specialist and a Senior Social Development Specialist, supported by an Environmental Officer and a Social Officer, respectively.

Capacity building has included Bank-led training on the ESF and GRM on April 23, 2026, attended by more than 50 staff from implementing agencies, as well as KoboToolbox training for the PMU in October 2025 to support E&S screening and monitoring. PMU E&S specialists have also participated in ESF Community of Practice sessions and completed the Open University short course on Land Acquisition and Resettlement.

All CERC-financed activities are being implemented in accordance with the environmental and social requirements of the parent project and the procedures established in the updated CERC Manual. E&S provisions have been integrated into the Project Operations Manual (POM) and the CERC POM. A simplified CERC screening approach applies E&S Codes of Practice (ESCOPs) to subprojects below LKR 25 million, and simplified E&S checklists and E&S Management Plans (ESMPs) for larger interventions.

A rapid assessment of the emergency cash transfer program was conducted to evaluate its effectiveness, transparency, inclusiveness, compliance, and timeliness. The assessment found that the program was largely successful in delivering assistance to affected farmers, supported by strong government coordination, field-level verification, and direct bank transfers. The findings also identified opportunities to strengthen future emergency response programs through

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enhanced beneficiary communication and the establishment of a formal grievance redress mechanism to improve accessibility, transparency, and accountability.

2. Country Legal Framework and World Bank Standard for Stakeholder Engagement

2.1 Country Legislature

The IRDCRP will institute a mechanism informed by stakeholder mapping to effectively engage stakeholders during the project life cycle. The steps taken are consistent with the regulatory framework of the GoSL and ESS10 on 'Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure.' People's access to information, consultation and engagement is recognized in both the Constitution of Sri Lanka as well as in the legal enactments described below followed by a summary of ESS 10.

Constitution of Sri Lanka

People's right to access information is enshrined in the Constitution of Sri Lanka (Chapter III, Section 14A) which advocates that every citizen shall have the right of access to any information as provided for by law, being information that is required for the exercise or protection of a citizen's right held by:

a) the State, a Ministry or any Government Department or any statutory body established or created by or under any law.
b) any Ministry of a Minster of the Board of Ministers of a Province or any Department or any statutory body established or created by a statute of a Provincial Council.
c) any local authority; and
d) any other person who is in possession of such information relating to any institution referred to in sub-paragraphs (a) (b) or (c) of this paragraph.

Act No. 12, 2016 Right to Information

The Act seeks to foster a culture of transparency and accountability in public authorities by giving effect to the right of access to information and thereby promote a society in which the people of Sri Lanka would be able to more fully participate in public life through combating corruption and promoting accountability and good governance.

National Involuntary Resettlement Policy (NIRP) 2001.

The policy objectives of the NIRP specify that (i) affected persons and resettlement hosts are consulted on resettlement options; (ii) all affected persons are made aware of processes available for the redress of grievances that are easily accessible and immediately responsive; and (iii) a consultative, transparent and accountable involuntary resettlement process is in place with a timeframe agreed to by the project executing agency and the affected persons.

Additionally, the main principles of the NIRP are that (i) affected persons should be fully involved in the selection of relocation sites, livelihood compensation and development options at the earliest opportunity; (ii) resettlement should be planned and implemented with full participation of the provincial and local authorities; and (iii) participatory measures should be designed and implemented to assist those economically and socially affected to be integrated into the host communities.

National Environment Act, No. 56, 1980, as amended in 1988 and Act No. 53 of 2000

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Development projects and undertakings which are designated as 'prescribed activities' (Section 23 A1 of NEA 2000) by the Minister (in-charge of the subject of environment) require obtaining approval for such projects from the project approving agencies specified by the Minister, disclose the documents prepared for such approval, and respond to the public comments. The National Environmental Act (NEA) of 1988 prescribes that "it shall be the duty of all project approving agencies to require from any Government Department, Corporation, Statutory Board, Local Authority, Company, Firm or individual who submit any prescribed project for its approval to submit within a specified time an initial environmental examination report or an environmental impact assessment report as required by the project approving agency relating to such project and containing such information and particulars as may be prescribed by the Minister for the purpose" (Part IVC, 23 BB).

By Gazette notifications 772/22 published on 24 June 1993 and No 859/14 of 23.02.1995, under Section 23 Z of the Act, the Minister determined the types of projects for which an EIA is required under Part IV C of the NEA.

The NEA 2000 Amendment (Section 23BB Subsection 2) further states that "A project approving agency shall on receipt of an environmental impact assessment report submitted to such project approving agency in compliance with the requirements imposed under subsection (1), by Notice published in one newspaper each in the Sinhala, Tamil and English language, notify the place and times at which such report shall be available for inspection by the public to make its comments, if any, thereon. Further, "An initial environmental examination report submitted in compliance with the requirements imposed under subsection (1) shall be deemed to be a public document for the purposes of sections 74 and 76 of the Evidence Ordinance (Chapter 21) and shall be open for inspection by the public" (23BB Sub Section 5).

Any member of the public may within thirty days of the date on which a notice under subsection (2) is published make his or its comments, if any, thereon to the project approving agency which published such notice, and such project approving agency may, where it considers appropriate in the public interest afford an opportunity to any such person of being heard in support of his comments, and shall have regard to such comments and any other materials if any, elicited at any such hearing, in determining whether to grant its approval for the implementation of such prescribed project. Where approval is granted for the implementation of any prescribed project, such approval shall be published in the Gazette and in one newspaper each in Sinhala, Tamil and English languages (Subsection 3 of Section 23BB, NEA 1980).

2.2 World Bank Standard and Requirements

ESS 10: Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

ESS10 of the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF, 2017) of the World Bank recognizes the importance of open and transparent engagement between the Borrower and project stakeholders as an essential element of good international practice.[5] Objectives of ESS10 are summarized as follows:

- To establish a systematic approach to stakeholder engagement, and build and maintain a constructive relationship with them, in particular the PAPs.
- To assess the level of stakeholder interest and support for the project and to enable stakeholders' views to be considered in project design and environmental and social performance.

[5] The World Bank. 2017. Environmental and Social Framework. Washington DC: IBRD/WB. P.97

- To promote and provide means for effective and inclusive engagement with PAPs throughout the project life cycle on issues that could potentially affect them.
- To ensure that appropriate project information on environmental and social risks and impacts is disclosed to stakeholders in a timely, understandable, accessible, and appropriate manner and format.
- To provide PAPs with accessible and inclusive means to raise issues and grievances and allow Borrowers to respond to and manage such grievances.

The project will establish an effective institutional mechanism to achieve the above objectives and in fulfillment of the requirements set out in ESS10, reiterated below:

i. Borrowers will engage with stakeholders throughout the project life cycle, commencing such engagement as early as possible in the project development process and in a timeframe that enables meaningful consultations with stakeholders on project design. The nature, scope, and frequency of stakeholder engagement will be proportionate to the nature and scale of the project and its potential risks and impacts.
ii. Borrowers will engage in meaningful consultations with all stakeholders. Borrowers will provide stakeholders with timely, relevant, understandable, and accessible information, and consult with them in a culturally appropriate manner, which is free of manipulation, interference, coercion, discrimination, and intimidation.
iii. The process of stakeholder engagement will involve the following: (a) Stakeholder identification and analysis; (b) Planning how the engagement with the stakeholders will take place; (c) disclosure of information; (d) consultation with stakeholders; (e.) addressing and responding to grievances; and (f) reporting to stakeholders.
iv. The Borrower will maintain and disclose as part of the environmental and social assessment, a documented record of stakeholder engagement, including a description of the stakeholders consulted, a summary of the feedback received and a brief explanation of how the feedback was considered, or the reasons why it was not.

ESS10 of the WB identifies three groups of stakeholders: (a) 'Project Affected Parties' (PAPs) who are individuals or groups affected or likely to be affected by the project, (b) 'Other Interested Parties' who are individuals or groups having an interest in the project, and (c) individuals or groups who, because of their circumstances, may be disadvantaged or vulnerable[6]. Stakeholder engagement is a mandatory requirement of the WB that the GoSL as the Borrower is expected to comply with and focus on during project preparation.

The idea of project-related information disclosure is to allow stakeholders to understand the risks and impacts of the project, and potential opportunities. Such information includes (a) the purpose, nature and scale of the project, (b) duration of project activities, (c) potential risks and impacts on local communities and proposals for mitigation, (d) process of stakeholder engagement, (e) time and venue of public consultation meetings, notification, documentation, and reporting, (f) grievance redress mechanism and process. The information will be disclosed in relevant local languages and in a manner that is accessible and culturally appropriate, considering any specific needs of groups that may be

[6] Disadvantaged or vulnerable refers to those who may be more likely to be adversely affected by the project impacts and/or more limited than others in their ability to take advantage of a project's benefits. Such an individual/group is also more likely to be excluded from/unable to participate fully in the mainstream consultation process and as such may require specific measures and/or assistance to do so. This will take into account considerations relating to age, including the elderly and minors, and including in circumstances where they may be separated from their family, the community or other individuals upon which they depend. (ESS 10, paragraphs 5 and 11.)

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differentially or disproportionately affected by the project or groups of the population with specific information needs such as, disability, literacy, gender, mobility, differences in language or accessibility (World Bank, 2017, ESS 10: 99).

2.3 Purpose of Stakeholder Engagement Plan

The purpose of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is to ensure that the stakeholders – especially individuals and groups who are affected or likely to be affected by the project – are identified early and engaged in a timeframe that enables meaningful consultations with stakeholders on project design, and indeed throughout the project life cycle.

In consultation with the World Bank, the Borrower will develop and implement the SEP proportionate to the nature and scale of the project, and its potential risks and impacts. A draft SEP will be disclosed as early as possible and in a timeframe that enables meaningful consultation on project design, and before appraisal, and the Borrower will seek views of the stakeholders on the SEP, including on the identification of stakeholders, and proposals for future engagement. If significant changes are made to the SEP, the borrower will disclose the updated SEP (World Bank, 2017, ESS 10: 98-99).

The IRDCRP will accordingly engage the relevant stakeholders in a process of meaningful consultations to make them aware of the project and understand the same including potential environmental and social risks and impacts, mitigation measures, grievance redress mechanism, reporting to stakeholders, and obtain their feedback to help the project to avoid, minimize, and mitigate the project-induced risks and impacts that could emerge during the process of project design and implementation.

The IRDCRP will define the institutional mechanisms and arrangements toward effective engagement of stakeholders during implementation. Recognizing that disadvantaged and vulnerable people, including indigenous people may be disproportionately affected by the project, have different concerns and priorities, and may even be left out of project benefits, the project implementing agency will identify them, and seek their feedback to ensure that they are not disproportionately affected by the project or left out of project benefits, and that appropriate forms of engagement are designed, and opportunities created for their participation in the project. Key areas of engagement would include collaborative decision-making during project implementation and involvement in project monitoring.

Specifically, the SEP for this project will take the following actions in accordance with the above purpose.

i. Identify project stakeholders including interested parties.
ii. Consult stakeholders, especially PAPs and vulnerable families who are likely to be adversely affected by the project.
iii. Understand power dynamics among the stakeholders and their implications on the project – activities, design, implementation etc.
iv. Institute a mechanism to timely obtain, consider, and incorporate feedback as appropriate to the subproject design and implementation.
v. Disclose project information to identified stakeholders, especially the negatively affected groups, through appropriate strategies.
vi. Specify methods of consultation considering different types of stakeholders; record opinions, incorporate into project design.
vii. Ensure grievance redress mechanisms consisting of committees at different levels are in place.
viii. Ensure adequate financial support and human resources to implement SEP timely and effectively.
ix. Provide opportunities for the PAPs to jointly monitor SEP implementation.

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3. Stakeholder Identification and Analysis

3.1 Methodology and Stakeholder Classification

The project stakeholder identification and analysis for the Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI), Irrigation Department (ID), Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka (MASL), Irrigation Management Division (IMD),), stakeholders under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource (MOFAOR), Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure (MOPCI) have been structured to ensure comprehensive and inclusive engagement. Stakeholders encompass diverse groups of individuals and organizations who

(i) are affected or are likely to be affected by the project, or

(ii) may have an interest in the project and may influence its outcomes.

The classification ensures alignment with the consultation and engagement requirements set out in Environmental and Social Standard 10 (ESS 10). The project will consider any specific needs of groups that may be differentially or disproportionately affected by the project or groups with specific information needs for information disclosure and engagement.

For the purposes of effective and tailored engagement of stakeholders, this SEP identifies the following core groups of stakeholders:

(i) Project-Affected Parties (PAPs)
(ii) Other Interested Parties (OIPs)
(iii) Disadvantaged and Vulnerable Groups

Engagement with these stakeholders of IRDCRP aims to maximize their contribution to the project's success, leveraging their expertise, networks, and agendas. Active involvement of stakeholders facilitates community and institutional endorsement while enhancing the project's design and implementation through local knowledge and experience.

This approach ensures the inclusivity and effectiveness of the stakeholder engagement process, promoting meaningful participation and addressing the needs of all stakeholder group to support the IRDCR project's development objectives.

This classification ensures targeted engagement and inclusion, addressing specific needs for information, consultation, and participation among all identified stakeholders.

Table 1: Stakeholder identification and classification

Project affected parties	**Other interested parties**	**Disadvantaged and vulnerable groups**
Agriculture Sector: **Direct Beneficiaries:** • Smallholder farmers practicing rain-fed agriculture. • Irrigated paddy / commercial crops	**Government Institutions:** • Agriculture and Agrarian Insurance Board. • Paddy marketing board. • Sri Lanka Council for Agricultural Research Policy.	**Economic vulnerabilities:** Households living below the poverty line. • Families reliant on casual labor or subsistence farming.

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Project affected parties	Other interested parties	Disadvantaged and vulnerable groups
farmers dependent on minor, medium and major irrigation schemes. • Livestock herders and poultry farmers reliant on local ecosystem. • Sharecroppers and tenant farmers. • Agricultural laborers dependent on seasonal employment. • Local Rural Entrepreneurs • Women Entrepreneurs • Buyers and Collectors of farm produce • Outside entrepreneurs • Local community • Women **Fishery Sector:** • Inland fish farmers reliant on tank and reservoirs. • Fisheries Society • Sea cucumber Society • Fisheries Co-op Federation. • Fisheries Federation, and District Fisheries Federation. **Other livelihood sectors:** • Casual laborers engaged in agriculture or rural construction. • Micro, small and medium-scale entrepreneurs dependent on agriculture value chains. **Environmentally affected groups:** • Communities residing in areas prone to flooding, drought, and other climate-induced hazards. Plantation sector Estate workers and other vulnerable groups Other Loans where borrowers fail to make scheduled payments for a specific period	• National Agricultural Diversification and Settlement Authority. • National Fertilizer Secretariat. • State fertilizer Company ltd. • National Hunger Eradication Campaign Board of Sri Lanka (National Food Promotion Board) • National Institute of Post Harvest Management. • Department of Animal Production and Health. • National Livestock Development Board and affiliated companies. • Milco (Pvt) Ltd. • Hector Kobbekaduwa Agrarian Research and Training Institute. • Mahaweli Livestock Enterprise Limited. • Department of Land Commissioner General. • Department of Land use Policy Planning. • Department of Land Tittle Settlement. • Land reform commission. • Survey Department of Sri Lanka. • Institute of Surveying and Mapping. • Land Survey Council. • Land Acquisition Board of review. • Department of Export Agriculture. • Agrarian Service Centers. • District and Divisional Secretariats. • Grama Niladari divisions • Relevant institutions coming under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource (MOFAOR), Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure (MOPCI) • Banks and other financial organization • Other government departments who like to be consulted because they have an interest in irrigation system and land use. **Non-Government Institutions:** • Trade organization/ association. • Community Based Organization – Farmer Organization, Producer Society, producer Association, SITHAMU • Rural fishery development societies • Youth groups • Media and advocacy groups • Religious institutions • Nongovernment organization who are working in rural development and climate resilience. **Private Sector and Development Partners:**	• Female headed households struggling with limited resources. • Small-scale fishers and livestock keepers with limited access to markets. **Social Vulnerabilities:** • Families with members affected by chronic illness. • Elderly individual reliant on agricultural or fisheries income. • Youth from rural areas with limited access to vocational training or employment. **Geographical vulnerabilities:** • Residents of remote rural locations with poor access to infrastructure and markets. • Estate sector workers and underserved urban settlements. People who are living in the HEC areas. **Gender and Protection issues:** • Women and children affected by the GBV. • Families with malnourished children or food security challenges. **Natural disaster and climate impact:** • Households affected by recurring natural disasters such as floods, droughts and landslides. • Communities facing displacement due to climate induced hazards.

Project affected parties	Other interested parties	Disadvantaged and vulnerable groups
Individuals and businesses with savings or deposits in the bank may face uncertainty or delays in accessing their funds.	• Chambers of commerce supporting agricultural value chains. • Export Development Board • BOI • Exporters associations • Agri-input suppliers, seed producers, and irrigation equipment manufactures. • Contractors and local workers • Local communities	

3.2 Analysis of Project-Affected Parties

Project-Affected Parties (PAPs) are persons, groups, and entities within the Project Area of Influence (PAI) directly or indirectly impacted by the project. They include individuals and communities who may be benefited from the project and those who might face adverse impacts during its implementation. This section identifies and evaluates the benefits, risks and impacts on affected parties, categorizing them into Direct Beneficiaries, Indirect Beneficiaries and Adversely Affected Groups.

During project implementation, people may be adversely affected by project interventions, construction/ rehabilitation activities that cause a host of issues such as noise, dust, etc. Further, they may be affected by loss of assets, crops, and income due to land acquisition. The project does not endorse land acquisition and is committed to keeping the incidence to the bare minimum, yet at this stage subproject details are not known. Clearly, rehabilitation of irrigation structures, farm roads, reclamation of watersheds and reservations of irrigation structures may require land acquisition where such land is currently under human use for agriculture, recreation, housing etc. Other potential negative risks may include risks of sexual exploitation and abuse and/or sexual harassment (SEA/SH), violence against children (VAC) due to influx of labor mobilized by construction contractors, risks of traffic and road safety, and child labor. Ethnic minorities and indigenous people who live near the subproject areas, and/or have livelihood activities in the subproject area of influence may be affected and face social and environmental risks identified as being associated with project investments. It should be recognized that such risks and impacts may occur during project construction and implementation as well. During project construction, there might be potential conflicts, for example between water users connected to the agro-wells in tank reservations/ watersheds and the farmers who are dependent on tanks for downstream agriculture. In the current economic crisis, people who migrated to cities and urban centres may return to rural areas and claim their rights to land now to be developed under project assistance. However, during subproject design, potential conflicts will be identified and through a process of sustained consultations consensus will be reached before subprojects are implemented.

Table 2: People's Benefits, Risks, and Impacts on Project Affected Parties

Categories of affected parties	Perceived benefits	Perceived risks/ impacts
Agriculture Sector: **Beneficiaries** • Smallholder farmers practicing rain-fed agriculture. • Irrigated paddy / Commercial crops farmers dependent on minor irrigation schemes.	• Improved access to climate-resilient irrigation system and climate smart technologies, enhanced productivity and income. • Increased irrigation efficiency (Water use efficiency and	• Temporary loss to agricultural land during construction; potential conflicts over water resources allocation. • Disruption of irrigation services during construction; risk of disputes between upstream users.

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Categories of affected parties	Perceived benefits	Perceived risks/ impacts
• Livestock herders and poultry farmers reliant on local ecosystem. • Plantation sector workers • Sharecroppers and tenant farmers. • Agricultural laborers dependent on seasonal employment. • Local Rural Entrepreneurs • Women Entrepreneurs • Youth farmers • Buyers and Collectors of farm produce • Outside entrepreneurs • Local community • Vulnerable groups. • Women farmers. • Ethnic minorities and indigenous people. • Young entrepreneurs and skill development • Fishermen Society/ Fisheries Society/ cucumber Society/ Fisheries Co-op Federation/ Inland Fisheries Society/ Fisheries Federation and other relevant institutions/ organization related to the fishery sector **Fishery Sector:** • Inland fish farmers reliant on tank and reservoirs. **Other livelihood sectors:** • Casual laborers engaged in agriculture or rural construction. • Micro, small and medium-scale entrepreneurs dependent on agriculture value chains. **Environmentally affected groups:** • Communities residing in areas prone to flooding, drought, and other climate-induced hazards. Plantation sector Plantation workers and other institutions/ organizations related to the plantation sector	water management) and crop yield. • Improved productivity leading to better profit-sharing opportunity. • Increased employment opportunities from project construction and operation phases. • Increased availability of fodder and water from watershed management interventions. • Increased fish productivity from improved water resource management. • Employment opportunities project related construction and maintenance. • Improved market access and opportunities from value addition and agro-processing support. • Reduced exposure to climate risks through climate resilient infrastructure and livelihood support. • Improved access to irrigation systems and technologies enhancing productivity; targeted livelihood support. • Access to improved resources and support for livelihood sustainability. •	• Exclusion from project benefits if landowners are prioritized in resource allocation; economic displacement if land acquisition occurs. • Temporary loss of incomes during land acquisition or seasonal access restriction. • Restricted grazing access during project activities. • Temporary disruption to fishing activities during rehabilitation of reservoirs or tanks. • Loss of income during project induced access restrictions. • Risk of exclusion from project benefits due to lack of awareness or capacity to participate in value chains. • Displacement risks and disruptions from construction activities. • Risk of exclusion if gender specific needs are not adequately addressed; potential exposure to SEA/SH risks due to labor influx. • Risk of cultural insensitivity in project design; potential economic displacement from traditionally used lands.

The level of impacts on affected parties

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The Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI), Irrigation Department (ID), Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka (MASL), Irrigation Management Division (IMD).), institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource (MOFAOR), Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure (MOPCI) directly impacts diverse groups through interventions aimed at climate adaptation, irrigation rehabilitation, and value chain development. While the project promises significant benefits, such as enhanced productivity, improved livelihood security and resilience to climate change, it also poses risks, including economic displacement, temporary disruption of livelihoods, and tensions over resource allocation.

The Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI), Irrigation Department (ID), Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka (MASL), Irrigation Management Division (IMD), institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource (MOFAOR), Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure (MOPCI) incorporates a commitment to minimize negative impacts, including and acquisition and ensuring fair, inclusive decision making, gender equality and equity. Sustained consultations, transparent grievance redress mechanisms, and tailored interventions for vulnerable groups are crucial to mitigating risks and enhancing the equitable distribution of project benefits.

The above table no 02 provides an assessment of the project's risk and impacts on individuals, groups, local communities and other stakeholders that may be directly or indirectly positively or negatively affected by the project. This assessment further extends to analysis the level of influence that these different stakeholder groups can exercise over the project preparation and implementation process. The assessment is based on the impact and the influence of affected parties on the ESSP supported programs.

Table 3: Analysis on Project Impacts on Affected Parties and their Influence Level

Affected Parties	**Impact Level (Low/Moderate/High)**	**Influence Level (Low/Moderate/High)**
Smallholder farmers practicing rain-fed agriculture	High	Moderate
Irrigated paddy / commercial crop farmers dependent on minor, medium and major tanks	High	Moderate
Sharecroppers and tenant farmers	High	Moderate
Agricultural and plantation laborers dependent on seasonal employment	Moderate	Low
Livestock herders and poultry & swine farmers reliant on ecosystems	Moderate	Low
Inland fish farmers reliant on tank and reservoirs	High	Low
Casual laborers in agriculture on rural construction	Moderate	Low
Micro, small, and medium scale entrepreneurs in agriculture and plantation value chains	High	Moderate
Communities climatically vulnerable hotspot areas	High	High
Vulnerable groups	High	High
Women farmers/ working in the fishery sector/ plantation sector	High	Moderate
Youth farmers/ fishermen	High	Moderate
Ethnic Minorites and indigenous people	High	High

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Affected Parties	**Impact Level (Low/Moderate/High)**	**Influence Level (Low/Moderate/High)**
The poorest and most vulnerable communities	High	High
Local farmers (including women) benefiting from improved irrigation and climate smart agriculture systems.	High	High
Local rural entrepreneurs in agro-processing and water purification	High	Moderate
Youth accessing employment opportunities created by the project	Moderate	Moderate
Women from farm households engaged in primary farm produce processing	Moderate	Moderate
Vendors and collectors	Moderate	Low
Skilled and unskilled labor from local community	Moderate	Moderate
Entrepreneurs outside local communities participating in value chain	Moderate	Low
Non-participating farmers benefiting indirectly from project outputs	Moderate	Low
Individuals and households economically displaced due to crop and tree impacts	High	Moderate
Individuals and households displaced due to impacts on business activities	High	Moderate
Disadvantaged and vulnerable households disproportionately affected	High	High
Individuals and households impacted by restricted access during construction	Moderate	Low
Individuals and households impacted by loss of income opportunities during construction	Moderate	Low

Notes:

1. Involvement Level: refers to the degree of participation in the participation in the program (High, Medium, Low).
2. Influence Level: Refers to the potential to affect the program's success and outcomes (High, Medium, Low).
3. NGOs/ CBOs and the Private sectors act as facilitators, bridging gaps between policies and grassroots implementation.

3.3 Analysis of Other Interested Parties

Other interested parties are those who do not experience direct impacts by the project but consider or perceive that their interests are affected, and those who can exert their influence over the project both in the design and the process of implementation, and thereby project outcomes. These parties could include residents and farmers not affected by the project, national and local authorities, enterprises and their associations, public and private companies including partnership entities, service providers, utilities, nongovernmental organizations, community leaders, mass media, etc.

- The National Government Administration consisting of ministries, departments, and statutory bodies. The key interested stakeholders among them are the Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development (MoFPED), National Planning Department (NPD), and Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government (MoPAPCLG), Ministry of

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Industry and Entrepreneurship Development (MoIED), Ministry of Environment (MoE), and the government agents/ district secretaries of the project districts. Other important interested parties include the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resources (MoFAOR), Ministry of Trade, Commerce, Food Security and Co-operative Development (MoTCFSCD), Ministry of Women and Child Affairs (MoWCA), Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure, (MoPCI) and Ministry of Rural Development, Social Security and Community Empowerment (MoRDSSCE), Forest Department (FD) and Department of Wildlife Conservation (DWC) . A National Project Steering Committee (NPSC), composed of various stakeholders at the national and local levels will also be established by NPD to provide guidance for project implementation.

- Relevant Provincial Level interested parties include the Provincial Councils with elected representatives. Provincial Councils have ministries and departments that includes agriculture and irrigation which are partially devolved subjects. The Divisional Secretaries report to the Secretary of the Ministry of Public Administration, Provincial Councils and Local Government (MOPAPCLG), Colombo, through the District Secretary/ Government Agent. For administration of devolved subjects, they are responsible to the Chief Minister of the relevant Provincial Councils. Both at the divisional level and the district level there are Coordinating Committees for agriculture and indeed for general development work implementation. These committees are chaired by political authorities and attended by public officials and representatives of local communities.

  The districts will play a lead role in respect of Component 3.2 (Strengthening Convergence) in convening and coordinating line departments, local and provincial authorities, and other stakeholders.

- At the field level, for Component 2 (Integrated Watershed and Natural Resources Management), Cascade Management Committees (or Water User Associations in Mahaweli areas) which are Farmer Organizations and federations, will play a key role to support coordination and mapping for watershed development and would support small scale activities through community groups towards livelihoods diversification and strengthening water use. They will also be engaged in social auditing of civil works. Other local level interested parties include community-based organizations (CBO) such as Community Organizations connected to local government institutions, NGOs, and civil society groups. In addition, there are several societies such as women's societies, youth societies, rural development societies, etc. connected to the government programs implemented by departments.

Analysis of Stakeholder Interests and Influence

Different stakeholders have different levels of interests in and influence over project design and project implementation processes. Similarly, affected parties in the socioeconomic hierarchy may be differentially impacted by the same type of impact. Sometimes, the type and level of impact may be the same although the position in the socioeconomic hierarchy may be different. It is therefore important to understand (a) the level of stakeholder interests in the investment, (b) the magnitude of project impacts on PAPs, and (c) the range of influences the interested parties can exert on the design, implementation, and outcome of the project. The stakeholders most relevant to the preparation and implementation of IRDCRP include the government agencies, potentially affected groups, and the beneficiary communities including the private sector entrepreneurs. They are affected by the project and influence the project at

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different stages of the project in various ways. Acknowledging that it is a dynamic process, an analysis of stakeholder interests is presented below.

Table 4: Analysis the Other Interested Parties' contributions, Interest and levels of influence.

Other Interested Parties	Specific Interests/ involvement	Interest Level (Low/Moderate/High)	Influence Level (Low/Moderate/High)
Ministry of Finance, Planning and Economic Development	Allocating financial resources, approving budgets, and ensuring accountability for the program's financial aspects.	High	High
Ministry of Environment	Guide climate resilience initiatives, conservation efforts, and policy implementation for sustainable development	High	High
Department of Agrarian Development	Supporting farmers in adopting climate resilient practices, crop diversification and efficient water use.	High	High
Department of Agriculture	Provide extension services, technical inputs, etc	High	High
Forest Department	Approval for working in the sensitive locations, forest lands etc	Moderate	High
Department of Wildlife Conservation	Approval for working in the sensitive locations, forest lands etc	Moderate	High
District and Divisional Secretariat	Coordinating program activities at the local level, ensuring inclusivity and adherence to government regulations.	High	High
Irrigation Department	Improve water use efficiency and management of irrigation systems, and water supply for agriculture.	High	High
Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority	Improve water use efficiency and management of irrigation systems, and water supply for agriculture in Mahaweli area.	High	High
Irrigation Management Division	Improved coordination among all stakeholders under Major Irrigation schemes.	High	High
Provincial council's Irrigation authorities	Improve water use efficiency and management of irrigation systems, and water supply for agriculture within their respective provinces.	High	High
Grama Niladharis	Assisting beneficiary identification, grievance redressal, and mobilization of local communities for project activities.	High	High
National Institute of Post Harvest management	Providing technical support for minimizing post-harvest loses and improving value chains.	Moderate	Moderate
National Livestock development board	Supporting sustainable livestock development, promoting modern farming practices, and providing technical assistance.	Moderate	Moderate
Community Based Organizations (CBOs)	Collaboration on implementation at the grassroots level, ensuring community participation and acting feedback mechanism, grievance redressal mechanism.	High	High
Youth Groups	Supporting innovation in rural development and promoting youth participation in climate smart livelihoods	Moderate	Moderate
Agrarian Service Centers	Grassroots implementation, farmer support, and localized service delivery	High	Moderate

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Other Interested Parties	Specific Interests/ involvement	Interest Level (Low/Moderate/High)	Influence Level (Low/Moderate/High)
Agriculture and Agrarian Insurance Board	Crop insurance and risk mitigation for farmers	Moderate	Moderate
Paddy marketing board	Ensuring a fair price for farmers' paddy production	Moderate	Moderate
Land Reform Commission	Land redistribution and administration	Moderate	High
Survey Department of Sri Lanka	Land surveying, mapping and bounty demarcation	Moderate	Moderate
Department of Land use Policy Planning	Planning sustainable land use policies	Moderate	Moderate
Framer Organizations	Grassroots engagement, mobilizing farmers, input for project implementation	High	Moderate
Rural Fishery Development	Mobilizing fisherfolk, advocating for improved resources and services	Moderate	Moderate
NGOs/ Other CBOs (e.g., those focused or rural development and climate resilience)	Capacity building, advocacy, and monitoring of project activities	Moderate	Moderate
Media and Advocacy Groups	Dissemination of information, raising public awareness	Low	Moderate
Agri-input suppliers	Supplying fertilizers, seeds and irrigation equipment	Moderate	Moderate
Chambers of Commerce	Supporting value chain development and export promotion	Moderate	Moderate
Seeds producers and irrigation equipment manufactures	Developing and supply of agricultural technology and infrastructure	Moderate	Moderate

3.4 Analysis of Disadvantaged and Vulnerable Persons/ Groups

It is important to understand if the project impacts disproportionately fall on the disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, including indigenous communities and other groups disadvantaged by the project compared to other groups due to their vulnerability status[7], and who often tend to have no voice to express their concerns to make stakeholders aware and sensitize them on their issues and adapt the project to take these concerns into account. On the other hand, they may not understand the project impacts – positive and negative. Therefore, the stakeholders will engage the vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals, households and groups both to understand their concerns and sensitivities as well as to raise their awareness to ensure understanding of project activities and benefits.

In Sri Lanka, 25.9% of the population were living below the poverty line in 2023. Labor force participation has also seen a decline, particularly among women and in urban areas, exacerbated by the closure of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprises (MSMEs). Households are grappling with multiple pressures from high prices, income losses, and under employment. This has led to households taking

[7] Vulnerability 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.

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on debt to meet food requirements and maintain spending on health and education. Poverty rates are likely to remain above 22% at least until 2026.[8]

The project-target areas inhabited by agrarian communities served by rain-dependent medium-scale irrigation tanks and minor irrigation tanks. They are in climatically vulnerable hotspot areas in 11 districts. Small farmers, mostly at subsistence level, and rural poor continue to depend on agricultural activities for their livelihood. They are increasingly vulnerable to falling into poverty trap due to climate change and natural resources depletion.

In the context of worsening poverty, their children may be motivated to work in subproject construction sites who may be vulnerable to labor exploitation, sexual harassment and exploitation, alcohol and drugs use. Women worker at construction sites may face discrimination, deprivation, and limitation in access to sanitation facilities. Watershed development, which is a project focus in some instances, for example, Badulla and Moneragala districts in Uva Province, involves activities in the surroundings of indigenous communities.

For the Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI), Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource (MOFAOR), Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure (MOPCI), the following are identified as vulnerable and disadvantaged individuals and groups:

- Female-headed households with dependents
- Single-parent households with dependents
- Households with members with disabilities and chronic illness who need care
- Elderly people (aged 60 years or older) with limited or no family support
- Children and adolescent youth
- Persons living below the poverty line of Rs. 16,619 per month – 2019 prices, March 2024
- Landless peasants, or those who have limited productive land
- Those with no or limited access to labor as a main source of income
- Indigenous communities, etc

Engagement of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups requires specific measures and assistance aimed at facilitation of their participation in decision making in project activities in their surroundings so that their awareness and inputs will benefit them and all other stakeholders.

[8] The World Bank. 2024. (Press Release). Sri Lanka's Economy Shows Signs of Stabilization, but Poverty to Remain Elevated. https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/press-release/2024/04/01/sri-lanka-s-economy-shows-signs-of-stabilization-but-poverty-to-remain-elevated.

Table 5: Analysis of Disadvantaged and Vulnerable Persons/ Groups

Stakeholder groups	Limitation for effective engagement	Preferred means of notification/consultations	Additional resources required
• Families with members affected by chronic illness/ differently able people	• Limited mobility and energy due to caregiving demands, increased dependent members; difficulty attending public meetings.	• Home-based/ phone consultations/ trusted WhatsApp groups; information dissemination via health clinics or local health workers.	• Support for transportation; health related support services during the consultations; simplified materials distribution/ information dissemination through the public announcement • Facilitation for drinking water
• Elderly individuals reliant on agricultural/ fisheries/ plantation income	• Physically mobility challenges; limited technology literacy; time constraints during peak seasons.	• Door-to-door visits; group discussions during non-peak farming or fishing periods; radio/ speaker announcement/ social media communication.	• Accessible venues; transportation arrangements; tailored materials in simple language and print • Assurance of water availability
• Youth from rural area with limited vocational access	• Limited awareness of project opportunities; time constraints due to livelihood demands; lack of representation in discussion.	• Engagement through youth organizations; vocational training workshops; use of social media like WhatsApp group and SMS alerts.	• Support for skill development programs; internet access for virtual consultations; motivational materials.
• Residents of remote rural locations	• Poor connectivity and infrastructure; limited awareness of project objectives and benefits.	• Mobile consultation units, local village meetings, broadcasting in local languages.	• Mobile consultation units; local village meetings; radio broadcasts in local languages.
• Estate sector workers and underserved urban settlement	• Poor access to project related information; high workload leaving limited time for engagement.	• Engagement through estate or community leaders; notice boards in common areas; short, focused group discussions.	• Literacy and translation support; flexible meetings schedules; transport for remote locations.
• People living in Human Elephant Conflict (HEC) areas	• Disruption due to wildlife conflicts; safety concerns; mistrust of external interventions.	• Consultations via local community organizations; integration with ongoing conflict mitigation efforts.	• Resources for conflict mitigation; collaborative engagement with wildlife authorities.
• Women and children affected by GBV	• Fear of stigma and reprisal; reluctance to report or discuss issues; limited safe spaces for engagement.	• Confidential focus group discussions; safe space for consultations; anonymous reporting mechanism.	• Gender sensitive facilitators; legal aid and counseling services; childcare during consultations.
• Families with malnourished children or food insecurity	• Limited participation due to focus on basic survival needs; lack of access to information.	• Engagement through schools, nutrition programs or health centers; mobile outreach programs.	• Nutritional support during consultations; collaborations with nutrition and welfare programs.

Stakeholder groups	Limitation for effective engagement	Preferred means of notification/consultations	Additional resources required
			• Assurance of water availability for food security
• Households affected by recurring natural disasters	• Frequent displacement; disruption of livelihoods; limited access to recovery resources.	• Engagement via local disaster response committee; use of early warning systems and disaster resilience hubs.	• Emergency response kits; resources for rebuilding livelihoods; disaster awareness materials.
• Communities displaced due to climate induced hazards	• Disconnection from project areas and benefits; lack of access to resources and services; trauma and stress from displacement; lack of trust in interventions.	• Engagement through temporary resettlement centers; collaboration with NGOs supporting displaced communities.	• Psychosocial support services; temporary shelters for meetings; travel allowances for displaced participants.
• Female headed households with dependent members	• Time constraints due to caregiving responsibilities; cultural norms limiting public participation.	• Separate women only focus group discussions; home visits; mobile consultations	• Female facilitators; child care facility during meetings; travel arrangements too attend the meetings.
• Landless peasants	• Limited interest in people participation due to lack of perceived benefits; lack of formal land documentation.	• Engaging through farmer organizations/ associations; participatory workshops; collaboration with the land administration offices.	• Awareness campaigns on land entitlements; collaboration with legal aid services to resolve land ownership issues.
• Women and children affected by GBV	• Fear of stigma; reluctance to report incidents or participate in discussions.	• Safe space for consultations; arrange the consultation at the nearby residents	• GBV awareness and preventing programs.
• Indigenous communities	• Cultural and language barriers, distrust of external interventions; geographical isolations	• Engagement through the trusted community leaders, culturally sensitive consultation methods, local language materials/ communication methods.	• Cultural mediators; training on indigenous customs and practices; logistical support for remote area consultation.

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4. Stakeholder Engagement Program

4.1 Purpose and timing of stakeholder engagement program

The overall objectives of SEP as stated in the ESS-10 are:

- To identify the roles and responsibilities of all stakeholders and ensure their participation in the complete project cycle.
- Establish a systematic approach to stakeholder engagements that will help the project identify stakeholders and build and maintain a constructive relationship with them, in project affected parties.
- Assess the level of stakeholder interest and support for the project and to enable stakeholders' views to be considered in project design and implementation
- Promote and provide means for effective and inclusive engagement with project- affected parties throughout the project life-cycle on issues that could potentially affect them.
- Ensure that appropriate project information on environmental and social risks and impacts is disclosed to stakeholders in a timely, understandable, accessible and appropriate manner and format with special consideration for the disadvantaged or vulnerable groups.
- Provide project-affected parties with accessible and inclusive means to raise issues and grievances and allow the Project to respond to and manage such grievances.
- To devise a plan of action that clearly identifies the means and frequency of engagement of each stakeholder.
- To allocate budgetary and other resources in the project design, project implementation, and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) for stakeholder engagement and participation

Thus, SEP provides an opportunity for all-inclusive approach in project preparation, planning, implementation and monitoring processes. It is geared toward ensuring meaningful and a wide consultative process guided by World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), particularly ESS-10.

Information disclosure and consultation processes will continue with affected parties, other interested parties and vulnerable groups during (i) project preparation, (ii) project implementation, and (iii) project operational phases. A variety of methods such as group consultations, individual consultations, awareness raising meetings/gatherings and interviews through different offline and virtual medians such telephone calls etc. and communication through printed (newspapers, banners & posters displayed in community locations and at government offices) and electronic & social media (Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp Groups etc.), appropriate to the target audience, will be used for information disclosure and consultation.

4.2 Summary of the Consultations held during project preparation.

During the project design, the project consulted with a wide range of stakeholders. In addition to the departments and institutions operating within the implementing agencies, including provincial and district authorities, members of the Technical Committee [9]and their relevant departments were

[9] The departments preliminarily identified for participation in the PP Technical Committee include Department of Agriculture, Department of Export Agriculture (DEA), Department of Animal Production and Health (DAPH), National

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consulted. This included representatives from various ministries, ensuring that the project design benefited from a broad spectrum of governmental expertise and perspectives.

Moreover, development partners such as the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), the Asian Development Bank (ADB), the Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO), the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, the United Nations Industrial Development Organization (UNIDO), and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) were actively consulted. Their insights and experiences provided valuable input, enriching the project design with international best practices and innovative approaches.

Furthermore, extensive communication consultations were conducted at the district level. These consultations included surveys among banking and financial institutions to gather their input on the project design. Given below the summary of the community consultation (details annexed) and the summary of the findings from the Agri-finance survey.

4.2.1 Community Consultation workshops

Overview and Objectives

In August and October of 2024, a series of four workshops were conducted to gather insights and feedback from various agricultural stakeholders. The workshops took place in districts of Anuradhapura, Mullaitivu, Kurunegala and Monaragala and **a total of 164 participants** attended these workshops, comprising 93 female and 71 male participants.

The primary objectives of these workshops were to evaluate existing agricultural programs, understand the challenges faced by smallholder farmers, female farmers, and other underrepresented groups, and gather community feedback to design new services aimed at improving agricultural productivity, modernization, and market access.

Participant Groups

During the workshops, participants were divided into four distinct groups to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the diverse challenges and needs within the agricultural sector.

- **1st groups - Smallholder Farmers -** These participants typically lacked formal ownership of their lands or leased land. They often relied on daily wage work and unskilled labor to supplement their farming income. The smallholder farmers had access to cultivable land that was 0.5 hectares or less. This group included both women and men of various age groups, providing a broad perspective on the challenges faced by smallholder farmers.
- **2nd group - Female Farmers -** Similar to the smallholder farmers, these women lacked formal ownership of their lands or leased land. They had access to cultivable land that was 0.5 hectares or less. This group consisted of women of different age groups, highlighting the unique challenges faced by female farmers in the agricultural sector.
- **3rd group - Producer Groups** - These participants were smallholders who relied on collective action within producer groups for market access and resources. They utilized shared inputs, pooled resources, and joint marketing efforts. The group also included export-oriented farmers who similarly relied on collective action for market access and

Aquaculture Development Authority (NAQDA), Coconut Development Authority (CDA), Rubber Development Department (RDD), Tea Smallholdings Development Authority (TSHDA), Department of Cinnamon Development (DCD), Export Development Board (EDB). Additional members may be added during the project period depending on the identification of new value chains for development.

resources. This group included both women and men of various age, gender, geography, and types of crops cultivated. This group included both women and men of different age groups, including youth, and may have included a farmer who was previously part of a dismantled producer group.

- **4th group - Export-Oriented Farmers -** The fourth group consisted of export-oriented farmers. These participants were farmers who had successfully integrated new technologies and climate-smart agriculture practices. The group included some lead farmers from field schools. It consisted of both women and men of different age groups, including youth, providing insights into the challenges and successes of export-oriented farming.

Key Themes discussed during the consultations - The workshops focused on a broad set of services beyond World Bank-financed projects that farmers relied on for their livelihoods. Key themes included access to agriculture services and inputs to increase production and competitiveness, access to markets and market linkages, adoption of innovative practices and technologies, access to finance, and the impact of producer groups.

Conclusions

Through these workshops, valuable insights were gathered, which would help in designing new services and improving existing ones to enhance agricultural productivity, modernization, and market access for farmers. See table below for a summary of the recommendations from the community consolations and project's response to the recommendations. The details are included in the annex.

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Table 7: Summary of consultation recommendations and how the findings have been incorporated into the project design.

Workshop findings	Recommendations	Incorporation of findings into project design
Finding 1: High uptake of project activities, but opportunity to improve impact through better coordination and service integration.	• Participants recommended consolidating activities under programs like CSIAP to improve access to the full range of available support and maximize impact.	• Incorporated - The project is designed in an integrated fashion, so farmers could benefit from irrigation rehabilitation, access to finance, knowledge transfer on CSA technologies & services and capacity-building initiatives.
Finding 2: Rehabilitation of agro-wells and irrigation tanks was identified as one of the most effective programs.	• Workshop participants highlighted the need to increase investments in irrigation infrastructure, as this is key to building resilience against climate variability in the dry season. • Female farmers highlighted the need to integrate solar-powered water pumps into irrigation improvement programs, to support farmers in areas without electricity and to counter the rising cost of electricity and fuel.	• Incorporated – The project will enhance water resources management by rehabilitating small, medium, and major irrigation infrastructure to increase water use efficiency and productivity. • Incorporated – As part of the customized packages of CSA practices and technologies for irrigation schemes provided, farmers will have the opportunity to receive solar water pumps and female farmers will be given priority.
Finding 3: Lack of transparency and inclusion in beneficiary selection is a key barrier.	• Participants recommended establishing clearer eligibility criteria and improving transparency by communicating the selection process through appropriate media channels.	• Incorporated – The project will take measures to establish equitable and transparent selection criteria and processes, and selection procedures and monitoring mechanism will be detailed in the operational manual of the project.
Finding 4: FOs play a key role in implementing programs but can suffer from poor coordination, elite capture, and lack of inclusivity, limiting their effectiveness.	• Introduce measures to prevent elite capture and ensure fair representation of marginalized groups, including women, in FO leadership. • Expand the grievance redress mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability in their operations.	• Incorporated - Special measures will be taken to support participation of women and youth producer organizations, productive partnerships, entrepreneurship, and in community decision making bodies. • Incorporated - A robust GRM will be established that which will be accessible including to vulnerable and marginalized groups.
Finding 5: Poor quality of seeds and significant delays in the provision of seeds and other inputs disrupt planting schedules.	• All participants emphasized the importance of timely distribution inputs, especially seeds and fertilizer subsidies to ensure planting aligns with the agricultural calendar. • Female farmers and smallholder farmers highlighted the need for higher quality seeds, especially hybrid varieties.	• Partly-incorporated – The project will provide knowledge to farmers on new seed varieties and will direct them to suppliers where they can purchase seeds in a timely manner. • Incorporated – Technical assistance and technologies will be introduced to produce high quality seeds, and linkages with private sector suppliers will be established to purchase high quality seeds. The

Workshop findings	Recommendations	Incorporation of findings into project design
		project will take additional measures to ensure access to quality seeds to female and smallholder farmers.
Finding 6: Training programs show positive results, especially for youth, but gaps in extension services and technical assistance remain.	• Female farmers recommended providing village-level training sessions to overcome travel and time barriers that currently prevent many women from participating. • Participants recommended strengthening extension services by increasing the number of officers to reduce the farmer-to-officer ratio. • Workshop participants also expressed a need for training and support on accessing the export market, certification requirements and packaging. • Youth recommended supporting the formation and mobilization of youth farmer organizations to promote modern practices; introducing entrepreneurship-focused training to encourage youth to invest in agriculture.	• Incorporated – The project will take measures to remove barriers preventing women from effectively participating in training activities by organizing training at convenient times and locations. • Incorporated – The project will carry out training programs to disseminate latest knowledge to the extension service officers. The institutional coordination would be strengthened at the ground-level with the aim of ensuring more officials work together to support farmers. • Incorporated– The project will build capacities and provide advisory services to producers to access export markets and meet international quality standards. • Incorporated– The project will also spur private sector provision of agri-services targeting youth entrepreneurs through training and business development support.
Finding 7: Producer Groups improve market access, enable higher prices for produce, and foster knowledge exchange, but institutional capacity gaps remain.	• Provide training to enhance governance, financial management, and operational capacity within producer groups. • Support producer groups in accessing certifications to unlock export opportunities. • Invest in infrastructure like storage facilities and post-harvest handling systems to reduce losses and improve market competitiveness.	• Incorporated - The project will support producer groups to build capacity through advisory services and facilitate them to link effectively with markets including for exports by facilitating productive partnerships. • Incorporated - The project supports improvements to the National Quality Infrastructure in improving testing, certification, traceability, digitization, automation and no-regret investments. The project will facilitate the farmer groups in identifying the required certificates and testing to access relevant markets. • Incorporated - The project will support investments in infrastructure like storage facilities and post-harvest handling systems.
Finding 8: Critical infrastructure gaps hinder productivity, market access, resilience.	• Expand investment in rural road rehabilitation to improve market connectivity. • Develop and equip cold storage and food preservation facilities in farming regions. • Accelerate the rehabilitation of irrigation tanks and canals, integrating solar-powered solutions where possible.	• Incorporated – The project will support restoration and rehabilitation of access roads to improve market connectivity that will beneift value chains and irrigation infrastructure investments supported by the project. • Incorporated – The project will ensure the business plans developed for value chains will include necessary equipment and facilities such as

Workshop findings	Recommendations	Incorporation of findings into project design
	• Enhance wildlife fencing and introduce innovative technologies to mitigate crop damage	cold storages. The project will also promote such support under youth entrepreneurship program. • Incorporated - Rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure and solar-powered solutions pumps will be supported by the project. • Incorporated – The project will support interventions identified in Cascade Management Plans (CMPs) to address issues of wildlife conflict.
Finding 9: High interest rates, rigid collateral requirements, limited credit options prevent farmers from accessing affordable financing.	• Introduce concessional loan schemes with reduced interest rates tailored to agricultural activities. • Simplify collateral requirements to accept alternative forms of security, such as group guarantees or leased land. • Streamline loan application and disbursement processes to align with seasonal farming cycles.	• Partly-incorporated – The project will support a blended financing instruments consisting of commercial credit, beneficiary contribution and grants to finance business plans. The project will facilitate producer groups to link with Banks to access available credit facilities. • Partly-incorporated – The project will provide technical support to improve business proposals to better attract credit and introduce financial products like insurance schemes to lower credit risks. • Partly-incorporated – The project will support access to financial services and products and guide farmers to access these facilities at the right time.
Finding 10: Limited formal land ownership and systemic biases in land access restrict farmers' eligibility for programs and resources.	• Project should support processes for issuing formal land titles to eligible farmers, including smallholders and women, in order to ensure their inclusion in project activities, especially agro-well construction. • Develop specific support mechanisms for female farmers to address systemic barriers in land ownership and inheritance. • Prioritize leased and informally cultivated land for program eligibility, especially agro-well construction, to ensure wider inclusivity • Identify vacant and barren lands in villages, enhance soil fertility, and support landowners to bring these lands into productive cultivation.	• To be determined – Issues affecting inclusion of eligible farmers, including smallholders and women will be studied especially related to land ownership and appropriate measures will be taken to provide secure land tenure. • To be determined - Project will further study the existing barriers and plan appropriate measures to address structural inequalities preventing women from owning assets including land. • To be determined – Project will assess and explore all options and determine an effective approach to address restrictions placed on use of land for productive purposes. • Same as above.
Finding 11: Crop destruction by wild animals, remains a significant challenge,	• Support reforestation and habitat restoration to redirect wildlife away from farmlands.	• Incorporated – The project will support natural resource management to reduce dependency on protected areas and mitigate human-wildlife conflicts.

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Workshop findings	Recommendations	Incorporation of findings into project design
causing yield losses and threatening livelihoods.	• Upgrade existing electric fences and introduce modern crop protection technologies like solar-powered systems and surveillance tools. • Provide training and incentives for farmers to adopt wildlife management tools, such as planting deterrent crops along farm perimeters. • Ensure regular maintenance and community-based management of wildlife barriers to enhance their effectiveness. • Expand the scale of CSIAP seasonal animal protection fences across more production areas.	• To be determined – Specific interventions including the tools and methods to address issues of wildlife conflict to be identified during the implementation phase. • Incorporated - The project will leverage community-based methods and interventions to address wildlife conflict, creating local opportunities. • Incorporated – same as above • Incorporated – Good practices from CSIAP to manage human-wildlife conflict will be fully taken onboard.
Finding 12: Crop insurance schemes have limited coverage, high premiums, and complex claims processes failing to meet farmers' needs.	• Expand crop insurance coverage to include wild animal damages and a broader range of crops. • Introduce affordable, subsidized premium rates tailored to smallholder farmers' income levels. • Simplify claims processes and establish local insurance officers to assist farmers with enrollment and claim submissions. • Conduct targeted awareness campaigns to educate farmers, especially women, on available insurance schemes and their benefits.	• To be determined – The project will support expansion of agricultural crop insurance provision especially alongside improved agricultural finance. The range of crops is yet to be decided. • To be determined – The project will facilitate consultations with other partners to discuss ways to make crop insurance more affordable and tailored to smallholder farmers' income levels. • Incorporated - The Project will support to improve operational efficiencies which will seek to simplify operational processes to access crop-insurance. • Incorporated – Project includes community outreach and awareness activities to educate farmers and women on all project supported activities including on insurance schemes.

4.2.2. Consultation Summary- Agri-finance Survey

Consultation Process

The Agricultural Finance Survey was conducted in consultation with a diverse group of stakeholders, ensuring a comprehensive understanding of the agricultural lending landscape in Sri Lanka. **This effort was spearheaded by the Global Agri finance team and involved extensive input from Agri GP, FCI, and IFC. The survey reached 30 banks, and 13 institutions actively engaged in agricultural lending participated. These included systemic, private, specialized, and state-owned banks,** offering a broad representation of the financial sector's involvement in agriculture. Additionally, the survey incorporated feedback from focus group discussions, providing qualitative insights to complement the quantitative data collected.

The selected banks collectively accounted for LKR 560 billion in outstanding agricultural loans in 2023, covering activities ranging from primary crop production to secondary market functions. This participatory process was further enriched by collaboration with the Central Bank of Sri Lanka (CBSL) and the Sri Lanka Banks' Association (SLBA), facilitating the distribution of the survey and alignment with national banking priorities.

Key Findings

- **The survey revealed a modest growth in agricultural lending**, with a decline in borrower numbers despite a significant increase in average loan sizes, which rose from LKR 160,000 in 2019 to LKR 470,000 in 2024. **State-owned banks played a critical role**, accounting for 50% of outstanding agricultural loans and 90% of active loans. However, their portfolios were heavily skewed towards short-term pawning advances, with ongoing governance and recapitalization reforms aiming to enhance their performance.
- The survey also highlighted the **fragmented nature of customer segmentation data**, with inconsistent definitions and limited information across banks. While **crop production emerged as the primary reason for borrowing**, there was notable lending for non-farming activities and investments in agricultural modernization. Challenges such as natural disaster risks, lack of credit history, and high operational costs emerged as barriers to agricultural lending. Additionally, the economic crisis had exacerbated loan restructuring needs and non-performing loan rates, impacting financial sustainability.
- **The geographic distribution of loans showed significant outreach**, with most banks offering agricultural loans across all districts. However, regional disparities were evident, with the Western region dominating loan portfolio values while the North and Central regions led in loan numbers. Government and donor-sponsored programs had limited scale, supporting only 10% of loans, and faced issues such as fragmented information and cumbersome claims procedures. Despite these challenges, interest subsidies and concessional lending under these programs were seen as key to attracting new clients and reducing borrowing costs, thereby fostering agricultural investment.

Recommendations

- **Tailored Lending Methodologies**: Banks emphasized the need for customized lending approaches to better address the unique challenges in agricultural finance.

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- Improved **Data Management**: A call for better data management systems to enhance customer segmentation, lending decisions, and overall financial sustainability.
- **Long-Term Strategy for Agriculture Development**: Banks highlighted the importance of a clear, long-term strategy to guide agricultural growth and ensure sustainable development.
- **Key Areas for Future Intervention**:
    - Programs aimed at reducing borrowing costs.
    - Increasing market access for farmers.
    - Promoting agricultural modernization to drive growth.
- **Priority Instruments for Strengthening the Sector**:
    - Expanding the use of guarantee schemes to reduce risk.
    - Promoting digital payments for greater efficiency and transparency.
    - Supporting value chain financing to improve agricultural production and market linkages.

Incorporating Recommendations into project design – The project recognizes the role of the private sector in achieving agrifood system transformation and will support private sector participation through: (i) improving the enabling environment for private sector investments and/or participating in productive alliances (i.e., expanding agri-financing and direct participation in agrifood investments for small and medium producers and their Producer Organizations - POs); (ii) creating non-financial incentives for the private sector to provide specialized services to POs; and (iii) private sector engagement through procurement of goods and services.

4.2.3. Consultation Summary – during project implementation up to September 2026

Stakeholder consultations were conducted in accordance with the Consultation Action Plan, engaging 788 participants (538 men and 250 women), including representatives of implementing agencies, government officials, farmer organizations, women's groups, community leaders, and other affected and interested stakeholders. The consultations disseminated project information, explained project activities and applicable World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) requirements, and gathered stakeholder feedback on rehabilitation and recovery priorities.

The consultations also facilitated discussions on potential environmental and social risks and impacts, proposed mitigation measures, stakeholder engagement arrangements, and grievance redress mechanisms. Feedback, concerns, and recommendations received from stakeholders were documented and incorporated into the environmental and social screening process. Relevant findings, agreed mitigation measures, and stakeholder commitments were reflected in the Environmental and Social Screening Reports (ESSRs) and subsequently integrated into the site-specific Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) to guide implementation and ensure effective management of environmental and social risks and impacts.

Stakeholder engagement and consultations formed a central part of the rapid assessment and were conducted at national, district, divisional, and community levels. At the Department of Agriculture Head Office, consultations were held with senior management and relevant finance, technical, and project staff involved in program oversight and implementation. During field visits across nine selected disaster-affected districts, the assessment team conducted Key Informant Interviews and Focus Group Discussions with Deputy and Assistant Directors of Agriculture, Agriculture Instructors, Agriculture Production and Research Assistants, Farmer Organization representatives, and other relevant local officials. Consultations also included interviews with

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240 affected farmers to capture their experiences and perceptions of program awareness, accessibility, eligibility, damage verification, transparency, payment delivery, and grievance handling. The issues and feedback raised through these consultations were triangulated with program records, operational documents, and field observations and directly informed the assessment findings, lessons learned, and recommendations.

Findings from the Rapid Assessment of Cash transfers to farmers

The Department of Agriculture (DoA), under the guidance of the Government of Sri Lanka, implemented an emergency cash transfer program to support farmers affected by the Dawah disaster.

A rapid assessment was conducted to evaluate whether the program was implemented effectively, transparently, equitably, and in accordance with approved Government guidelines and operational procedures. The assessment covered selected disaster-affected districts, including Anuradhapura, Badulla, Batticaloa, Kandy, Kurunegala, Nuwara Eliya, Puttalam, Trincomalee, and Vavuniya. The methodology included field visits, Key Informant Interviews (KIIs), Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), document reviews, and farmer interviews. The assessment found that the program was largely implemented successfully under challenging post-disaster conditions, supported by strong institutional coordination, field-level teamwork, communication, and verification processes. Overall, the program provided timely assistance to affected farmers and supported the early recovery of agricultural livelihoods.

The assessment recommends strengthening future emergency compensation programs by introducing a time-bound and carefully controlled review and appeal mechanism for genuinely affected farmers who are unable to apply within prescribed deadlines due to exceptional disaster-related circumstances. Any reconsideration should be subject to strict verification, documentary evidence, field validation where appropriate, and clear approval and audit trails. Future programs should also strengthen participatory damage assessment and communication of approved compensation; allow limited, rule-based operational flexibility in severely affected locations; strengthen communication and outreach through multiple local channels; clarify crop eligibility criteria; and establish a simple, formal, and accessible grievance redress mechanism with clear responsibilities and response timelines.

The findings and recommendations were discussed with the Department of Agriculture and were well received. The DoA agreed to take the recommendations into consideration and incorporate relevant lessons and improvements into the design and implementation of future emergency support programs.

4.3 Information Disclosure Strategy

During the Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI), Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource (MOFAOR), Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure (MOPCI) preparation and planning, information related to project scope and schedule will be shared with project affected persons and other stakeholders during consultations.

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Information about each component and phase of the Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI), Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource (MOFAOR), Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure (MOPCI) will be provided to the public through media briefings, targeted media articles, information sessions, television/radio programs etc. The Project will also provide up-to-date information in the Ministries websites and in social media.

At the appraisal stage, safeguard instruments including Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) and SEP prepared for this project will be disclosed on the website of Implementing Agencies and on the World Bank's external website, after their clearance by the government and the Bank. Additionally, copies of the referenced documents will be kept at the Ministry of Finance for public reference. Any changes to the approved ESCP and SEP would have to follow the same clearance/ approval procedures and disclosure.

During project implementation, sub-project specific safeguard instruments will be publicly disclosed in-country as well as on the World Bank's external website. The documents and plans to be disclosed include

- Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP)
- Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)
- Monitoring activities undertaken as per ESCP and SEP
- Project quarterly reports and annual reports

Translations of executive summary of all documents prepared by the project in Sinhala and Tamil will also be made available to the public through the website of Ministry of Finance. Information can also be disseminated through digital platform (where available) like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp/Viber groups, and traditional means of communications (TV, newspaper, radio, phone calls and e-mails) with clear description of mechanisms for providing feedback via mail and / or dedicated telephone lines. All channels of communication need to clearly specify how stakeholders can provide their feedback and suggestions.

Table 7 provides a plan for information disclosure during project preparatory, implementation and operational periods.

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Table 7: Information disclosure plan

List of information to be disclosed	Proposed methods	Time frame	Target stakeholders	Responsibility
During Preparation				
ESCP & SEP including translated summaries.	Electronic copies will be published in Ministry/Project websites and social media sites hardcopies available at Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation, Chief Secretariat Offices, Irrigation Department, Department of Agrarian Development and Department of Agriculture	Before commencement of the project.	The public including eligible and vulnerable groups, government entities at national, district and divisional level and interested groups like media and NGOs etc.	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation, Chief Secretariat Offices, Irrigation Department, Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority, Irrigation Management Division, Department of Agrarian Development and Department of Agriculture
Project details, objective, duration, target beneficiaries, selection criteria, and project implementation plans.	TV, radio, newspapers, website, social media platforms, mobile phone text messages, Community meetings, public notice boards, posters and leaflets.	Before commencement of the project.	The public, including eligible & vulnerable groups, government entities at national, district and divisional level and interested groups like media, NGOs etc.	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation, Chief Secretariat Offices, Irrigation Department, Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority, Irrigation Management Division Department of Agrarian Development and Department of Agriculture and other relevant institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource, Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure
GRM process including GBV incidents.	Community meetings, public notice boards, posters and leaflets	Before commencement of the project.	Eligible & vulnerable groups, government entities involved in implementation.	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation, Chief Secretariat Offices, Irrigation Department, Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority, Irrigation Management Division Department of Agrarian Development and Department of Agriculture, and other relevant institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource, Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure
During Project Implementation Phase				
Eligibility criteria, beneficiary selection/ assessment & proposals	Gazette, TV, radio, newspapers, website, social media platforms, mobile phone text messages,	During implementation on an ongoing basis.	Eligible & vulnerable groups, government entities involved in implementation.	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation, C Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority, Irrigation Management Division hief Secretariat

List of information to be disclosed	Proposed methods	Time frame	Target stakeholders	Responsibility
for livelihood support & validation and monitoring processes.	Community meetings, public notice boards, posters and leaflets.			Offices, Irrigation Department, Department of Agrarian Development and Department of Agriculture, and other relevant institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource, Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure
Progress reports of the project prepared by PMU & other partner agencies related to project performance.	Websites, social media, email, formal meetings, community meetings, DS level information boards.	Weekly, Monthly, quarterly & annual reporting	The public including eligible & vulnerable groups, government entities at national, district and divisional level and interested groups like media, NGOs etc.	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation, Chief Secretariat Offices, Irrigation Department, Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority, Irrigation Management Division Department of Agrarian Development and Department of Agriculture, and other relevant institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource, Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure
Summary outcomes of consultation meetings.	Websites, notice boards at DS and District level, community meetings.	Quarterly	Eligible & vulnerable groups, government entities involved in implementation.	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation, Chief Secretariat Offices, Irrigation Department, Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority, Irrigation Management Division Department of Agrarian Development and Department of Agriculture, and other relevant institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource, Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure
Information on Help Desk, awareness on GRM & appeal processes and reporting on GBV related incidents and accessing GBV service provided.	Hotline number, Help Desk, SMS service, Divisional Secretariat, websites, social media, Community meetings, Notice Boards.	Continuous	Eligible & vulnerable groups, government entities involved in implementation.	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation, Chief Secretariat Offices, Irrigation Department, Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority, Irrigation Management Division Department of Agrarian Development and Department of Agriculture, and other relevant institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource, Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure

List of information to be disclosed	Proposed methods	Time frame	Target stakeholders	Responsibility
Status/progress of grievance resolution.	Feedback to complainant – manual, or via SMS service	Monthly/Quarterly	Eligible & vulnerable groups, government entities involved in implementation.	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation, Chief Secretariat Offices, Irrigation Department, Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority, Irrigation Management Division Department of Agrarian Development and Department of Agriculture, and other relevant institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource, Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure
Awareness raising/capacity building training programs planned & conducted.	Website, progress reports, meetings, emails.	Quarterly	Eligible & vulnerable groups, government entities involved in implementation.	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation, Chief Secretariat Offices, Irrigation Department, Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority, Irrigation Management Division Department of Agrarian Development and Department of Agriculture, and other relevant institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource, Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure
Project's key deliverables	Website, progress reports, emails	Monthly & Quarterly	Eligible & vulnerable groups, government entities involved in implementation.	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation, Chief Secretariat Offices, Irrigation Department, Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority, Irrigation Management Division Department of Agrarian Development and Department of Agriculture, and other relevant institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource, Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure
Beneficiary feedback Surveys	Telephone, mobile phone - SMS feedback	At registration, cash transfer, and for training and productive inclusion.	Project beneficiaries.	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation, Chief Secretariat Offices, Irrigation Department, Sri Lanka Mahaweli Authority, Irrigation Management Division Department of Agrarian Development and Department of Agriculture, and other relevant institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic

List of information to be disclosed	Proposed methods	Time frame	Target stakeholders	Responsibility
				and Ocean Resource, Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure

4.4 Proposed Stakeholder Engagement Strategy

Meaningful consultation is a two-way communication process between the project implementing agencies and the project stakeholders that is carried out on an on-going basis. It allows stakeholders opportunities to express their views and implementing agencies to consider and respond to them. To facilitate the process, information about the project will be disclosed among stakeholders. During the project preparation stage, consultations were conducted on a sample of project provinces where the above-mentioned base projects (ASMP, CSIAP, IWWRMP) are being implemented. As can be seen, the people who were consulted this way are the PAPs of the existing projects. They expressed views about how to move forward with the project. However, at this stage subproject details are not known, and in the project implementation when subproject will be identified, consultations will be conducted with all potentially affected people of subprojects.

Choice of consultation methods will be contingent upon the type of stakeholders and the purpose of consultation. Face-to-face consultation methods involve key informant interviews, household interviews, focus group discussions, and community/public meetings. At community meetings, public address systems will be used if necessary. Project information will be disseminated in local languages.

- **National Level Consultations** - These consultations will be held in Colombo with the key officers of the relevant ministries, Agriculture, Irrigation, Fishery, Plantation sectors and National Planning. For these consultations, the normal practice adopted by authorities is to invite provincial and district heads of public administration.
- **Provincial Level Consultations** - These consultations will be held when the overall detailed design of the project is being prepared. Based on these consultations, ESMP for specific subproject will be prepared.
- **Local Level Consultations** - At the local level, the consolations will focus on the initial subproject design. This will be followed by a second round of consultations where the adjusted design for the pilot projects will be discussed

The following criteria will be used to guide the stakeholder consultations at subproject level:

- Prior to civil works commencement, or any project activity, consultation outcomes are considered and incorporated in project design and reported back to the consulted communities for further feedback. Process and outcomes will be documented.
- Affected as well as interested people will be included in the consultations. Vulnerable persons, women, elderly, persons with disabilities will be invited and encouraged to express views.
- Consultations will be carried out without any interference, manipulation, coercion, discrimination, and intimidation.
- Interviews and focus group discussions will be conducted in local languages and in a culturally appropriate manner, and communications will be accessible to all participants, regardless of their disabilities.
- Participants will be notified in advance of the consultation, and wherever possible project information will be shared with them before the consultation.
- Questions, comments, and suggestions of stakeholders will be collected, considered, and incorporated into the subproject design. The stakeholders will be made aware how the issues /feedback that were not answered during the consultations will be addressed during the follow-up consultations or summarized and disclosed at the project website.

Further, the project will continue to consult the project affected parties; other interested parties and the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups, specifically on themes listed below, in order to elicit their views

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and feedback. Individual and group meetings, mini-workshops/focus group discussions, satisfaction surveys, social media, community monitoring, etc. will be used to facilitate the consultations on the following

- Project beneficiaries/target groups
- Beneficiary selection criteria
- Project deliverables
- Project implementation procedures
- Project's impacts and risks
- Project's safeguard measures including grievance redress
- Beneficiary satisfaction

Table 8: Strategy for Stakeholder Engagement / Consultations

All stakeholders will receive an overview of the project including project objectives, instruments, scope, locations, interventions, implementation methods, beneficiary selection procedures, risks/ impacts , mitigation measures, GRM, consultation plans and monitoring systems. In addition, targeted consultations to discuss issues relevant to specific stakeholder groups.

Group	Characteristics	Interests/ Concerns	Topics for consultations	Proposed Strategies	Time and Frequency
Affected Stakeholders and Disadvantaged and Vulnerable					
Local farmers/ fishermen/ plantation workers	• Ordinary farmers/ fishermen, youth farmers/ fishermen, women farmers, women landowners, sharecroppers with own land, leaseholders whose farms are located upstream and downstream the tanks including in watershed areas and reservations	• Concerned about adequate supply of irrigation when needed, quality of civil works, land acquisition, crop losses, and work opportunities in civil works, role in local management committees, grievance redress. Concerned about how community views during consultations were considered or rejected. • Concerned about transparency in beneficiary selection, project resources availability	Project overview, scope, interventions, subprojects, beneficiary selection, and GRM, participation in project monitoring.	• Public gatherings, awareness sessions and consultations. • Village level consultations and focus groups discussion.	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Ongoing
Women	• Includes members and non-members of farming communities	• Concerned about how to access meetings and training programs. Concerned about technologies. • Concerned about access restrictions to fields and houses. • Women are concerned about worker camps, worker behaviors, safety and dangers to children.	Project overview, strategy for engaging women, risks/impacts on women & mitigation measures, targeted interventions for women, SEA/SH prevention and reporting measures.	• Contractors and workers will be trained. • On GBV, women will be consulted individually. • Posters, Announcements, & Helpdesk.	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Ongoing
Youth	• Youth who are interested in fishery/ farming, climate	• Concerned about how to access project benefits	Project overview, project activities &	• Public gatherings, awareness sessions and consultations.	• Preparation and Implementation

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Group	Characteristics	Interests/ Concerns	Topics for consultations	Proposed Strategies	Time and Frequency
	smart activities including new agri-technologies.	• Concerned about modern technologies, and capacity building opportunities.	benefits, stakeholder engagement	Village level consultations and focus groups discussion.	stage. • Ongoing
Older persons and Persons with disabilities Organizations of Persons with Disabilities (OPDs)	• Persons with mobility difficulties • Persons with physical impairments (e.g. using wheelchairs and walking canes) • Persons with sensory impairments (e.g. Blind and Deaf persons)	• Concerned about how to access project benefits • Concerned about how to participate in stakeholder engagement	Project overview, strategy for supporting and engaging vulnerable groups, risks/impacts on vulnerable groups & mitigation measures,	• Contractors and workers will receive a training on disability inclusion • Use of accessible means of communication and engagement (accessible formats for information sharing; use of Sign language and CART in consultations)	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Ongoing
Local rural entrepreneurs	• Persons engaged in agri-produce processing, value addition, floriculture, ornamental fishery etc.	• Concerned about quantities produced, modern processing technologies, capacity building	Project overview, ESMPs, project activities and benefits	• Public gatherings, awareness sessions and consultations. • Village level consultations and focus groups discussion.	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Ongoing
Women entrepreneurs	• Persons engaged in primary processing of farm produce	• Concerned about crop losses due to construction, participation in training, technologies	Project overview, project activities & benefits, risks/impacts on women & mitigation measures.	• Public gatherings, awareness sessions and consultations. • Village level consultations and focus groups discussion.	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Ongoing
Buyers and collectors of farm produce	• Buyers from outside and their local agents	• Concerned about income losses due to prolonged construction	Project overview, project activities, benefits, risks/impacts & mitigation measures.	• Public gatherings, awareness sessions and consultations. • Village level consultations and focus groups discussion.	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Ongoing
Outside entrepreneurs	• Firms and persons engaged in agri-produce purchasing, processing and value addition including export	• Concerned about impacts on supply of raw materials, and if project supports technology improvement.	Project overview, project activities, benefits, risks/impacts &	• Public gatherings, awareness sessions and consultations. • Village level consultations and focus groups discussion.	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Ongoing

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Group	Characteristics	Interests/ Concerns	Topics for consultations	Proposed Strategies	Time and Frequency
			mitigation measures.		
Local communities	• Persons who provide skilled and unskilled labor for project-related work	• Concerned about loss of work opportunities due to hiring of outside workers	Project overview, project activities, benefits and ways to engage and participate.	• Public gatherings, awareness sessions and consultations. • Village level consultations and focus groups discussion	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Ongoing
Non-participating farmers and others in the community	• People who benefit from community-managed seasonal fencing, improved water management and distribution systems for irrigation efficiency.	• Concerned about widening the project coverage, potential work opportunities	Project overview, project activities and benefits indirect benefits and opportunities for engaging for wider community.	• Public gatherings, awareness sessions and consultations.	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Periodically and during key stages of the project.
Farmers and other groups affected by civil works, including access to water and land acquisition.	• Construction related risks and impacts. • Access to water may be temporarily restricted during reservoir rehabilitation. • Land acquisition is unlikely, but will be confirmed at the detailed design stage	• Concerned about impacts and losses to cultivation including cultivation seasons and interested to know entitlement and procedures if people's livelihoods are affected. • Concerned about impacts and interested to know entitlement and procedures if people lose assets	Site-specific Environment and Social Management Plans (ESMPs), livelihood Support Plans (LSAs) and if required Resettlement Action Plan (RAP).	• Public gatherings, awareness sessions and consultations. • Close consultations and focus group discussions during socioeconomic surveys, inventory of assets, GRM, relocation, resettlement, livelihood restoration etc.	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Ongoing
People willing to donate land (Women and vulnerable persons especially focused)	• People in project impact area may choose to voluntarily donate land, in accordance with E&S guideline.	• Interested about donation process, rights, information, grievance redress, and construction schedule.	ESMPs, livelihood Support Plans (LSAs) and if required Resettlement Action Plan (RAP).	• Undertake early consultation, share information, provide guidance, pay special attention to women and vulnerable people ensuring their voices are heard. • Posters, Announcements, & Helpdesk	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Ongoing
Indigenous people, if any, and NGOs engaged	• To be confirmed during detailed design stage	• To be confirmed during detailed design stage. Could include land acquisition, land	ESMPs, Indigenous Peoples Plans (IPP),	• Close consultations from early on per SEP, IPP, other guidelines.	• Preparation and Implementation

Group	Characteristics	Interests/ Concerns	Topics for consultations	Proposed Strategies	Time and Frequency
		use restrictions, cultural rights, labor influx etc.		Conduct social impact assessment study. • Posters, Announcements, & Helpdesk.	stage. • Periodically and during key stages of the project.
Government, MOALLI Authorities responsible for designated areas under irrigation development, watersheds and reservations	• Specific government departments and authorities such as Irrigation Department (ID), Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka (MASL), Irrigation Management Division (IMD), and Agrarian Development Department working on irrigation systems, Agriculture Department, Provincial irrigation authorities. • District and Divisional heads of public administration	• Responsible for overseeing delivery of project components, and deliver wherever necessary. Keen to adhere to time schedule and compliance with agreements. Need to be thoroughly informed. Interested to ensure no adverse impact on women and vulnerable groups	Project objectives , scope, subprojects , ESF instruments (such as E&S guidelines, SEP, LMPs etc.), Monitoring Reports	• Consultations and meetings before implementation, ongoing meetings, discussions to inform procedures. Conduct field visits and report. Erect display boards containing project information. National Consultations to disclose safeguards instruments including SEP	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Periodically and during key stages of the project.
Relevant institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource (MOFAOR), Ministry of Plantation and	• Specific government departments and authorities under the purview of the MOFAOR	• Responsible for overseeing delivery of project components, and deliver wherever necessary. Keen to adhere to time schedule and compliance with agreements. Need to be thoroughly informed. Interested to ensure no adverse impact on women and vulnerable groups	Project objectives , scope, subprojects , ESF instruments (such as E&S guidelines, SEP, LMPs etc.), Monitoring Reports	• Consultations and meetings before implementation, ongoing meetings, discussions to inform procedures. Conduct field visits and report. Erect display boards containing project information. National Consultations to disclose safeguards instruments including SEP	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Periodically and during key stages of the project.

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Group	Characteristics	Interests/ Concerns	Topics for consultations	Proposed Strategies	Time and Frequency
Community Infrastructure (MOPCI)					
Relevant institutions under the purview of the Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure (MOPCI)	• Specific government departments and authorities under the purview of the MOPCI	• Responsible for overseeing delivery of project components, and deliver wherever necessary. Keen to adhere to time schedule and compliance with agreements. Need to be thoroughly informed. Interested to ensure no adverse impact on women and vulnerable groups	Project objectives, scope, subprojects, ESF instruments (such as E&S guidelines, SEP, LMPs etc.), Monitoring Reports	• Consultations and meetings before implementation, ongoing meetings, discussions to inform procedures. Conduct field visits and report. Erect display boards containing project information. National Consultations to disclose safeguards instruments including SEP	•
Other Interested Parties					
Political Authorities	• National level: (President, Cabinet Ministers in charge of relevant subjects – finance and planning, agriculture, irrigation, fishery, plantation, Mahaweli, forestry etc.) • Provincial level: (Chief Minister, relevant ministers and local levels) • Local level: (Chairman and members of Pradeshiya Sabha)	• At the provincial and local level, political authorities are concerned about award of contracts, selection of beneficiaries, and encroachers including support already extended for agro-well construction and land permit holders	Transparency in contracts, beneficiary selection, land permits	• Consultations from early on and explanations about project processes and criteria including for transparency and community consultations, feedback, and grievance redress	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Periodically and during key stages of the project.
Government departments who like to be consulted because they have an interest project activities	• Decision-makers and policy-level stakeholders. • Provincial government representatives	• Interested to know about hotspot area development plans	Project objectives , scope, benefits and impacts, ESF instruments (such as E&S guidelines, SEP, LMPs etc.), Monitoring Reports.	• Consultations and meetings before implementation, ongoing meetings, discussions to inform procedures. Conduct field visits and report. Erect display boards containing project information.	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Periodically and during key stages

Group	Characteristics	Interests/ Concerns	Topics for consultations	Proposed Strategies	Time and Frequency
and play a decision making role				• Provincial, National and District Consultations to disclose safeguards instruments including SEP	of the project
Local media personals	• District level media groups (printed and electronic)	• Local media groups support to disseminate relevant information to the public including benefits of the project and correct/clarify any misinformation.	Project objectives, scope, benefits an impacts,	• Consultation of media personals on proposed project activities by conducting media briefing, providing printed project briefing notes and displaying a short animated video documentar on proposed activities. • Arrange site visit for media personals (while the project activities are implementing at ground level). • Mass media, Website & Helpdesk	• Preparation and Implementation stage. • Periodically and during key stages of the project.
Contractors and local workers	• Contractors may hire unskilled workers from the community, some including women	• Local workers are concerned about wages, timely payment, rates, resting time, load and type of work especially given to women. Women are concerned about safety at work	ESMPs, Codes of Conduct, GRM, Concerns about work conditions, wages,	• PMU and divisional/district authorities of DAD, DoA and ID will screen the contractors in the bidding process in terms of application of E&S requirements. Required to follow project's LMP and Contractor's LMP. Divisional/district authorities of DAD, DoA and ID will conduct monitoring. • Contractors and workers will be trained by divisional/district authorities of DAD, DoA and ID in relation to code of conduct requirements, GRM etc.	• Implementation stage. • During key stages of subproject implementation.
Local communities	• Positively interested as climate resilient irrigation infrastructure combined	• Concerned about local views are considered or rejected.	Project overview, scope, interventions,	• The environmental and social issues and management	• Preparation and Implementation

Group	Characteristics	Interests/ Concerns	Topics for consultations	Proposed Strategies	Time and Frequency
	with CSA practices benefit all	• Concerned about external influences	implementation, methods of participation and GRM.	procedures will be included in training. • Community organizations will be involved in monitoring and social auditing. Continued consultations, information sharing, feedback. • Mass media, Posters & Announcements, Website & Helpdesk	stage. • Ongoing

4.5 Strategies for engaging vulnerable and disadvantaged groups

The PMU of the Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI) with respective departments and provincial authorities will ensure that Women Headed (or single parent) Households, elderly, disabled, ethnic minorities, vulnerable communities living in urban, rural, and estate areas participate effectively and meaningfully in consultative processes and that their voices are heard. This may require measure and assistance to afford opportunities for meetings with vulnerable groups in addition to general community consultations. For instance, women may be more outspoken in women only focus group discussions or meetings than in general community meetings. In addition, it is important to rely on other consultation methods that do not require physical participation in meetings such as social media, email, virtual meetings to ensure groups that cannot physically be present at meetings can participate where feasible.

Working with community mobilizers, CSOs/ NGOs, disabled committees, women led committees, Elderly committees, religious leaders in the areas is critical. They will provide special encouragement and assistance where necessary to vulnerable and marginalized individuals/households to ensure that information reaches them and that they can participate meaningfully in consultations. To ensure community validation of beneficiary lists, sharing of beneficiary lists at community level meetings, posting on PMU project/ ministry website, and at district, divisional secretariats will enable communities to contest, make queries if names are not on lists can actively participate.

To ensure gender equality and equity it is important to engage with women's groups on an ongoing basis, including the participation of Women Development Organizations (WDO) throughout the life cycle of the project. Ensuring that female headed households and other beneficiary women are able to voice their concerns, contribute towards decision making and obtain benefits of the welfare programs should be encouraged especially in various fora that tend to include more men. WDOs, CSOs that engage with women will be an important asset to ensure women's active participation as women are likely to make household decisions relating to food consumption, child rearing etc.

Table 9 presents a strategy for the engagement of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in consultative processes.

Table 6: Presents a strategy for the engagement of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups in consultative processes

Stakeholder group	Strategies
Poorest households affected by multiple vulnerabilities such as: • Families with elderly, disabled, and with other chronic diseases patients/ members. • Living in vulnerable areas such as in climatically vulnerable hotspot area, estate sector, underserved urban settlements, HEC area and remote rural locations. • Female Headed	**Accessibility:** • Meeting venues located close by to ensure cost effective commute in urban, rural, and estate settings. • Scheduling of meetings should not conflict ability to earn an income or existing employment. • Locations that are easy to access and non-intimidating and do not require long commutes. **Inclusion:** • Engage CSO/NGOs working with vulnerable groups who have more in-depth knowledge and research data on issues affecting them. • Cater to low literacy using graphic communication media that is easy to understand. • Prepare public awareness and dissemination materials in relevant languages, tailor messages to the cultural contexts and work with relevant institutions to engage this category of people and disseminate information.

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Stakeholder group	Strategies
Households/Single headed households. • Families with young children including school dropouts, affected with food security and with malnourished children. • Affected/victims of SEA/SH/GBV including child abuse.	**Gender concerns:** • Targeted focus groups discussions and consider gender disaggregated consultations to enable women to participate, inclusion in project benefits. • Location and time of community meetings held at times suitable to women's active participation, and easy to access and have gender-segregated toilets. • Design online and in-person surveys and other engagement activities so that women in unpaid care work can participate. • Consider the literacy levels of women while developing communications materials; consider provisions for childcare, transport, and safety for any in-person community engagement activities. **GBV prevention measures:** • Discuss measures to respond to GBV issues, about the available support systems & psychosocial services for survivors of GBV, SEA, SH • Make aware of behavioural standards in place and availability of support of GBV service providers.

4.6 Public Comments and Feedback, Reporting to Stakeholders

The draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) will be disclosed before the decision meeting, and the Borrower will seek the views of stakeholders on the SEP. The draft SEP can be emailed to relevant stakeholders requesting comments and suggestions and will also be published on the MoALLI and ID, DAD, & DOA websites for public review and comments. The PMU will also seek to organize a one-day review meeting with community leaders, community organizations and CSO/ NGOs working with vulnerable groups and to get their views and engagement. If significant changes are made to the SEP, the Borrower will re-disclose the updated SEP.

All comments received by the project will be reviewed by the PMU and any decisions made based on the comments made by the public and the stakeholders will be communicated to all relevant stakeholders after the review meetings. If the project had not been able to make any decision in response to public, stakeholder comments, same will be communicated to the relevant stakeholders with explanations as to why a decision cannot be made.

5. Grievance Redress Mechanism

The objective of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) is to provide a convenient procedure to receive and facilitate resolution of concerns and grievances related to environmental and social performance of the project of the PAPs in a timely manner, that is accessible and inclusive. GRM is expected to address concerns promptly and effectively, in a transparent manner that is culturally appropriate, and readily accessible to all PAPs, at no cost and without retribution. However, if the PAP decides to take his or her case to court, they must bear the cost of lawsuit. The project GRM does not replace the judicial system. Nevertheless, the project may offer mediation as an option or an alternative to the recourse to the judicial procedures.

The GRM specifies how a complaint can be lodged including channels and different ways (in-person, by phone, text message, mail, e-mail, website), or forms to be used for the purpose, steps, and timeframes, as well as documenting responses to grievances and reporting to the PAPs. Handling of grievances will be done in a culturally appropriate manner, and be discreet, objective, sensitive and responsive to the

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needs and concerns of PAPs. GRM will allow for anonymous complaints to be raised and addressed. To facilitate the process, grievances will be acknowledged formally, and where necessary dialogue with the aggrieved party will be undertaken and mutual understanding established to resolve the problem. The results of the resolution will be formally notified. The GRM consists of sequential steps including appeals (if PAP is unsatisfied with resolution decision at a given step) and defined timeframes for each step. However, issues related to health and safety will be immediately addressed.

The IRDCRP will be established a comprehensive GRM to ensure effective resolution of grievances and concerns raised by stakeholders. The GRM operated through GRC will be formed at four levels: a) GN level/ SAC level, b) Divisional/ District Level c) Provincial Level d) National Level. At the GN/ SAC level, GRC should be composed of Social Safeguard Officer from the Project, GN, and members of the SAC. This localized structure facilitates the immediate resolution of grievances, making it a particularly mechanism for addressing community level concerns promptly. If the grievance cannot be resolved or if the AP is not satisfied with the solution, they can escalate it to the next level divisions/ district, provincial and national level GRC.

Grievance can be resolved at the Divisional/ District Coordinating Committees' meeting, Provincial Steering Committees' meeting and National Steering Committees. They can be submitted through various channels, including verbal communication, letters (80/5, 'Govijana Mandiraya', Rajamalwatta Lane, Battaramulla), telephone (general: 011-2034300), SAC, suggestion boxes at the ASC level, Gmail (until PMU establish email: argrpmoapi8@gmail.com~~),~~ if fishery sector related New Secretariat, Maligawatta, Colombo 10. If it is related to the plantation sector related, 11th Floor, Sethsiripaya 2nd Stage, Battaramulla, telephone (general: 0112 186 160), etc.. The grievances may relate to environmental issues, GBV, technical matters, land issues, livelihoods, contract management, labor influx related, administration, project design, exclusion and benefits distribution related etc. These grievances will be recorded by the focal person and monitored closely to resolve those in timely manners.

The GRM procedures for project workers will be included in the Labor Management Procedures (LMP). The GRM related to land acquisition is provided in the project's Environmental and Social Guideline. Those related to sexual exploitation and abuse and violence against children are often due to labor influx and are dealt with according to the relevant national laws and the LMP. Nevertheless, the GRM is proposed for the entire project, founded on the same principles, and discussed as such under the SEP to effectively address grievances and disputes, and better manage feedback which is a core component in managing operational risks of the project and enhance project performance and outcomes.

The IRDCRP is a step forward taken based on an amalgamation of experiences in several projects that adopted similar approaches and implemented in the same regions over a period. With respect to the GRM, it is noted that the government officials in relevant positions have served in the grievance redress committees at the divisional, provincial, and national levels. Similarly, community leaders and civil society representatives have also participated in grievance redress committees especially at the subproject level. Therefore, while the GRM and the related processes are generally not novel to the stakeholders, their availability, credibility, and capability to the likely issues relating to the ARGRP will be assessed during the project preparation.

GRM Implementation Update: A separate GRM Guideline has been prepared and disclosed, and GRM infographics and posters have been developed and distributed across project sites. Initial GRM training has been provided, with further training planned during implementation. The GRM provides for a four-tier grievance resolution and escalation structure at the local, Divisional/District, Provincial, and National levels. However, further strengthening is required to ensure that the relevant Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs) are established and operational at all required levels, grievance registers are

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consistently maintained and updated, and grievances and their resolution are systematically monitored and reported. Continued training and implementation support will be provided to strengthen the effective functioning of the GRM.

5.1 Principles of GRM

The SEP proposes the following principles to guide the establishment and functioning of the GRM:

- Channels: Establish different channels to submit complaints – at GN level/ SAC level/ divisional/ district level, Provincial and national levels
- Forms: Grievances can be submitted in various ways – verbally or in writing, directly or via representatives
- Accessibility: All GRM procedures will be entirely accessible to all project-affected parties, and accessibility features (accessible documents; sign interpretation; support/assistance; alternative and accessible formats) will be built in to cater to the need of disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals and groups, including persons with disabilities
- Delegation: PAPs can seek assistance to lodge complaints and delegate family members or an individual to act on their behalf
- Disclosure: GRM procedures are publicly disclosed in the website of the Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI), MOFAOR, MOPCI
- Documentation: Grievances are recorded and maintained as a database in the Monitoring Information System (MIS) of the Project
- Transparency: GRM procedures, timeframes, notification, and reporting will be publicly disclosed and closely monitored under the Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI), MOFAOR, MOPCI.
- Acknowledgement: Complaints will be acknowledged, and resolution process is set in motion
- Appeal: If the complainant is not pleased with the GRM decision, a provision is included for appeals to higher levels in the grievance hierarchy
- Monitoring: All grievances are recorded, processed, and monitored by GRM focal points at the project implementation unit level and the project management unit level
- Timeframe: Each step of the GRM has defined time limits to resolve grievances
- No cost to PAPs: The entire process of grievance resolution is cost-free to the complainant. If cases are taken to courts, the complainant bears the cost of lawsuit. The GRM will offer mediation as an alternative in the last resort before judicial proceedings are instituted.
- Urgent issues such as those related to health and safety will be addressed immediately.

5.2 Structure of the GRM

The project is built on the experience of several related projects recently concluded or currently under implementation. In the first two years of the project the focus is on addressing the immediate climate change-related needs of the poor segments of the population, as well as those related to the economic crisis. At the same time, the project emphasizes scaling up, expansion, and deepening links with productive alliances. As such, the physical areas of interventions, referred to as 'hotspots', spread over more than one village, a Grama Niladhari (GN) Division. While there is a site level focal person handling grievances the GRM consists of a hierarchy of three multi-stakeholder committees set up at the divisional, provincial, and national levels. Given the previous relevant experiences, most of the officers

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are aware of and familiar with the processes of grievance redress. During consultations, they have expressed willingness to participate in the GRCs. However, they will be exposed to orientation sessions.

Importantly, the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) operates through Grievance Redress Committees (GRC) will be established at four (04) different levels for the Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP) under the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI), MOFAOR, MOPCI.
Social Audit Committees (SAC) take part as one of the GRC levels and an active channel for receiving grievances in the GRM Process.

a) Hotspot level / GN level/ SAC level/ subproject site level
b) Divisional level
c) Provincial level
d) National level

- **GN Level/ SAC level (site/hotspot) Grievance Redress Committee (GRC)**

The Hotspot Level/ GN Level/ SAC level will be formed with the DPD Officers (Social Development Officer), Grama Niladhari (GN), and Social Audit Committee Members. This helped us to resolve the issues immediately and also it was identified as a very effective mechanism at this level. GBV-related issues were not solved by the project, it linked to the service providers to resolve the issues. At least 1/3 of the total members of the committee should represent female members. The committee meets once a week.

- **Divisional/ District/ Provincial level GRC**

The next tier of the GRM is at the local level or the divisional level grievance redress committee (DGRC). The Divisional Secretary (DS) functions as the Chairman. Other members include: Irrigation Engineer (IE), Divisional Officer (DO) of the Agrarian Service Center, Agricultural Instructor (AI), Deputy Director of Planning (DDP), Chairpersons of Farmer Organizations (FO), Community Centers (CC) and Mayor/Chairperson of the local authority. DS may call for back up support, if necessary, from the village-based five government officials – GN, Samurdhi Officer, Midwife, Agricultural Research and Production Assistant, and Economic Development Officer. At least 1/3 of the total members of the committee should represent female members. The committee meets twice a week.

If any grievances that cannot be resolved at the grassroot level, will be referred by the DS along with their observations and related documents to the Provincial Grievance Redress Committee (PGRC), which is the third tier of the project GRM. PGRC will be constituted by the Chief Secretary (Chairman), the divisional secretaries (DS) of the respective districts where project interventions are implemented, Provincial Directors of planning, agriculture, irrigation, fishery, plantation, Provincial Commissioner of Lands, Provincial Director/ Rural Development and Commissioner of Local Government.

- **National level GRC**

The fourth tier of the GRM is the national level grievance redress committee (NGRC) established at the PMU. It will be constituted by the Secretary, PD, Directors of Irrigation, Agriculture, Fishery, Plantation, Land Commissioner, Commissioner of Agrarian Services. Only on rare occasions will the need arise for invoking national level GRC because most of the likely grievances will be practical, day to day problems and matters that could be addressed at the site, local, and provincial level GRCs. However, there could still be some issues that are not resolved to the satisfaction of all. Therefore, the project provides an opportunity for the affected or concerned people to reach the national level. On the other hand, according to the Agreements between the GoSL and the World Bank, the latter allows for accessing the

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Bank's Grievance Panel as it is concerned that Bank-assisted projects should not cause negative impacts and thereby create reputation risk to Bank. It is important to ensure that problems, real or perceived, are managed locally. Furthermore, PMU has monitoring responsibility that includes GRM as well.

5.3 Process of Grievance Redress

The process of land acquisition related grievance redress is summarized below:

Step 1: Site-Level: PAPs can raise issues, directly or through a representative, at the site level with the contractor's environmental and social officer (ESO) or the ESO focal person of the divisional/district authorities of DAD, DoA and ID to find a solution. No written submission is required. The complaint will still be registered in the logbook, and the process adopted by the ESO to resolve the complaint, and the result will be documented. The contractor's ESO will consult the divisional/district implementing agency ESO although the complaint will be resolved promptly. Assistance and support will be provided to those who require it to file a complaint (e.g. persons with sensory disabilities).

Step 2: Divisional-Level: PAPs can lodge complaints in writing or using other ways at the divisional/district authorities of DAD, DoA and ID where the subproject is located and an ESO/SSO functions as the focal point. The ESO/SSO will register the complaint, obtain support of the other members of the DGRC and organize an investigation. The committee will propose a primary solution within 7 days of the date of receipt of the complaint. If the complainant is not pleased with the solution, the ESO/SSO will immediately refer the complaint together with all relevant information and the observations of the committee members to the PGRC. The complainant will be notified about the steps thus taken to resolve the issue.

Step 3: Provincial-Level: Upon receipt of the complaint with the observations of the DGRC, the PGRC will carry out a holistic review of the complaint and submit a report containing recommendations, if any, to the Provincial Director (who functions as the Deputy Director of the Project) for review and decision. PGRC may conduct a field investigation, if required, to meet the complainant and meet the DGRC members. At this meeting, the SSO/ESO who will not have voting right at the PGRC will provide an explanation for the rejection of the complaint or the decision taken. Alternative solutions to the problem will be discussed with the complainant. PGRC may either justify the decision of the DGRC or propose a different solution. This process will be completed within 10 days of the date of receipt of the appeal. PGRC in addition to monitoring the grievance redress process at the DGRC will also maintain a database of the grievances received, resolved, and feedback received.

Step 4: National-Level: A PAP dissatisfied with the decision of the PGRC may appeal in writing to the NGRC located at the PMU/ Ministry. The PGRC will submit a report to the NGRC together with the observations of the committee members. If required, further investigations will be carried out including a field visit. The complainant or a representative will be called up for a meeting where they will have the opportunity to explain any special circumstances or compelling reasons that the NGRC may consider in taking decisions. A member of the PGRC who has no right to vote at the NGRC will explain to the NGRC the process it adopted in resolving the issues. NGRC will take decisions based on consensus, and the decision will be final and binding. However, it will not deal with matters relating to government policy. Problems will be resolved within 14 days of the date of receipt of the appeal.

Step 5: Courts of Law: PAP not satisfied with the decision of the PGRC has the liberty to take their case to the court. In this event, the PAP must bear the cost of lawsuit and none of the GRC members will have any involvement.

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GRM does not replace the existing systems of mediation or adjudication. It only provides a convenient means for grievance redress involving no cost to the PAP concerned.

The stakeholders at the divisional and provincial level who have implemented previous World Bank supported projects are aware of the World Bank approach to grievance redress, mechanisms and processes and have relevant experience as they have participated in the grievance redress committees of the afore-mentioned projects. During discussions, they expressed agreement to serve in the GRM.

Registration of Grievances

ESO/SSO is expected to register the grievances and maintain the database. Responsibility for GRM lies with the Manager of the divisional/district authorities of DAD, DoA and ID while the Provincial Project Director (Chairman of PGRC) and the Project Director of the PMU (member of NGRC) are responsible for monitoring the grievance redress process. Any serious grievance must be brought to the notice of the World Bank forthwith.

5.4 Responding to SEA/SH related complaints

SEA/SH complaint reporting channels:

- SEA/SH related grievances are handled through a survivor-centered approach. The grievance uptake channels to be used to report on SEA/SH issues will be through the designated focal points and focal points of the implementing agencies who will undergo a training on how to respond and refer grievances relating GBV in a confidential manner).
- No grievance uptake mechanism can reject such grievances, and all focal points directly receiving grievances will be trained in the handling and processing of SEA/SH-related grievances. Complainants are also free to directly submit their complains directly to GBV service providers – please see recommended GBV service providers.

GBV Service Providers: The GRM of the project will assist SEA/SH survivors by referring them to the following qualified GBV services providers, institution, NGO for support immediately after receiving a complaint directly from a survivor:

- Women Development Officers, Social Service Officer and Counselor at the Divisional Secretary offices.
- National Women's Helpline (no. 1938) managed by the Ministry of Women,
- Mithuru Piyasa from Ministry of Health, which are available at most State Hospitals,
- Women In Need etc. to handle SEA/SH incidents.
- Women's Unit established at the closest Police Station.

Details on the GRM and GBV reporting mechanism and channels will be displayed at the GN, DS, construction sites, within communities where the project will be implemented and district and divisional level offices and Ministry Website in Sinhala, Tamil and English.

Registering SEA/SH related grievances: When taking information and registering grievances of a SEA/SH nature the following steps will be strictly followed:

- No identifiable information on the survivor shall be stored in the Grievance Mechanism (GM)
- The GM should **not** ask for, or record, information on more than the following related to the SEA/SH allegation:
  - The nature of the complaint (what the complainant says in her/his own words without direct questioning);
  - If, to the best of the survivor's knowledge, the perpetrator was associated with the project;
  - If possible, the age and sex of the survivor; and
  - If possible, information on whether the survivor was referred to services.

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- The SEA/ SH services provider will use its own case management system to respond to the case.
- The above services will be offered even if a survivor does not wish to file a formal complaint or if the complaint is not related to the project before closing the case.

Ensuring Confidentiality and obtaining Consent:

- Absolute confidentiality will be maintained for all grievances related to SEA/SH issues to prevent any risks of stigmatization and reprisals against the survivor.
- This means that no information shall be disclosed at any time to any party without the informed consent of the person concerned. The survivor's consent will also be sought for undertaking any action on the grievance. Under no circumstance should the survivor be pressured to consent to any conversation, assessment, investigation or other intervention with which they do not feel comfortable. In the case of children, informed consent is required from a parent or legal guardian and the children.
- A survivor can withdraw such consent at any time as well. If a survivor does not consent to sharing information, then only non- identifying information can be released or reported on.
- WHO Ethical and safety recommendations for researching, documenting and monitoring sexual violence in emergencies: https://www.who.int/gender/documents/OMS_Ethics&Safety10Aug07.pdf will be adopted.

SEA/SH incidents linked to project workers: Where SEA/SH grievances have been allegedly committed by project workers[15], the grievance will also be reported and registered. The PMT social specialist will follow up and determine jointly with the GRM focal point of the respective partner agency (Village level, Divisional Secretary levels) the likelihood that the allegation is related to the Project. The PMT social specialist will follow up to ensure that the complaint was addressed appropriately and complainant was provided guidance on obtaining the services of the above listed GBV service providers. The responsibility to implement any disciplinary action lies with the employer of the perpetrator, in accordance with the local legislation, labour laws, and employment contract. The PMT social specialist will report back to the survivor on any steps undertaken and the results.

Reporting to World Bank

The GRM is required to inform the PMT Social Specialist and TTL within 24 hours of receiving the complaint. The TTL is required to notify PM, Sector Director and CMU (including CD and CM/Rep) by sending first draft of the ESIRT within 24 hours of receiving the details. If the incident is a severe one eg: sexual abuse, rape, human trafficking, senior management and the VP of SAR must be notified. Survivor confidentiality should be always protected to prevent any risks of stigmatization and reprisals against the survivor. A corrective action plan must be developed to mitigate the risk of a similar re-occurrence and the TTL is required to monitor the implementation of the agreed actions.

6. Monitoring and Reporting

6.1 Summary of how SEP will be monitored and reported upon

The objective of monitoring is to ensure that the activities outlined in the SEP are carried out timely and efficiently. The monitoring and evaluation officers of the Department of Irrigation and the Department of Agriculture, Livestock and relevant institution under the purview of the MOFAOR, and MOPCI will monitor the implementation of the SEP. Under the supervision of the DPD and the guidance of the PD/PMU, the project ESOs of the relevant zones are responsible for monitoring SEP activities. They will prepare and submit monthly reports on the progress of SEP implementation during project implementation.

Social Audit Committees (SACs) will be established in the project areas. These committees will be composed of local community members, representatives of farmer organizations, and other relevant stakeholders. The SACs will conduct regular audits of the project's social and environmental performance, ensuring that it meets the agreed-upon objectives and complies with the set safeguards. The committees will also facilitate community participation in identifying and resolving any issues or grievances that may arise during project implementation. SACs will help build trust and accountability between the project and the communities it serves, creating a platform for direct participation in the monitoring process.

Further, the project will encourage both the project beneficiaries and the adversely affected communities for participatory monitoring of project activities that affect the communities. The project will establish Social Audit Committees (SACs). Based on past project experience SACs, are designed to strengthen accountability and transparency in public resource management by directly involving community members in the monitoring and evaluation of government projects. This participatory mechanism allows citizens, particularly those directly impacted by the projects, to organize and evaluate the performance of government agencies, officials, or contractors. Social audits assume that monitoring officials creates pressure to meet constituents' demands and reduces the likelihood of power abuse.

These activities would involve construction and rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructure, farm roads, reclamation of reservations for canals, roads, and tanks that cause involuntary resettlement impacts. In addition, there will be temporary environmental risks and impacts due to the construction and rehabilitation works. Furthermore, there could be potential risks related to labor influx, road safety, community health etc.

6.2 Reporting to Stakeholders

The project is committed to processing feedback including grievances from PAPs and interested parties and their resolution and reporting back to stakeholders. Responsibility for these activities lies with the ESO working under supervision of the Social Safeguards Specialist of the PMU. Follow up meetings and consultations with the stakeholders will be conducted to inform them how their comments and suggestions were considered in project design. Following workshops with the national level stakeholders, an email or official letter or proceedings will be sent informing how their suggestions and comments were considered. They will also be published on the project website.

Reporting back to stakeholder groups: The results of the stakeholder engagement activities including results and outcomes of monitoring and evaluation of SEP implementation will be reported back to the stakeholders through website and/or formal communications.

Reporting to the World Bank: The PMUs will collate all monitoring and evaluation results and produce bi-annual reports to be submitted to the World Bank. SEP monitoring will be part of the project monitoring reports submitted to WB.

6.3 SEP Monitoring Indicators

Table 7: SEP Monitoring Indicators & Methods

Monitoring Indicators	Methods	Timeframe
No. of affected parties, other stakeholders and vulnerable groups engaged in SEP implementation	Review of reports on consultations and progress reports	Quarterly
Type of information shared, disclosed	Review of information material shared and their content	Quarterly
Type of methods used for information dissemination and their effectiveness	Review of communication methods used, observations and feedback interviews and consultations with information recipients	Quarterly
Accessibility to information and language used for communication	Records of persons who sought information; observations and feedback interviews and FGDs with stakeholders, feedback survey (annual)	Quarterly
Level of awareness among affected parties, other stakeholders and vulnerable groups on project implementation procedures and potential impacts	Focus group discussions and individual interviews with a cross-section, feedback survey (annual)	Bi-annually
No. consultations conducted with affected parties, other stakeholders, and vulnerable groups	Review of reports on consultations by project and its partners	Bi-annually
Type of issues, concerns raised and discussed at consultative meetings	Review of reports on consultations	Quarterly
Type of decisions made based on consultation outcomes	Review of progress reports	Quarterly
Feedback sessions conducted with affected parties, other stakeholders and vulnerable groups to report on the decisions made	Review of progress reports, and focus group discussions and individual interviews with a cross-section	Bi-annually
Level of satisfaction among affected groups, other stakeholders and vulnerable groups on the consultative process and its outcomes	Feedback surveys, focus group discussions and individual interviews with a cross-section	Annually
No. grievances, complaints received and resolved	Review of progress reports and GRM database	Quarterly
Level of efficiency and responsiveness of the GRM	Review of the records of GRC meetings and decisions made	Bi-annually
Level of satisfaction among affected parties, other stakeholders and vulnerable groups on the overall performance of GRM	Focus group discussions, feedback surveys and individual interviews with a cross-section of parties who reported grievances	Annually

(Note: Based on the types of grievances, continuous daily/weekly/monthly monitoring of grievances will be required to avoid any unwanted protests)

6.4 Beneficiary Feedback Indicators

As part of the Strategic Framework for Mainstreaming Citizen Engagement (CE) in World Bank Operations, the Bank made a commitment to mainstreaming citizen engagement (CE) into operations.

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Accordingly, the Projects Results Frameworks must include at least one beneficiary feedback indicator to monitor CE throughout project implementation (as a PDO or intermediate outcome indicator); and Projects must report on beneficiary feedback indicators in Implementation Status and Results Reports (ISRs) by the third year of implementation or demonstrate credible progress towards reporting.

As such, the project has included the following Beneficiary Feedback Indicators to meet this Bank requirement (table 14):

Table 8: Indicators included in the Results Framework

Indicator
Grievances addressed within the stipulated time (Percentage)
Project beneficiaries satisfied with the Project (Percentage)

7. Resources and Responsibilities for Implementation

7.1 Resources

The PMU at the national level and the divisional/district authorities of DAD, DoA and ID at the regional level will oversee the implementation of SEP. For example, SEP requirements for agriculture-related activities will be implemented by the district office of the provincial agriculture department. Similarly, irrigation improvement projects under the jurisdiction of various authorities will be executed by DAD, PID, or ID through their district/division operational mechanisms. The PMU will recruit consultants in consultation with the divisional/district authorities of DAD, DoA and ID. Fishery and Plantation sector related activities will be implemented under the relevant departments. The PMU will make sure that the consultants carry out stakeholder engagement following the approach and methods described in this SEP.

Only indicative costs are estimated for the purpose of budget planning. Once the subprojects are worked out and stakeholders are identified, the scope and activities will be known, and the SEP budget will be updated.

The budget for SEP implementation will come from the project resources.

Table 9. Budget for SEP Implementation

No.	Key Activities	Stakeholders Involved	Unit Cost (LKR)	Sub Total (LKR)
Consultations During Project Preparation				
1.	Disclosure Materials: Summary of key risks and impacts; Project information leaflet; Poster; (English, Sinhala, and Tamil versions)	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation	500 x 5 Districts x 200	500.000
2.	National consultation to discuss safeguards instrument	Ministry of Agriculture Livestock, Lands and Irrigation Mahaweli Authority of Sri Lanka Ministry of National Planning Relevant Provincial Ministries (invited for	200000 x 8	1,600,000

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No.	Key Activities	Stakeholders Involved	Unit Cost (LKR)	Sub Total (LKR)
		national consultations)		
3.	Public consultations at selected districts	Leaders of farmer/ fishermen/ estate sector workers organizations; NGOs; Divisional Secretaries; Relevant public officers	5 selected districts, one from each province x 400,000	2,000,000
Consultations during project implementation				
4.	Local consultations to introduce the project; screening; land acquisition including land donation; detailed designs; impacts etc.	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure Project safeguards specialists and officers; Project consultant	25 pilot districts with vulnerable areas identified x 200,000	5,000,000
6.	Disclosure of ESMP, voluntary land donations, and RAP (if deemed necessary)	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure Project safeguards specialists	25 x 200,000	5,000,000
Civil Works				
9.	Staff allowance	Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation Ministry of Fisheries, Aquatic and Ocean Resource Ministry of Plantation and Community Infrastructure Project staff Consultant	2000 Per day	200,000
10.	Transport		2000 per day	200,000
11.	Data collection			500,000
12.	Other		50000 x 25 provinces	1,250,000
13.			**TOTAL**	**16,250,000**

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7.2 SEP Implementation Responsibilities

Institutional structure for implementation of SEP, and indeed the project, follows the institutional structure of the government. Thus, as the project implementing agencies, the MOALLI with a mandate for agriculture and irrigation will establish a PMU at the national level. At the provincial level where power has been devolved by Constitutional Amendments, to the Provincial Ministry of Irrigation and Provincial Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Fishery and Plantation sector. Thus agriculture/ fishery/ livestock/ plantation-related activities will be implemented by the district office of the provincial agriculture/ fishery/ livestock departments etc. Similarly, irrigation improvement projects under the jurisdiction of various authorities will be executed by DAD, PID, or ID through their district/division operational mechanisms. E&S officers will be assigned at the divisional/district authorities of DAD, DoA and ID**.** E&S officers will assume direct responsibility for SEP implementation and monitoring. PMU and divisional/district authorities of DAD, DoA and ID will have consultants to train officers and supervise SEP implementation including by the contractor's staff.

The National Planning Department that monitors and coordinates the project activities will establish a National Platform for Rural Growth and Resilience tasked with the overall articulation of a rural growth and resilience strategy for the GoSL where priority government departments participate articulating sectoral priorities and investments and help in the alignment of development partners with the agri-food systems and off-farm linkages.

SE activities outlined in this SEP will be periodically reviewed and evaluated by the divisional/district authorities of DAD, DoA and ID and PMUs in line with the ESMP, RP, and IPPF (if areas where IPs are present are found in the pilot areas), and any other developments in SEP introduced by the WB during the course of the project. Project stakeholders – affected and interested parties – are encouraged to engage in monitoring subproject activities.

The ESOs already trained by the national level consultants during the preparation and implementation of the projects on which the proposed project is founded will be exposed to further orientation and training. The officers recruited afresh will be given training in all aspects. The idea is to enhance their capabilities to perform the tasks assigned for stakeholder engagement during subproject preparation and implementation including monitoring.

Table 10. Responsibilities for SEP Implementation

Responsibilities for SEP Implementation		
MOALLI/ MOFAOR/ MOPCI	**Project Director**	(At the Project Level) Reviews and approves monthly reports on SE activities and grievance redress. Keeps the WB informed of the progress of the implementation of the SEP Oversees the DPDs. Submits monthly reports to the Secretary of the relevant ministry. Provides guidance to the DPD and the ESO as needed for specific cases. Supervises, guides, and coordinates process of SEP implementation
	E&S Expert	(At the subproject level) Implement SEP activities including consultations, disclosure, trainings, etc. as set out in the plan and as additionally required by the PD Coordinate with the affected communities, the contractors, the WB and the government to ensure PAP engagement Coordinate with the complainants, the contractors, and the subproject implementation units regarding grievances Coordinate with PAPs, contractor, agencies, and officers regarding grievance management Ensure records are kept Ensure database on GR is kept up to date

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Prov. MOA and Prov. MOI/ other relevant institutions in fishery and plantation sectors	**E&S Officer**	Coordinate with E&S Officers of the contractor and communities Provide guidance Ensure GR records are kept updated Provide information to review committees
Prov. MOA and Prov. MOI/ other relevant institutions in fishery and plantation sectors	**M&E Officer**	Coordinate with E&S Officers of the contractor and communities Provide guidance Ensure GR records are kept updated Provide information to review committees
Independent Monitoring Agency	**E & S Experts**	(At the subproject level) Conducts site visits and interviews to assess progress on voluntary land donations, involuntary land acquisitions, and identify issues Assess progress on resettlement, livelihood development, gender-based violence and gender mainstreaming, as described in the SEP and required by the implementing agencies, identify issues Check the efficiency of GRM Check the social database. Help build capacity Inform immediately the project management of any observed potentially serious issues Assist in the identification of especially vulnerable people including indigenous people Report to project director

Annex 1 – Summary Of Previous Stakeholder Engagement Activities

Table 11. Detail findings from the stakeholder consultations

Overview and Objectives

In August and October of 2024, a series of four workshops were conducted to gather insights and feedback from various agricultural stakeholders. The workshops took place in districts of Anuradhapura, Mullaitivu, Kurunegala and Monaragala and **a total of 164 participants** attended these workshops, comprising 93 female and 71 male participants.

The primary objectives of these workshops were

- **Objective 1:** Evaluate existing programs and identify which services are working well and why.
- **Objective 2:** Understand the challenges faced by smallholder, female, and other underrepresented groups in accessing agricultural support services.
- **Objective 3:** Gather community feedback to design new services and improve agricultural productivity, modernization, and market access.

Participant Groups

During the workshops, participants were divided into four distinct groups to ensure a comprehensive understanding of the diverse challenges and needs within the agricultural sector.

- **1st groups - Smallholder Farmers -** These participants typically lacked formal ownership of their lands or leased land. They often relied on daily wage work and unskilled labor to supplement their farming income. The smallholder farmers had access to cultivable land that was 0.5 hectares or less. This group included both women and men of various age groups, providing a broad perspective on the challenges faced by smallholder farmers.
- **2nd group - Female Farmers -** Similar to the smallholder farmers, these women lacked formal ownership of their lands or leased land. They had access to cultivable land that was 0.5 hectares or less. This group consisted of women of different age groups, highlighting the unique challenges faced by female farmers in the agricultural sector.
- **3rd group - Producer Groups** - These participants were smallholders who relied on collective action within producer groups for market access and resources. They utilized shared inputs, pooled resources, and joint marketing efforts. The group also included export-oriented farmers who similarly relied on collective action for market access and resources. This group included both women and men of various age, gender, geography, and types of crops cultivated. This group included both women and men of different age groups, including youth, and may have included a farmer who was previously part of a dismantled producer group.
- **4th group - Export-Oriented Farmers -** The fourth group consisted of export-oriented farmers. These participants were farmers who had successfully integrated new technologies and climate-smart agriculture practices. The group included some lead farmers from field schools. It consisted of both women and men of different age groups, including youth, providing insights into the challenges and successes of export-oriented farming.

Key Themes – The workshops focused the broader set of services (beyond WB-financed projects) that farmers rely on for their livelihoods, including:

1. **Access to Agriculture Services and Inputs** to Increase Production and Competitiveness
2. **Access to Markets** and Market Linkages
3. **Adoption of Innovative Practices** and Technologies

Key Findings

- **Finding 1**: High uptake of project activities, but opportunity to improve impact through better coordination and service integration.
- **Finding 2:** Rehabilitation of agro-wells and irrigation tanks was identified as one of the most effective programs.
- **Finding 3:** Lack of transparency and inclusion in beneficiary selection is a key barrier.
- **Finding 4:** FOs play a key role in implementing programs but can suffer from poor coordination, elite capture, and lack of inclusivity, limiting their effectiveness.
- **Finding 5:** Poor quality of seeds and significant delays in the provision of seeds and other inputs disrupt planting schedules.
- **Finding 6:** Training programs show positive results, especially for youth, but gaps in extension services and technical assistance remain.
- **Finding 7:** Producer Groups improve market access, enable higher prices for produce, and foster knowledge exchange, but institutional capacity gaps remain.
- **Finding 8:** Critical infrastructure gaps hinder productivity, market access, resilience.
- **Finding 9:** High interest rates, rigid collateral requirements, limited credit options prevent farmers from accessing affordable financing.
- **Finding 10:** Limited formal land ownership and systemic biases in land access restrict farmers' eligibility for programs and resources.
- **Finding 11:** Crop destruction by wild animals, remains a significant challenge, causing yield losses and threatening livelihoods.
- **Finding 12:** Crop insurance schemes have limited coverage, high premiums, and complex claims processes failing to meet farmers' needs.

Detail Findings

Finding 1: High uptake of project activities, but opportunity to improve impact through better coordination and service integration.

Key Feedback

- **All participants** highlighted that they widely used and benefited from various agricultural projects and programs, including the CSIAP, the ASMP, the Fertilizer Subsidy Program, and training programs under DAD. Participants noted the significant benefits of irrigation rehabilitation, input provision, and capacity-building initiatives under these programs.
- **Smallholder farmers** expressed difficulty in accessing the full benefits of fragmented project activities.
- **Export-oriented farmers** suggested bundling services to provide a more streamlined and accessible support structure.
- **Producer Groups** highlighted the need for aligned support services to better impact market access and productivity.
- **Producer Groups** also stressed that there is a need to better align irrigation rehabilitation with input distribution.

Recommendations from Workshop Participants

- Participants recommended consolidating activities under programs like CSIAP to **improve access to the full range of available support and maximize impact**.

Finding 2: Rehabilitation of agro-wells and irrigation tanks was identified as one of the most effective programs.

Key Feedback

- **All groups** highlighted the positive impact of irrigation infrastructure rehabilitation, particularly through the rehabilitation of agro-wells and irrigation tanks, which improved water availability during the dry season, and solar-powered water pumps, which reduced energy costs.
- **Producer Groups** highlighted the critical importance of rehabilitating irrigation systems to maintain water availability during dry periods.
- **Export-oriented farmers** confirmed that reliable irrigation systems have significantly improved their production and helped mitigate climate risks.
- **Smallholder and female farmers** emphasized the urgent need for more financial support to improve irrigation infrastructure for sustainable farming.
- **Recommendations from Workshop Participants**
- Workshop participants highlighted the need to increase investments in irrigation infrastructure, as this is key to building resilience against climate variability in the dry season.
- Female farmers highlighted the need to integrate solar-powered water pumps into tank rehabilitation programs, to support farmers in areas without electricity and to counter the rising cost of electricity.

Finding 3: Lack of transparency and inclusion in beneficiary selection is a key barrier.

Key Feedback

- **All groups** raised concerns about beneficiary selection processes and the lack of transparency.
- **Smallholder farmers** reported that in most programs, a very small number of farmers received the majority of support. They also highlighted frequent selection of ineligible individuals as beneficiaries.
- **Female farmers** noted limited access to support compared to their male counterparts, and highlighted unfair and impractical beneficiary selection.
- **Producer Groups** and **export-oriented farmers** identified political influence on program implementation.
- **Recommendations from Workshop Participants**
- Participants recommended establishing clearer eligibility criteria and improving transparency in the selection process to ensure fair distribution of resources.

Finding 4: FOs play a key role in implementing programs but can suffer from poor coordination, elite capture, and lack of inclusivity, limiting their effectiveness.

Key Feedback

- **Smallholder farmers** reported that FO leadership is often dominated by village elites influenced by local politicians, leading to biased targeting and exclusion of deserving beneficiaries.

- **Female farmers** highlighted the inability of village farmer organization officers to effectively coordinate programs, excluding women and other marginalized groups from participation.
- **Workshop participants** noted that FOs and producer groups formed under CSIAP and ASMP benefit from oversight by project officials and established grievance redress mechanisms, which enhance their functionality compared to traditional FOs. However, they lack formal DAD registration.

Recommendations from Workshop Participants

- Introduce measures to prevent elite capture and ensure fair representation of marginalized groups, including women, in FO leadership.
- Expand the grievance redress mechanisms to ensure transparency and accountability in their operations.

Finding 5: Poor quality of seeds and significant delays in the provision of seeds and other inputs disrupt planting schedules.

Key Feedback

- **All groups** Identified that seeds and inputs provided under various programs are not high quality.
- **All groups** identified delayed seed and fertilizer provision as a major issue impacting seasonal planting. Small-holder farmers in particular reported crop failures due to delays in receiving seeds during critical planting periods.
- **Producer Groups** expressed frustration at receiving seeds too late for optimal cultivation, and some highlighted that introduced seed varieties are not always compatible with the area.

Recommendations from Workshop Participants

- **All participants** emphasized the importance of timely seed distribution to ensure planting aligns with the agricultural calendar.
- **Female farmers** and **smallholder farmers** highlighted the need for higher quality seeds, especially hybrid varieties.

Finding 6: Training programs show positive results, especially for youth, but gaps in extension services and technical assistance remain.

Key Feedback

- **Workshop participants** highlighted that training programs, such as the Climate-Smart Farmer Training School and Farmer Business Schools, have successfully enhanced farmers' knowledge and led to the adoption of innovative practices like insect-proof nets, solar irrigation, and drip systems.
- **A youth farmer organization** was represented, highlighting interest in adopting modern agricultural technologies but calling for better mobilization and support for youth-led initiatives.
- **Smallholder farmers** reported that limited access to extension services, with one officer serving too many farmers, hinders their ability to fully adopt modern technologies.
- **Female farmers** stated that they would benefit from training opportunities provided locally but stated that female farmers are often excluded from extension services, especially in remote areas.
- **Smallholder and female farmers** reported that more complex technologies, like sprinklers, were not used because not enough training and information was provided on their use.
- **Export-oriented farmers** noted that at times the advice received from agricultural instructors and CSIAP officers is not in accordance with local conditions. For example, they noted that weed mat, recommended by agriculture instructors and CSIAP officers, is less effective than poly-mulch for vegetable cultivation, limiting its perceived utility.

Recommendations from Workshop Participants

- Female farmers recommended providing village-level training sessions to overcome travel and time barriers that currently prevent many women from participating.
- Participants recommended strengthening extension services by increasing the number of officers to reduce the farmer-to-officer ratio.
- Workshop participants also expressed a need for training and support on accessing the export market, certification requirements and packaging.
- Youth recommended supporting the formation and mobilization of youth farmer organizations to promote modern practices; introducing entrepreneurship-focused training to encourage youth to invest in agriculture.

Finding 7: Producer Groups improve market access, enable higher prices for produce, and foster knowledge exchange, but institutional capacity gaps remain.

Key Feedback

- **Market Access:** Producer groups enable members to bypass middlemen and secure direct sales agreements, improving access to domestic and export markets.
- **Higher Prices:** Collective action allows farmers to negotiate better prices for their produce, particularly by coordinating crop production to avoid market gluts.
- **Knowledge Sharing:** Groups facilitate peer learning, helping members improve agricultural practices and address common challenges.
- **Institutional Gaps:** Governance structures and financial management capacity within groups require strengthening to improve functionality and accountability.
- **Certification Barriers**: A lack of support for obtaining necessary certifications, such as GAP, limits access to high-value export markets.

Recommendations from Workshop Participants

- Provide training to enhance governance, financial management, and operational capacity within producer groups.
- Support producer groups in accessing certifications to unlock export opportunities.
- Invest in infrastructure like storage facilities and post-harvest handling systems to reduce losses and improve market competitiveness.

Finding 8: Critical infrastructure gaps hinder productivity, market access, resilience.

Key Feedback

- **Storage Facilities:** Lack of cold storage and appropriate facilities for post-harvest handling leads to significant produce losses.
- **Transportation and Market Access:** Poor road conditions in rural areas limit timely access to markets, increasing transportation costs and reducing competitiveness.
- **Irrigation Systems:** Inadequate maintenance and rehabilitation of irrigation tanks and canals reduce water availability, especially during dry seasons.
- **Power Supply:** Limited access to reliable electricity hinders the use of advanced farming technologies such as solar-powered irrigation systems.
- **Wildlife Fencing:** Insufficient electric fencing and other protections exacerbate damage from wild animals, impacting crop yields.

Recommendations from Workshop Participants

- Expand investment in rural road rehabilitation to improve market connectivity.
- Develop and equip cold storage and food preservation facilities in farming regions.
- Accelerate the rehabilitation of irrigation tanks and canals, integrating solar-powered solutions where possible.
- Enhance wildlife fencing and introduce innovative technologies to mitigate crop damage.

Finding 9: High interest rates, rigid collateral requirements, limited credit options prevent farmers from accessing affordable financing.

Key Feedback

- **Smallholder farmers** reported that the interest rates on available loans often exceed the profitability of crops, making financing unsustainable.
- **Producer Groups** highlighted difficulties in repaying loans when crops fail unexpectedly, creating cycles of debt.
- **Female farmers** noted challenges in providing acceptable collateral, as many women do not have land titles or assets required by financial institutions.
- **All groups** highlighted that banks often require government servants as guarantors, excluding those without connections.
- **Various farmers** shared concerns that lengthy loan approval processes often prevent farmers from accessing funds in time for critical cultivation periods.
- **Various farmers** highlighted that they would benefit from more project contributions, facilitations and monitoring in terms of finances for the sustainability of their business activities.

Recommendations from Workshop Participants

- Introduce concessional loan schemes with reduced interest rates tailored to agricultural activities.
- Simplify collateral requirements to accept alternative forms of security, such as group guarantees or leased land.
- Streamline loan application and disbursement processes to align with seasonal farming cycles.

Finding 10: Limited formal land ownership and systemic biases in land access restrict farmers' eligibility for programs and resources.

Key Feedback

- **Lack of proper land ownership documents**: Farmers noted that they have cultivated their land for three to four decades without proper land ownership documents.
- **Smallholder Farmers** noted that many farmers lease land or lack formal ownership documents, preventing them from accessing benefits like agro-well construction and credit facilities.
- **Non-land-owning farmers** highlighted a lack of programs to assist those leasing or informally cultivating land.
- **Female farmers** highlighted that traditional inheritance practices favor male heirs, limiting women's ability to claim land ownership and access agricultural support.

Recommendations from Workshop Participants

- Project should support processes for issuing formal land titles to eligible farmers, including smallholders and women, in order to ensure their inclusion in project activities, especially agro-well construction.
- Prioritize leased and informally cultivated land for program eligibility, especially agro-well construction, to ensure wider inclusivity.
- Develop specific support mechanisms for female farmers to address systemic barriers in land ownership and inheritance.
- Identify vacant and barren lands in villages, enhance soil fertility, and support landowners to bring these lands into productive cultivation.

Finding 11: Crop destruction by wild animals, remains a significant challenge, causing yield losses and threatening livelihoods.

Key Feedback

- **All groups** reported extensive damage caused by wild animals, including elephants, monkeys, and peacocks.
- **Female farmers** stated that crop destruction by wild animals disproportionately affects women due to their dual responsibilities in farming and household management – which limits their ability to keep watch of their fields.
- **Various groups** highlighted that crop insurance schemes do not always cover losses due to animal damage.
- **Smallholder farmers** noted that existing electric fences are poorly maintained and fail to provide adequate protection.
- **Producer Groups** stated that collective action, including organizing sub-teams to keep watch, has helped reduce crop losses from wild animal attacks. However, they also suggested need for advanced technologies such as CCTB monitoring and innovative fencing solutions.

Recommendations from Workshop Participants

- Support reforestation and habitat restoration to redirect wildlife away from farmlands.
- Upgrade existing electric fences and introduce modern crop protection technologies like solar-powered systems and surveillance tools.
- Provide training and incentives for farmers to adopt wildlife management tools, such as planting deterrent crops along farm perimeters.
- Ensure regular maintenance and community-based management of wildlife barriers to enhance their effectiveness.
- Expand the scale of CSIAP seasonal animal protection fences across more production areas.

Finding 12: Crop insurance schemes have limited coverage, high premiums, and complex claims processes failing to meet farmers' needs.

Key Feedback

- **Female farmers** expressed frustration that current schemes do not cover damages caused by wild animals, which are a major cause of crop loss.
- **Female farmers and Producer Groups** noted that the schemes focus only on select crops, leaving many farmers without insurance for diversified farming activities.
- **Producer Groups and female farmers** reported delays and inefficiencies in processing claims, claim assessments being done incorrectly, and farmers not receiving compensation for insurance claims.

- **Smallholder Farmers** highlighted that high premiums make insurance unaffordable, especially for low-income farmers.
- **Female farmers** highlighted unfair compensation for crop damages through the agricultural insurance scheme.

Recommendations from Workshop Participants

- Expand crop insurance coverage to include wild animal damages and a broader range of crops.
- Introduce affordable, subsidized premium rates tailored to smallholder farmers' income levels.
- Simplify claims processes and establish local insurance officers to assist farmers with enrollment and claim submissions.
- Conduct targeted awareness campaigns to educate farmers, especially women, on available insurance schemes and their benefits.

Additional Findings

- **Cost of Technology and Opportunity to Engage Youth**: In Monaragala, the cost of preparing one acre is LKR 22,000, nearly double that of Ampara (LKR 11,000–12,000), due to machinery shortages during peak periods, leading to planting delays, reduced harvests, and increased wild animal damage; farmers proposed engaging unemployed youth to provide affordable machinery services and ensure timely land preparation.
- **Advisory Services:** Farmers emphasized the need for comprehensive advisory support on selecting appropriate crops and planning cultivation cycles to align with seasonal conditions and market demand. It was recommended by some participants that this should include the use of online dashboards and analysis of historical prices to help guide forecasting of prices.
- **Youth Engagement and Entrepreneurship Promotion:** Youth are highly interested in modern agriculture practices but lack encouragement, leading to migration for unskilled urban jobs. Workshop participants suggested promoting youth farmer organizations and supporting entrepreneurship programs in villages, including establishing agribusinesses and developing value-added products.
- **Post-Harvest Techniques and Technology:** Farmers lack access to proper post-harvest handling methods and technologies, leading to losses and reduced market competitiveness. Workshop participants noted that more investment in training and infrastructure for post-harvest management is needed.
- **Public Unlisted Companies (PUCs)** are an effective model for improving market access and increasing farmer incomes, but challenges remain, including the need for incentive payments to ensure active participation by board members and executive committees, as well as greater government and institutional support to meet operational objectives.
- **Agriculture Inspector Support and Grievance Handling:** Farmers noted inadequate support from Agriculture Inspectors and the absence of formal grievance mechanisms to address issues and receive timely resolutions.
- **Technology for Green Gram:** Farmers need innovations like synchronized maturity varieties and mechanized harvesting solutions to reduce high labor costs for green gram production.