



## **Indigenous Peoples Framework of Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP).**

**Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation**



### **Indigenous Peoples Framework**

**Social Development Section-IRDCRP**

**August 25, 2025**

## LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AAIB – Agriculture and Agrarian Insurance Board  
AWD – Alternate wetting and drying  
BC – Before Christ  
CBO – Community Based Organization  
CMCs – Cascade Management Committees  
CMPs – Cascade Management Plans  
CRI – Climate Risk Index  
CSA – Climate Smart Agriculture  
CSIAP – Climate Smart Irrigated Agriculture Project  
DAD – Department of Agrarian Development  
DO – Development Officer  
DS – Divisional Secretary  
ESF – Environmental and Social Framework  
ESMP – Environmental and Social Management Plan  
ESS – Environmental and Social Standard  
FO – Farming Organization  
FPIC – Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC)  
GN – Grama Niladhari  
GoSL – Government of Sri Lanka  
GRC – Grievance Redress Committee  
GRM – Grievance Redress Mechanism  
Ha – Hectare  
ID – Irrigation Department  
IDA – International Development Association  
IFC – International Finance Corporation  
ILO – International Labour Organization  
IP – Indigenous People  
IPF – Indigenous People Framework  
IPOs – Indigenous Peoples’ organizations  
IRDCRP – Indigenous Peoples Framework of Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project  
LIPMB – Local Indigenous Peoples Mediation Bodies  
MoALLI – Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation  
NGOs – Non-Government Organization  
NQI – National Quality Infrastructure  
PDOs – The Project Development Objective  
PMU – Project Management Unit  
POM – Project Operational Manual  
PPs – Productive Partnerships

SA – Social Assessment

SIA–Social Impact Assessment

SDS – Social Development Section

SSDS – Senior Social Development Specialist

SSR – Social Screening Report

UNDRIP – United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples

US\$ – United States Dollar

WB – World Bank

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## Indigenous Peoples Framework-IRDCRP

### I). Executive summary

The Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP), led by Sri Lanka's Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation, aims to tackle the twin challenges of economic recovery and climate adaptation in 12 vulnerable districts reliant on irrigated farming. The project promotes climate-smart agriculture, efficient water use, ecosystem protection, and market access, aligning with national strategies to modernize agriculture and reduce rural poverty.

A key focus is the recognition and protection of Indigenous Peoples, particularly the Vedda (Wanniyala-Aetto) community, whose cultural heritage, ecological knowledge, and land stewardship are vital yet historically marginalized. The report sets out a framework in line with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Standard 7 (ESS7) to ensure their rights, dignity, and traditions are respected.

The objectives include upholding Indigenous rights and identity, preventing or mitigating negative impacts, fostering inclusive development opportunities, securing Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), and safeguarding traditional knowledge. Institutional mechanisms such as Local Indigenous Peoples Mediation Bodies (LIPMBs), a culturally sensitive Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), and participatory monitoring are proposed to strengthen inclusion and accountability.

Although Sri Lanka's Constitution guarantees equality and cultural rights, the absence of a dedicated Indigenous Peoples law highlights the need for international safeguards like UNDRIP and World Bank standards. Where projects affect Indigenous lands or resources, Indigenous Peoples Plans (IPPs) will be prepared to ensure compliance and equity.

In conclusion, the IRDCRP seeks to build a development process that is inclusive, respectful, and resilient, ensuring that Indigenous communities—especially the Veddas—are not only protected from risks but are empowered as key partners in sustainable development and climate resilience.

## 2). Background:

The Integrated Rurban Development and Climate Resilience Project (IRDCRP)-Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, Lands and Irrigation (MoALLI) is designed to address Sri Lanka's dual challenges of economic revival and climate adaptation, with a strong focus on rural communities that rely heavily on natural resources. It is an initiative seeks to foster a sustainable and diversified agri-food system while enhancing water resource management. IRDCRP specifically targets 12 districts identified as climate-vulnerable and poverty-prone. Since these areas depend largely on irrigated farming, they face significant risks from both economic instability and climate-related impacts, highlighting the importance of an integrated and multi-sectoral approach. The project has five components financed through a US\$100 million IDA credit and US\$ 3 million contributions from the GoSL. The project's components are:

**Component 1:** Promotion of Climate-Smart Production, Value Addition, and Inclusive Access to Markets (US\$ 45 million: IDA US\$30 million, local beneficiaries US\$15 million).

**Component 2:** Integrated Management of Natural Resources for Climate Resilience (US\$ 55 million)

**Component 3:** Strengthening the Enabling Environment for Sectoral Growth (IDA US\$13 million and GoSL US\$1 million).

**Component 4:** Project Management, Monitoring & Learning (IDA US\$2 million and GoSL US\$ 2 million).

**Component 5:** Contingent Emergency Response Component (US\$0 million).

In adhering to component 2: Integrated Management of Natural Resources for Climate Resilience (US\$ 55 million), IRDCRP committed to improving the institutional governance of natural resources in cascades and village tanks through continued strengthening of cascade management committees (CMCs). On the other hand, this component is used to enhance water management in major, medium, and small (cascade) irrigation systems to increase water use efficiency and productivity.

The Indigenous Peoples Framework (IPF) is a vital safeguard in World Bank projects to ensure that development initiatives respect the rights, cultures, and livelihoods of indigenous communities. It provides a structured approach for identifying potential impacts on these groups and promotes their meaningful participation throughout the project cycle. The framework emphasizes free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC), ensuring that indigenous peoples have a voice in decisions affecting their lands and resources. By integrating traditional knowledge and cultural values, the IPF helps enhance the sustainability and social acceptance of development outcomes. Ultimately, it strengthens equity and inclusion, preventing marginalization and fostering shared benefits for indigenous communities.

## 3). Project Development Objective:

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to increase the productivity, market access, and climate resilience of agri-food producers in selected areas. The PDO level results indicators are:

- i Agri-food producers adopting improved and climate-resilient technology or practices supported by the Project (Number).
- ii Area provided with improved irrigation or drainage services (Ha)
- iii Agri-food producers with increased market value of their produce of at least 15 percent through Productive Partnership (Percentage).
- iv People with enhanced resilience to climate risk (disaggregated by sex) (Number) [CRI].

#### **4). Objectives of this IPF**

- i To ensure that the IRDCRP development process fully upholds the human rights, dignity, identity, cultural values, aspirations, and resource-based livelihoods of Indigenous Peoples.
- ii To prevent negative impacts on Indigenous Peoples, and where avoidance is not possible, to minimize, mitigate, or compensate for such effects.
- iii To create sustainable development opportunities and benefits for Indigenous communities in ways that are inclusive, culturally sensitive, and accessible.
- iv To strengthen project design and community support by maintaining continuous, meaningful consultations with affected Indigenous Peoples throughout the project cycle.
- v To secure the Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) of Indigenous Peoples in the specific situations outlined in this ESS.
- vi To acknowledge, protect, and preserve Indigenous cultures, knowledge, and traditional practices, while enabling them to adapt to changing conditions in a manner and timeframe they consider appropriate.

#### **5). Preamble of Indigenous Peoples in Sri Lanka**

The Indigenous Peoples of Sri Lanka, commonly referred to as the Veddas (Wanniyala-Aetto), are recognized as the island's earliest inhabitants, possessing a unique cultural identity, linguistic traditions, and customary practices that remain closely connected to nature. As traditional guardians of ancestral lands, forests, and ecosystems, they have played a vital role in conserving biodiversity, managing resources sustainably, and passing on traditional knowledge across generations. However, despite this rich heritage, Sri Lanka's Indigenous communities continue to face vulnerabilities, including social marginalization, dispossession of ancestral lands, restricted access to development opportunities, and the gradual erosion of

cultural identity. Both the Constitution of Sri Lanka and international frameworks such as the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) highlight the importance of protecting their rights, culture, and livelihoods.

This framework emphasizes inclusion, respect, and active participation of Indigenous Peoples throughout all stages of development planning and implementation. It upholds the principle of free, prior, and informed consent (FPIC), ensuring meaningful consultation while safeguarding their cultural heritage, traditional knowledge, and community aspirations. Accordingly, the Preamble provides a foundation for inclusive and sustainable development in Sri Lanka—anchored in the protection of Indigenous rights, the preservation of cultural dignity, and the strengthening of resilience amid economic, social, and environmental transformations.

## **6). Historical perspective of Sri Lankan Indigenous Peoples**

Chief Seattle’s words in 1854, “Every part of this soil is sacred in the estimation of my people...” reflect the profound bond between Indigenous communities and their ancestral lands. The passage speaks of hills, valleys, plains, groves, and even rocks as sacred markers of history, memory, and sacrifice. To this day, such sentiments resonate deeply with Indigenous groups across the world, including Sri Lanka’s own Veddah community, who continue to view the land not just as territory, but as a living, spiritual entity enriched by the footsteps and sacrifices of their ancestors.

### **i. Origins and Identity of the Veddahs**

The Veddahs of Sri Lanka, often called Vanniyalaththo or “forest dwellers,” are widely regarded as the island’s Indigenous people. Their name is believed to derive from the Sanskrit Vyadha, meaning “hunter with bow and arrow.” Unlike the Sinhalese, who trace Aryan roots, the Veddahs are linked to Austro-Asiatic groups scattered across southern Asia. Living in harmony with forests, rivers, and wildlife, the Veddahs built their lives upon nature’s generosity, drawing strength, love, and livelihood from the environment, echoing Kahlil Gibran’s reflections on nature as the eternal, nurturing mother.

### **ii. Historical Narratives and Ancestral Links**

Scholarly and traditional accounts differ regarding the origin of the Veddahs. The Mahawamsa links their ancestry to Prince Vijaya and Kuveni, the queen of the Yakkas, whose children are said to have founded the Veddah lineage after retreating into the forests of Ratnapura. Anthropologists such as Seligmann (1911) found evidence supporting genetic ties between the Yakkas and modern Veddahs. Similarly, place names such as Vedhi Gala, Vedha Ala, and Vedi Kanda across Sabaragamuwa stand as cultural markers of their presence. These narratives emphasize their deep entwinement with Sri Lanka’s earliest history.

### **iii. Archaeological Evidence and Evolution**

Beyond legend, archaeology provides further insight into the ancestry of the Veddahs. Research by Dr. S. V. Deraniyagala (1992) traces a genetic continuum from prehistoric sites such as Batadombalena (18,000 BC), Belilena (16,000 BC), and Bellan Bandi Palassa (6,500 BC), linking the Veddahs to the prehistoric Balangoda

Man. Known for his robust physique and distinct skeletal features, Balangoda Man is considered one of the earliest anatomically modern humans in South Asia. Over time, the Veddah population spread across rural Sri Lanka, with Dambana emerging as their cultural heartland, while others integrated into society in the North Central and Uva Provinces. However, according to anthropologists, their origins are much older; with some anthropologists dating them back to the stone age. A hunter-gather people, the Veddas have a long history of living harmoniously with nature. There are three predominant types of Veddas- Gal Veddas or cave-dwelling, who spent their time in forest caves; Muhudu Veddas or Coastal Veddas, that lived on the coastline; and Gam Veddas or village Veddas, that lived off in Chena Cultivation in small huts in village communities.

### 7). Vadda Population:

As the indigenous people of Sri Lanka, the Vedda community constitutes a tiny percentage of the national population. As of recent estimates, they account for less than 1% of Sri Lanka’s total population. This minority status highlights the vulnerability of their cultural and societal practices as they navigate the challenges of preserving their unique heritage and traditions in a rapidly modernizing world. Their small numbers further emphasize the importance of efforts to protect and promote their rights, language, and traditional way of life, ensuring that this rich and ancient culture continues to be a part of Sri Lanka’s diverse tapestry.

### 8). Current Settlements of Indigenous Peoples in Sri Lanka:

In Sri Lanka, the Vedda community predominantly represents the Indigenous Peoples, recognized as the island’s original inhabitants. Their numbers are limited, dispersed across various regions, and largely reside in rural areas. A more detailed overview of their settlements is as follows:

**Table I: Current Settlements of Indigenous Peoples in Sri Lanka**

No	Province	District	Area
01	Eastern Province	Trincomalee	Kuchchaveli, Kinniya, and surrounding forested areas
		Batticaloa	Valaichenai and surrounding forested regions
02	North Central Province	Polonnaruwa	Dimbulagala forest area, Dalukana
		Anuradhapura	Kudagama (near Anuradhapura city, Mihintale area), Henoigama and Anuradhapura outskirts
03	Uva Province	Badulla	Mahiyangana area in forest fringes.
		Monaragala	Dambana, situated within the Maduru Oya National Park, Rathugala (Gal Oya range, Uva)
04	Southern province	Hambantota District	Yala, Weerawila, and surrounding villages.

## 9). Sri Lanka's Legal Framework in relation to Indigenous Peoples:

### i. **Absence of a National Policy for Indigenous Recognition**

So far, no national policy has been established to acknowledge any community or group as indigenous. Sri Lanka currently lacks a dedicated national policy or legal framework aimed specifically at protecting the rights of indigenous communities (Veddas) or other social and cultural groups. Public services guaranteed by the Constitution are directed towards individuals rather than being extended to specific groups.

### ii. **General Social and Economic Development Policies**

Successive governments have implemented poverty alleviation and social development policies in areas such as education, health, and infrastructure, along with economic development programs in agriculture and irrigation. Social welfare schemes such as Samurdhi are designed to benefit the entire citizenry, not targeting any specific community or group. These initiatives are open to all citizens by design.

### iii. **Consideration for Vedda Communities within the General Legal Framework**

Issues and concerns of the Veddas are addressed within the general legal framework of the country. The implementation of rules and regulations is often adaptive, considering the special circumstances of Veddas living in traditional areas. For example, the Vedda chief and families continue to live at Kotabakini village in Maduru Oya National Park, following its establishment. The State extends patronage to their interest in conserving their culture and traditions. The Veddas are, however, recognized as an especially vulnerable group.

### iv. **Citizenship Rights of the Veddas**

According to the Citizenship Act of 1948, the Veddas are acknowledged as citizens of Sri Lanka and are entitled to all rights and privileges guaranteed by the country's Constitution. The Constitution recognizes one unified status of citizenship — “the status of a citizen of Sri Lanka” (Article 26 (1), Chapter 5 on Citizenship). No distinction shall be drawn between citizens based on the mode of acquisition, whether by descent or by virtue of registration (Article 26 (3), Chapter 5).

### v. **Constitutional Guarantees of Equality and Non-Discrimination**

Article 12 of Chapter 3 of the Constitution, which covers the Right to Equality and Non-Discrimination, specifies that all persons are equal before the law and entitled to equal protection of the law. Under Article 27 (6) of Chapter 6, the State is mandated to ensure equality of opportunity so that no citizen suffers any disadvantage based on race, religion, language, caste, sex, political opinion, or occupation.

### vi. **Cultural Rights and Freedom of Expression**

Article 14(I)(f) of the Constitution affirms that every citizen has the right to the freedom, either individually or collectively, to enjoy and promote their culture and to use their own language, subject to reasonable

restrictions under Article 15(7). This provision ensures that all cultural groups, including the Veddas, can preserve and promote their traditions within the broader national framework.

**vii. Directive Principles and State Responsibilities**

Chapter 6 of the Constitution, through the Directive Principles of State Policy and Fundamental Duties, outlines the State's broader responsibility to safeguard social order, promote access to cultural opportunities, support the growth of languages and traditions, and ensure environmental protection for societal well-being. These principles collectively emphasize the State's duty to preserve cultural diversity and promote the well-being of all communities, including indigenous groups.

**viii. Fauna and Flora Protection Ordinance**

Section 3(3) – Provides an exception relevant to Veddas, allowing the exercise of rights acquired “by law, custom, or usage” before the establishment of a Nature Reserve, Corridor, or Sanctuary.

Restrictions – Despite this exception, Sections 3 and 4 impose limitations on entry and strictly prohibit hunting within designated protected areas.

**ix. Forest Ordinance**

Sections 6 and 7 – Define offenses related to causing harm to forests or engaging in hunting within forest reserves. These provisions restrict traditional subsistence activities of indigenous communities within forested lands.

**x. National Heritage and Wilderness Areas Act**

Section 3 – Prohibits unauthorized entry and remaining within national heritage and wilderness areas, except for official purposes. This limits the access of indigenous communities (Veddas) to ancestral or culturally significant lands.

**xi. International Commitments and Gaps**

UN Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples (UNDRIP) – Sri Lanka voted in favor but has not enacted enabling legislation to give effect to its provisions.

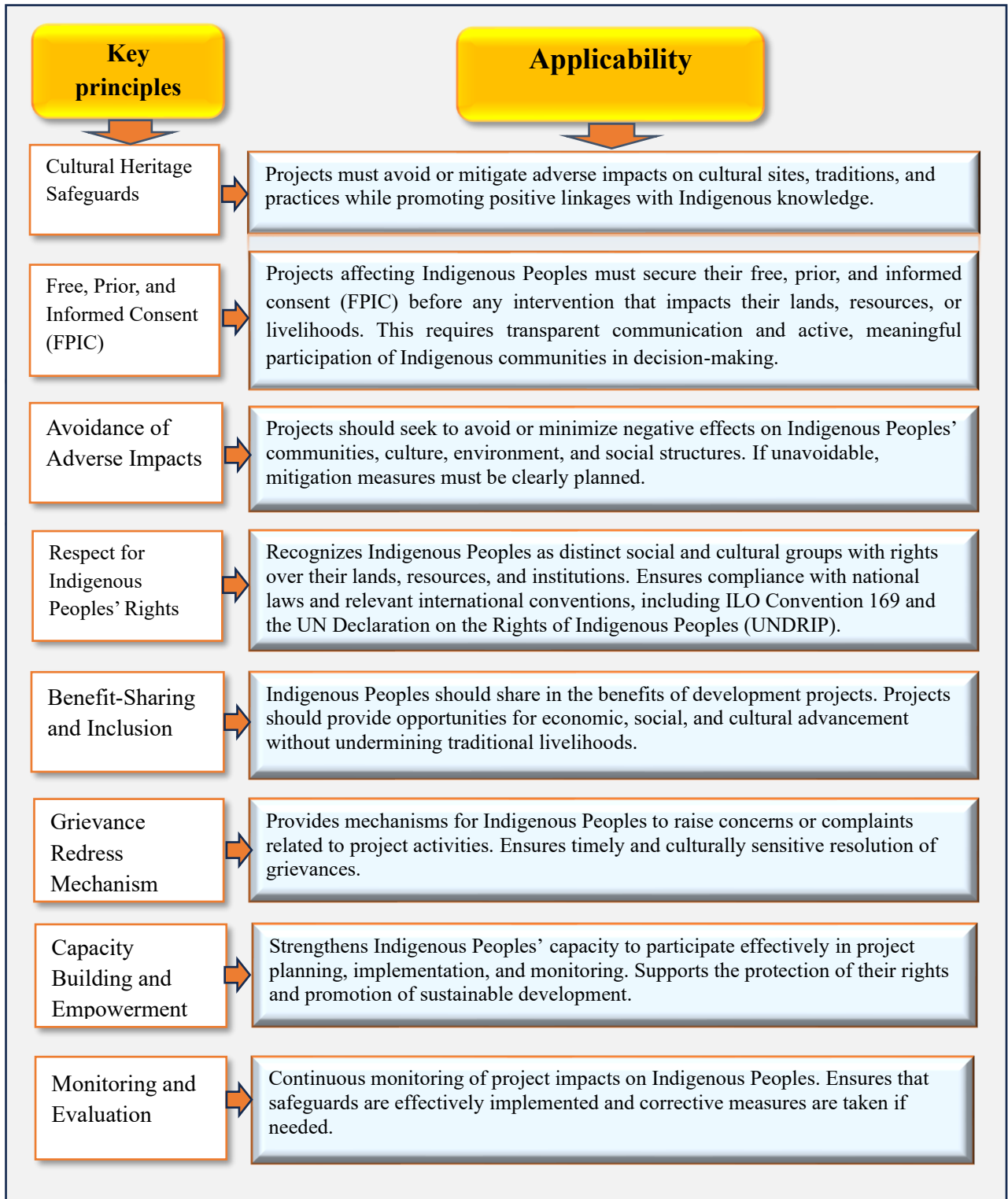
ILO Convention No. 169 – Sri Lanka is not a party, indicating the absence of binding international obligations specifically recognizing indigenous peoples' rights.

**10). Indigenous peoples in Sri Lanka and applicability “Environmental and Social Framework of World Bank.**

In line with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), Environmental and Social Standard 7 (ESS7), Indigenous Peoples in Sri Lanka require special consideration in development projects

to ensure that their rights, dignity, culture, and livelihoods are respected and protected. Key principles of IPF are illustrated in following Figure 1:

**Figure 1: Key principles of IPF**



Source: SDS-IRDCRP

## **II). Importance of Indigenous Peoples Framework for WB projects**

The Indigenous Peoples Framework (IPF) is an essential safeguard instruments in World Bank–funded projects in Sri Lanka because it ensures that Indigenous communities—particularly the Vedda (Vanniyaletto / Adivasi) people, who are the main recognized Indigenous group in the country—are respected, protected, and included in development processes. Its importance can be explained under several key points:

### **i Compliance with World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF)**

The World Bank requires borrowers to follow ESS7 (Environmental and Social Standard on Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities). An IPF ensures Sri Lanka’s projects align with these standards by guaranteeing recognition of Indigenous peoples’ rights, cultures, and livelihoods.

### **ii Protection of Indigenous Rights and Culture**

Indigenous groups in Sri Lanka maintain distinct cultural identities, languages, and traditional knowledge systems. The framework safeguards their land, resources, and heritage from being adversely impacted by development activities. It prevents marginalization and ensures cultural survival.

### **iii Inclusive and Equitable Development**

Without a framework, Indigenous peoples risk being excluded from project benefits. The IPF ensures that they participate in decision-making and share equally in project opportunities, particularly in areas like livelihood enhancement, social services, and climate change adaptation.

### **iv Avoiding Adverse Impacts**

Large-scale projects (e.g., irrigation, infrastructure, agriculture, or resettlement programs) can unintentionally displace Indigenous peoples or damage their access to forests, rivers, and land. The IPF includes measures to identify, mitigate, and monitor risks so that Indigenous peoples are not disproportionately harmed.

### **v Strengthening Traditional Knowledge for Sustainability**

Indigenous communities possess valuable traditional knowledge of natural resource management, climate resilience, and biodiversity conservation. Recognizing and incorporating this knowledge enhances the sustainability and effectiveness of World Bank projects in Sri Lanka.

### **vi Legal and Ethical Responsibility**

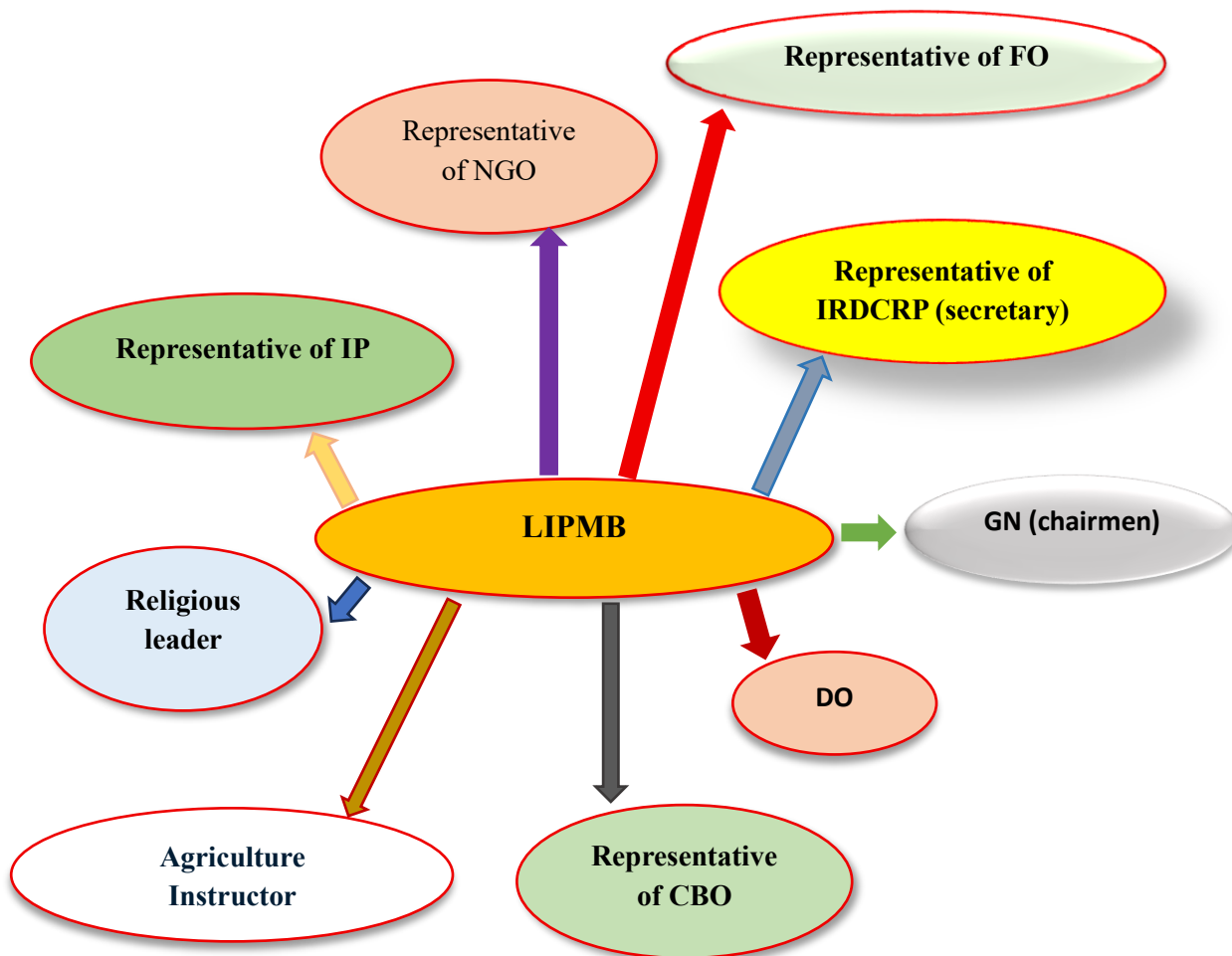
Sri Lanka has obligations under international human rights frameworks (e.g., UNDRIP, ILO 169 principles), even though not all are ratified. The IPF demonstrates commitment to ethical development and good governance, aligning with global standards.

## **I2). Institutional Arrangements and Capacity Building**

The Project Management Unit of IRDCRP shall establish “Local Indigenous Peoples Mediation Bodies” (hereafter called LIPMB) as an Indigenous Peoples Focal Point (IPFP) and a small IP team responsible for IP screening, SA oversight, IPP preparation, FPIC facilitation, and coordination with local authorities,

government offices, religious leaders, and civil society. In this manner, PMU shall collaborate with local NGOs, community-based organizations, and, where appropriate, IP institutions and leaders to form LIPMB. The following figure 2 illustrates the relevant officials and local representatives, which consist of the LIPMB.

**Figure 02: Local Indigenous Peoples Mediation Bodies (LIPMB)**



Budgetary allocations will be made by IRDCRP for community consultations, FPIC processes, capacity building, IPP implementation, and the M&E system in the subproject. Training programs will be provided by SDS-IRDCRP for project staff, local officials, and community leaders on IP rights, cultural sensitivity, FPIC, participatory methods, and conflict-sensitive engagement. SSDS-IRDCRP is responsible for disseminating relevant information when there is a need to be aware of IP before commencing development project activities in the indigenous settlement area. As per table 2, the project is dedicated to complying with ESF when applying relevant mitigation measures for the development sub-project of IRDCRP. As well, GRM and the social audit committee with GRC shall activate as needed. The Project Director of IRDCRP and relevant DPDs shall provide administrative cooperation to proceed with needed activities for the SDS.

**13). Table 02: Alignment of Legal Framework with ESS7 and Gap-Filling Measures**

<b>ESS7 Objective / Borrower Requirement</b>	<b>Alignment with Country Framework</b>	<b>Gaps and Issues</b>	<b>Gap-Filling Measures for IRDCRP</b>
1. Ensure the development process fosters full respect for affected persons’ human rights, dignity, aspirations, identity, culture, and natural resource-based livelihoods.	Fully supported – Veddas enjoy the same rights and privileges as other citizens under the Constitution; state support provided through declarations and MOUs when required.	Veddas not legally recognized as a distinct Indigenous group; no specific policy framework for their rights.	Adopt ESS7 principles recognizing Veddas as distinct groups for project purposes; maintain respect for cultural and livelihood practices through inclusive design and consultations.
2. Avoid adverse impacts of projects, or when avoidance is not possible, minimize, mitigate, and/or compensate for such impacts.	Partially supported – State provides resettlement and special assistance during large-scale development relocations.	Some historic relocations restricted traditional livelihoods; no permanent policy safeguards for Indigenous access or compensation.	Project will not cause resettlement or adverse impact. If future risks arise, mitigation will follow ESS7 and National Involuntary Resettlement Policy (NIRP).
3. Promote sustainable development benefits and opportunities in a manner that is accessible, culturally appropriate, and inclusive.	Fully supported – Equal access to development services (education, health, utilities, welfare).	None identified – development benefits accessible to Veddas.	Maintain inclusive benefit-sharing; ensure culturally appropriate delivery of livelihood support programs.
4. Improve project design and promote local support by establishing and maintaining ongoing meaningful consultation throughout the project cycle.	Partially supported – Externally funded projects ensure consultations; mixed implementation in national programs.	Inadequate consultation with Veddas in some instances; limited participation in decision-making.	Implement Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) with culturally sensitive approaches ensuring meaningful consultation and inclusive GRM for Veddha communities.
5. Obtain Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) of affected persons.	Partially supported – Externally funded projects comply when required.	No legal framework mandating FPIC for Veddas.	FPIC not triggered (no adverse impacts expected); meaningful engagement through SEP will be ensured.

<b>ESS7 Objective / Borrower Requirement</b>	<b>Alignment with Country Framework</b>	<b>Gaps and Issues</b>	<b>Gap-Filling Measures for IRDCRP</b>
6. Recognize, respect, and preserve culture, knowledge, and practices of Indigenous Peoples and provide opportunity to adapt to change.	Fully supported – State promotes education and welfare, including preservation of cultural identity.	Limited legal recognition of intangible cultural practices.	Integrate traditional knowledge into livelihood and environmental programs; document and protect cultural heritage with community participation.
7. Ensure Indigenous Peoples are fully consulted and have opportunities to participate in project design and implementation.	Partially supported – Practices adopted mainly in externally funded projects.	Consultation processes not institutionalized for all projects.	Strengthen implementation of SEP ensuring continuous engagement and feedback mechanisms with Veddha communities.
8. Assess direct and indirect economic, social, cultural, and environmental impacts on Indigenous Peoples.	Partially supported – Carried out only in donor-funded projects.	No national requirement for impact assessment specific to Indigenous Peoples.	Not applicable – no anticipated impacts. If risks emerge, site-specific IP screening and assessment will be conducted.
9. Develop measures and actions (e.g., IPP) in consultation with affected Indigenous Peoples.	Not supported – No Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) prepared unless required by donors.	Absence of IP-specific planning tools.	Include Veddha considerations in Operations Manuals for Cash Transfer and Livelihood Support Programs; prepare IP Plan if future impacts identified.
10. Design and implement projects to ensure equitable access to benefits.	Partially supported – Equality principle recognized; applied better in donor-funded projects.	Limited culturally adapted livelihood and benefit-sharing mechanisms.	Operations Manuals to specify culturally appropriate and equitable benefit access for Veddha communities.
11. Avoid adverse impacts on Indigenous Peoples where possible.	Partially supported – Avoidance applied in donor projects.	National framework lacks IP-specific safeguards.	Project avoids activities with adverse IP impacts; subprojects requiring resettlement or land acquisition excluded.

<b>ESS7 Objective / Borrower Requirement</b>	<b>Alignment with Country Framework</b>	<b>Gaps and Issues</b>	<b>Gap-Filling Measures for IRDCRP</b>
12. Identify mitigation measures and sustainable development opportunities jointly with Indigenous Peoples.	Partially supported – Occasional engagement in donor-funded initiatives.	Limited participatory planning for IP development.	Develop culturally sensitive livelihood activities; promote community-based sustainable resource use and IP participation in monitoring.

## I4). Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation

A participatory monitoring framework will be established with IP communities, using culturally appropriate indicators (e.g., community-defined wellbeing measures, control over resources, economic indicators disaggregated by gender and age). Regular internal monitoring reports will be prepared and made available to communities and stakeholders under assistant of M&E specialist. Independent third-party monitoring or periodic social audits may be commissioned to verify compliance with IP safeguards and the effectiveness of mitigation.

**Monitoring responsibility:** Environmental and Social Specialists together with the Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist of the two PMTs will be responsible for monitoring the implementation of this IPPF. The following monitoring framework in Table 2 provides a set of indicators that could guide the monitoring processes for IP communities to be included in the monitoring reporting requirements.

**Table 3: Monitoring requirements of IPPF**

Monitoring Indicators	Methods	Timeframe
Number of consultations conducted with IP community members	Review of reports on consultations by project and its partners	Bi-annually
Type of issues, concerns raised and discussed at consultative meetings	Review of screening reports on consultations	Quarterly
Number of IP community members and vulnerable groups engaged in project activities	Review of reports on consultations and progress reports	Quarterly Reporting
Type of information shared & disclosed to IPs, Accessibility to information and language used for communication	Review of communication methods used, observations and feedback interviews/surveys and consultations with IPs	Quarterly Reporting
Level of awareness among IP community members on project implementation procedures and potential impacts	Focus group discussions and individual interviews with a cross-section, feedback survey (annual)	Annually
Level of satisfaction among IPs on the consultative process and its outcomes	Feedback surveys, focus group discussions and individual interviews with a cross-section	Annually
Number of 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 IP community on the overall performance of GRM	Focus group discussions, feedback surveys and individual interviews with a cross-section of parties who reported grievances	Annually

### Reporting to Stakeholders:

Findings from stakeholder engagement activities, including monitoring and evaluation outcomes related to the implementation of the SEP, will be shared with stakeholders through the project website and/or official communications. For Indigenous Peoples (IP) communities, information will be disclosed and feedback provided in the local dialects commonly used by these groups.

### Reporting to the World Bank:

The Project Management Teams (PMTs) will compile all monitoring and evaluation findings and prepare bi-annual reports for submission to the World Bank. Monitoring and reporting on the Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF) will be integrated within the SEP monitoring process and included in the overall project progress reports submitted to the World Bank.

## I5). Potential Risks and Impacts on Indigenous Peoples and Mitigation Measures

### I5-I. Possible Social Risks:

- i Potential risks to Indigenous Peoples (IPs), particularly Veddha communities, are similar to those of other remote beneficiaries, as they are well-assimilated into mainstream society.

- ii **Key identified risks include:**

**Exclusion risks:** IPs who are vulnerable may be excluded from the scheme due to inaccuracies or gaps in data collection, verification, or eligibility formulas.

**Accessibility barriers:** IPs may face difficulties in accessing and submitting information, opening/operating bank accounts, and withdrawing cash benefits.

**Information and communication issues:** Possible exclusion of IP communities due to Lack of information dissemination to IPs; Information not being provided in local dialects understood by IPs; Limited access to mobile technology (e.g., to scan QR codes); Low awareness or understanding of available grievance and complaint mechanisms.

iii **Institutional capacity gaps:**

Limited capacity of project implementing agencies to mitigate social risks linked to Stakeholder/Citizen Engagement (CE/SE) and to effectively handle appeals or grievances.

iv **SEA/SH (Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Sexual Harassment) risks:**

Risks of abuse of authority by officials dealing with beneficiaries; Potential increase in domestic violence linked to household decision-making over project cash transfers; SEA/SH risk level rated “Moderate” as per World Bank’s SEA/SH Risk Rating Tool for Social Protection projects.

## I5-2. Mitigation Measures

- i **Inclusive communication and capacity building:** Finance culturally sensitive and appropriate communication, training, and monitoring & evaluation (M&E) activities; Strengthen Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) systems to ensure inclusivity of IP communities.
- ii **Meaningful engagement with IP communities:** Establish and maintain ongoing consultations with IP communities throughout the project cycle; Monitor progress in including historically excluded groups in the social registry through regular project reporting.
- iii **SEA/SH prevention measures:** Adopt and communicate a zero-tolerance policy on SEA/SH with clear consequences; Establish confidential reporting and response mechanisms managed by qualified service providers.
- iv **Systemic and institutional risk mitigation:** Address potential resistance from local-level officers concerned about losing authority under the new selection procedures; Overcome reluctance of officers to engage with remote IP communities through regular multi-stakeholder engagement platforms; Strengthen social accountability by facilitating dialogue and feedback from stakeholders.
- v **Engage NGOs/CSOs working closely with IP communities to:** Identify access barriers faced by IPs; Develop strategies to make the system more inclusive and responsive.

## I6). Procedures and process to follow to address risks and impacts to Indigenous Peoples

The IRDCRP activities will not cause any adverse impacts on Veddha communities that would require Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC). The requirement for meaningful engagement will be addressed through the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). The IRDCRP, which aims to provide livelihood support and enhance agricultural sustainability in selected areas across 25 districts, is unlikely to have any adverse impacts on Indigenous Peoples (IPs). In implementing the project interventions, the following major criteria will be considered:

- Adverse impacts on Land and Natural Resources subject to traditional ownership or under customary use or occupation;
- Do not relocate any IP community from their location with collective attachment;
- Do not have any significant impact on the cultural practice/heritage sites, ceremonial or spiritual aspects of affected IP communities.

Therefore, according to the above criteria, the project will not be required to conduct FPIC with Indigenous Peoples (IP) communities. However, if any project intervention may lead to adverse impacts on IPs, the project will adopt the following measures when engaging with IP communities, in line with the requirements of ESS7.

**I6-1. Adhering to the following basic principles-** To avoid or minimize adverse impacts and, at the same time, to ensure benefits for IPs, the following principles will be applied by the implementing agencies in selection and design of activities:

- i Ensure that IP communities in general and their organizations are not excluded by any means in activities related to selection, design and implementation processes.
- ii Together with IPs, carefully screen the activities for a preliminary understanding of the nature and magnitude of potential impacts, and explore alternatives to avoid or minimize any adverse impacts.
- iii Where alternatives are not feasible and adverse impacts on IPs are unavoidable, the projects together with IPs and others knowledgeable of IP culture and concerns, will immediately assess the key impact issues.

The project will undertake the necessary tasks in order to adopt appropriate mitigation measures. The most important in this respect is intensive consultation with the IP communities, community elders/leaders, and formal and informal IP organizations, civil society organizations like NGOs, and others who are interested in and have knowledge of IP issues.

**I6-2. Identifying IP Social Concerns:** Impacts on IPs will vary in terms of activities and their scope, presence and size of IP population in the locales, as well as the magnitude of potential adverse impacts and social risks. To the extent applicable for a particular activity, information on the cultural and socioeconomic characteristics and potential vulnerability will be used to identify the social concerns of IPs and adopt alternative mitigation measures. For example, the project will seek to increase the awareness of households of key issues such as gender-based violence, good health and nutrition practices, protecting members in case of natural disasters among others.

**I6-3. IP Consultation Strategy.** As required for informed consultation, concerned institutes will provide IPs with all activity-related information, including that on potential adverse impacts in a language familiar to and understandable by the IPs. To facilitate consultation the institution will:

- i Prepare a time-table for dialogues during activity selection, design and implementation processes, and consult them in manners so that they can express their views and preferences freely.
- ii In addition to the communities in general, consult IP organizations, community elders/leaders and others with adequate gender and generational representation; and civil society organizations like NGOs and groups knowledgeable of IP issues.
- iii Consultation will include the activity objectives and scope; the likely key adverse impacts on (and benefits for) IPs; IPs' own perception of the impacts and feedback; and a preliminary assessment of economic opportunities which the implementing agency could promote – in addition to mitigation of the adverse impacts.

Consultation will in general concentrate on the adverse impacts perceived by the IPs and the probable (and feasible) mitigation measures, as well as exploring additional development activities that could be promoted under the project. The institutes will keep Minutes of these consultation meetings in the activity files and make them available for inspection by the respective Government officials, the World Bank and other interested groups and persons.

#### **I6-4. Grievance Redress Mechanism for IP**

Grievances from the affected people including IPs on social and environmental issues during project implementation will be addressed mainly through the existing local administrative system. Depending on the nature and significance of the grievances or complaints, grievances will be addressed at three tier GRM. The first will be at the grass roots level where complaints will be directly received and addressed by the contractor, project representatives on site (regional social safeguard coordinators). Grievances which are simple but still cannot be addressed at the site level will be addressed at the level two (DS level). More complex grievances which cannot be addressed at the DS level will be addressed at the PMU level which is considered as level three. Minimum composition of GRCs at GN and DS levels are discussed below.

#### **Composition of GN level (site level GRC)**

No	Representatives	Nature of membership
1	Grama Niladhari of the subproject area	Chairman
2	Representative of IRDCRP/relevant implementing agency.	Secretary
3	Representative of contractor (site engineer/TO/Supervisor)	Member
4	Women representative of DS (DO or relevant officer) <sup>1</sup>	Member
5	Women representative of IP	Member
6	Representative of Religious leader/CBO/NGO	Member
7	Representative of relevant authority as needed (if required)	Member

<sup>1</sup> If the issue is gender-sensitive or involves gender-related matters, DS-level female officials should be invited as members on a need basis. This could be the women's development officer of DS. If there is no female WDO in the DS office, the DS can nominate a female officer to facilitate the GN-level GRC.

## Composition of DS level GRC

No	Representatives	Nature of membership
1	Divisional Secretary of the area	Chairman
2	Representative of IRDCRP/relevant implementing agency	Secretary
3	Grama Niladhari Member	Member
4	Women representative of DS (DO or relevant officer) <sup>2</sup>	Member
5	Women representative of IP	Member
6	Representative of Religious leader/CBO/NGO	Member
7	Representative of a social organization	Member

To ensure that the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) is gender-responsive, the Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) will include at least one female member to represent the interests of local women. Both male and female complainants will be treated equally when submitting grievances, and appropriate measures will be taken to resolve issues in the most effective manner.

Before civil works begin, public notices will be displayed at each subproject site to provide information about the GRM and relevant contact persons for lodging complaints. Additionally, suggestion, request, and complaint boxes will be placed at convenient locations within project areas. A register for recording such grievances will be maintained in the contractor's office by the designated officer, under the supervision of the SSDS-IRDCRP. All submissions, along with the corresponding actions taken, will be systematically documented in this register. The recommended and suggested modes of grievance receiving of Indigenous Peoples (IP) under the IRDCRP are the following (Local language and culturally appropriate facilitation should be ensured).

### Modes of Receiving Grievances from IP Communities

#### **i Verbal Complaints**

IP community members may report grievances orally during community meetings, consultations, or directly to Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) members, including the designated community representative.

#### **ii Written Complaints**

Complaints can be submitted through letters, forms, or petitions addressed to the GRC, project office, or local implementing agency (Assistance should be provided to IP complainants with limited literacy to record grievances).

#### **iii Complaint Boxes**

Secure complaint boxes placed at accessible public locations (e.g., village office, community center, project site office, DS or GN Office) for anonymous or written submissions.

#### **iv Telephone / Hotline**

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<sup>2</sup> Follow footnote 1.

A dedicated hotline number or mobile contact for grievance reporting. Should allow communication in local/indigenous languages.

**v Digital Submissions**

Complaints may be submitted via email, SMS, WhatsApp, or an official project website portal. Particularly useful for younger IP members with access to digital tools.

**vi Through Community Leaders / IPOs (Indigenous Peoples Organizations)**

IP leaders, elders, or IPO representatives may collect and forward grievances on behalf of community members (Ensures inclusion of vulnerable or marginalized groups).

**ii During Monitoring and Consultation Visits**

Project staff or social safeguard officers record grievances raised informally during site visits, focus group discussions, or community monitoring activities.

## **I6-5. Preparation of indigenous people's plan (IPP)**

The indigenous peoples plan shall be created by SDS of IRDCRP, Ministry of Agriculture, when required for subproject intervention at the indigenous peoples community residential areas. This is a compulsory manner on behalf of the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework at the time of touching the customary lands area of IP (ESS-7). Hence, prior to the implementation of subproject activities in IP areas, the IRDCRP should prepare an IPP according to the following outline.

### **I6-5-I. Outline of the IPP:**

This outline forms part of the safeguard requirements. An Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) must be prepared for any project that affects Indigenous Peoples (IP). The scope and depth of the IPP should correspond to the scale and nature of the potential impacts on IP. The key elements of this outline serve as a guide for developing IPPs, though they may not be followed in the exact sequence presented.

**i Executive Summary of the IPP**

This section concisely describes the critical facts, significant findings, and recommended actions.

**ii Description of the Project**

This part outlines the overall description of the project, explains its components and activities that could affect Indigenous Peoples (IP), and specifies the project area.

**iii Objectives of the IPP**

This section should illustrate major aims of the IPP

#### **iv Social Screening and Identification**

Conduct initial screening of project areas to determine the presence of Indigenous Peoples (e.g., Veddas in Sri Lanka). Verify whether the community meets the ESS7 criteria (distinct identity, collective attachment to territory, cultural traditions, social institutions).

#### **v Geographical and socio-economic information**

This section should be consistent with geographical and socio-economic information of a particular IP.

#### **vi Social Assessment**

(a) Examines the legal and institutional framework relevant to Indigenous Peoples within the project context, and presents baseline data on the demographic, social, cultural, and political features of the affected communities, along with details of their traditionally owned or customarily used lands, territories, and the natural resources they rely on.

(b) Determines the main project stakeholders and outlines a culturally sensitive and gender-responsive approach for meaningful consultations with Indigenous Peoples throughout all stages of project design and implementation, based on the review and baseline information.

(c) Evaluates, through meaningful consultations with the affected Indigenous Peoples (IP) communities, the possible positive and negative consequences of the project. A key aspect of this assessment is a gender-sensitive analysis that considers the relative vulnerabilities and risks faced by these communities due to their unique circumstances, strong dependence on land and natural resources, and their limited access to opportunities compared with other social groups at the local, regional, or national levels.

(d) Conducts a gender-sensitive review of how the affected IP communities perceive the project and its implications for their social, economic, and cultural well-being.

(e) Based on consultations with the IP communities, identifies and proposes necessary actions to prevent negative impacts. Where avoidance is not feasible, it outlines measures to reduce, mitigate, or compensate for such effects while ensuring that IPs gain culturally appropriate benefits from the project.

#### **vii Information Disclosure, Consultation and Participation**

Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC) is a process required by the World Bank when projects may affect Indigenous Peoples, especially regarding their lands, resources, or cultural heritage. FPIC ensures that affected communities have the opportunity to participate in decision-making about projects that may impact them, and that their agreement is sought before project activities begin.

- **Free:** The process is voluntary and free from coercion or manipulation.
- **Prior:** Consent is sought well in advance of project implementation, allowing time for Indigenous Peoples' own decision-making processes.

- **Informed:** Communities are provided with full, accessible, and culturally appropriate information about the project, its potential impacts, and alternatives.
- **Consent:** Refers to collective support for the project, reached through culturally appropriate processes. FPIC does not require unanimity; broad community support is sufficient, even if some individuals or groups disagree.

**FPIC is required in World Bank-financed projects when there are:**

- Adverse impacts on land and natural resources subject to traditional ownership or customary use.
- Relocation of Indigenous Peoples.
- Significant impacts on Indigenous Peoples' cultural heritage.

The process is documented and must involve representative bodies, provide sufficient time for decision-making, and ensure that Indigenous Peoples are fully informed and able to participate meaningfully. FPIC is about partnership and broad community support, not about granting veto power to any individual or group.

**FPIC Process:** The World Bank's FPIC process involves several key steps:

**Stakeholder Identification and Social Assessment:**

- Identify Indigenous Peoples and their representative bodies.
- Assess potential project impacts and risks.

**Information Dissemination:**

- Provide accurate, accessible, and culturally appropriate information about the project, its scope, and potential impacts.

**Consultation and Negotiation:**

- Engage in good faith, culturally appropriate consultations.
- Allow sufficient time for Indigenous Peoples' decision-making processes.
- Use consultation tools and methods that respect local customs and protocols.

**Agreement and Consent:**

- Document the mutually accepted process and evidence of agreement.
- Consent is established through negotiation and does not require unanimity.

**Implementation and Monitoring:**

- Implement agreements reached through FPIC.
- Monitor outcomes and maintain ongoing engagement with Indigenous Peoples

When complying with the Information Disclosure, Consultation and Participation fraction in the preparation of the IPF, the following significant factors should be commonly considered.

- (a) outlines how information was shared and the consultation and participation process with the affected Indigenous Peoples (IP) communities during project preparation.
- (b) presents a summary of feedback received on the social assessment, highlighting key concerns raised during consultations and explaining how these were incorporated into the project design;
- (c) for project components requiring broad community support, records the consultation process, its outcomes, and any agreements reached with the affected IP communities regarding project activities and safeguard measures to address potential impacts;
- (d) explains the consultation and participation mechanisms planned for the implementation stage to ensure active involvement of IP communities;
- (e) confirms that both the draft and final versions of the Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) have been disclosed to the affected IP communities.

#### **viii Beneficial Measures:**

This part outlines the measures designed to guarantee that Indigenous Peoples gain social and economic benefits that are both culturally sensitive and gender-responsive.

#### **ix Mitigation Measures**

This section outlines the strategies to prevent negative impacts on Indigenous Peoples (IPs); and, in situations where complete avoidance is not possible, it details the actions to reduce, mitigate, and provide compensation for the unavoidable adverse effects on each affected IP group.

#### **x Capacity Building**

This section outlines strategies to enhance the social, legal, and technical capacities of (a) government agencies to manage Indigenous Peoples (IP) issues within the project area, and (b) Indigenous Peoples' organizations (IPOs) in the project area to improve their ability to effectively advocate for the affected IP communities.

#### **xi Grievance Redress Mechanism**

This section outlines the mechanisms for addressing grievances raised by affected Indigenous Peoples (IP) communities, detailing how these mechanisms are both accessible to them and designed to be culturally appropriate and sensitive to gender considerations.

## **xii Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluation mechanism**

This section outlines the mechanisms and standards suitable for the project to monitor and evaluate the implementation of the IPP. It also details the procedures for involving the affected IP in preparing and validating the monitoring and evaluation reports.

Hence, during the initial stage of IPP preparation, Appendices I, 2, and 3 should be completed by the consultant selected by the IRDCRP, with responsibility assigned to the SDS.



16. Land ownership pattern of the area (e.g., Titleholders, Non-titleholders, Tenants, Share Croppers, Encroachers, Squatters., etc.) Please mention

.....  
 .  
 .....

17. What are the main sources of livelihoods in the area?

.....  
 .  
 .....

18. Are there existing settlements or social sensitive locations near the project area?

SN	Social Sensitive Locations	Distance from proposed subproject site (m)
1	Human settlements	
2	School	
3	Hospital	
4	Temple	
5	Church	
6	Kovil	
7	Public Gathering location (please specify.....)	
8	Other	

19. Will, there be any structures get affected by the proposed civil works? If yes please give a briefing (Type of structure, ownership, the severity of the damage, and whether the damage is permanent or temporary) .

.....  
 .....

..Are there any other development activities linked to the proposed sub project?

.....

20. Potential Impacts from the Sub-Project:

Potential Impacts		Yes	No	Not Known	Details
<b>Identification of IP</b>					
22	Are there socio-cultural groups present in or use the Project area who may be considered as "tribes" (hill tribes, schedules tribes, tribal peoples), "minorities" (ethnic or national minorities), or "indigenous communities" in the Project area?				
23	Do such groups self-identify as being part of a distinct social and cultural group?				

Potential Impacts		Yes	No	Not Known	Details
24	Do such groups maintain collective attachments to distinct habitats or ancestral territories and/or to the natural resources in these habitats and territories?				
24.	Do such groups maintain cultural, economic, social, and political institutions distinct from the dominant society and culture?				
25.	Do such groups speak a distinct language or dialect?				
26.	Have such groups been historically, socially and economically marginalized, disempowered, excluded, and/or discriminated against?				
27.	Are such groups represented as "Indigenous Peoples" or as "ethnic minorities" or "scheduled tribes" or "tribal populations" in any formal decision-making bodies at the national or local levels?				
<b>Identification of potential Impacts</b>					
28.	Will the project directly or indirectly benefit or target Indigenous Peoples?				
29.	Will the project directly or indirectly affect Indigenous Peoples' traditional socio-cultural and belief practices? (e.g., child-rearing, health, education, arts, and governance)				
30.	Will the Project be in an area (land or territory) occupied, owned, or used by Indigenous Peoples, and/or claimed as ancestral domain?				
<b>Identification of Special Attention</b>					
31.	Physical displacement from traditional or customary lands?				
32.	acquisition of lands that are traditionally owned or customarily used, occupied or claimed by Indigenous Peoples?				
33.	Will there be any permanent or temporary loss of income as a result of the civil works? If so for what period?				
34.	Will there be labour Influx Related Impacts				



**Appendix 2: Consultation Note of Social screening**

<b>Consultation Note</b>	
1. Date: 2. Whenua: 3. Name of subproject: 4. Location of consultations: 5. Details of Participants: i Male: ii Female: iii Total:	
Community Feedback	Project Responses / Decision taken (Negotiated)

**Prepared by:** .....

**Date:**.....


### Appendix 3: Attendance sheets of consultation

#### Structure of attendance sheets for IP consultation

- Subproject name:
- Authorized institution (ID/DAD etc.):
- Date:
- Whenua:

No	Name	Designation	Institution	GND	Gender		Contact details		Signature
					Male	Female	Address	Contact number	

Prepared by:

Name	Designation	Date	Signature
M.R.Sisira Kumara	Senior Social Development Specialist-IRDCRP	August 25, 2025	

Approved by:

Name	Designation	Date	Signature
R.H.W.A.Kumarasisri	Project Director-IRDCRP	December 03, 2025	