

Preliminary Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)
COVID-19 SCHOOL SECTOR RESPONSE PROJECT (GPE)

Appraisal Stage

1 July 2020

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1. Introduction/Project Description:

The outbreak of the Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) is spreading fast across the world since December 2019. As of May 13, 2020, worldwide surveillance by the World Health Organization (WHO) reports that 4.17 million people have been infected in 215 countries and territories leading to a total of 287,400 deaths. Based on the scale of transmission, WHO declared the virus a global pandemic, with a call on countries to take proactive measures to prevent and/or respond to further outbreak. In Nepal, the first case of COVID-19 was detected on January 24, 2020. As of May 13, 2020, there has been 243 confirmed cases of COVID-19 in Nepal and 60,319 RDT tests have been administered. GoN has imposed a nationwide lockdown since March 23, 2020 to reduce the spread of COVID-19 diseases. The current nationwide lockdown that the Government announced on May 6 will end on June 14, 2020. Other restrictions such as suspension of international flights and temporary closure of non-essential business activities have also been put in place. A High-Level Coordination Committee on COVID-19 Prevention and Control has been established under the Chairmanship of the Deputy Prime Minister and Minister of Defense. The Committee meets regularly to appraise and address multi-sectoral coordination and issues related to major decisions affecting the operations of the Government, economy and social distancing measures. In responding to impacts of the pandemic on education sector, the GoN has requested funding from IDA to implement the COVID-19 School Sector Reform Project.

The **Program Development Objective (PDO)** of SSDP is to improve the quality, equitable access and efficiency of basic and secondary education in Nepal by supporting the Government's School Sector Development Program. The proposed AF will add a new component to the SSDP using the IPF modality to support with the objective to preserve the achievements made under SSDP, including maintaining access to basic education in grant-supported local governments and build resilience for continued learning. The AF component will contribute to the implementation of MOEST's Education Cluster COVID 19 Contingency Plan (ECCCP), to support continuation of learning for approximately 6.5 million children in basic education in Nepal. The AF is designed to support the schools in restoring teaching learning environments and will be implemented in all seven provinces and all regions of the country covering hills, mountains and terai. At local level, the Project will reach all 753 rural and urban municipalities which are represented by Municipal Level Education Units /Local Government Bodies. For select but most disadvantaged local governments (100-125 LGs) in regions that have been impacted by CoVID-19. The AF will provide support through schools grants to ensure safe re-opening of schools and continued learning.

The Project has three components which are as follows to support the education system by the adverse impact of COVID- 19:

Component 1: Remote learning methods for continued learning of all children, including children with disabilities (CwD) and children from marginalized background (US\$.99 million): This component will finance activities to ensure continuity of learning for all children; communication campaign and sharing of information; and continued professional development of teachers.

- (i) **Mitigate learning loss through inclusive distance learning programs for all children:** On April 28, 2020, MOEST/ CEHRD launched a learning portal which includes digital content for Grade 1-12. The content is categorized as per grade and subject for easy user accessibility. The project will support development of additional disability inclusive content for basic education, including content for early childhood education. Disability inclusion in remote learning content will specifically include captioning, interpretation,

use of images and examples that are inclusive and do not stigmatize. These contents could be made available on the learning portal and broadcasted through TV, radio and print-media. Digital content developed will also factor the needs of the CwD. The availability of these contents will be advertised locally through communication campaigns nationwide through newspapers, TV, social media, mobile messaging. The communication campaign will also include (i) messages on the importance of education with special focus on girls and CwD; (ii) messages endorsed by the Ministry of Health and Population on disease prevention and good hand washing practices; (iii) sensitization campaign to prevent gender based violence (GBV), teenage pregnancy, and consequent dropping out from school resulting from stay at home orders in the current pandemic. (iv) schedule of TV and radio programs. The Project will also seek arrangements and/ or finance zero bandwidth access to learning portal in partnership with telecom companies and internet providers.

- (ii) **Development and updating of learning packs for children from marginalized background** with no access to media or internet: As presented in Table 1, many households in Nepal do not have access to media and/or internet. The project will support development and updating of learning materials, including for CwD.
- (iii) **Strengthening Education Management Information System (EMIS)**: The EMIS is the main administrative database system capturing information related to schools, students, and teachers. The data and reports generated by the EMIS are used for the annual and trimester progress reporting of school education. Currently, there is ongoing support provided by donors (USAID, EU and ADB) to include disability module, and strengthen and enhance the web-based EMIS. The Project will fill the financing gap and support enhancement of EMIS to capture data for project-related indicators..

Component 2 Support to sub-national level to support safe re-opening and continued learning(US\$ 9.26 million). This component will support three subcomponents.

- (i) **Sub-component 2.1: Printing and distribution of learning packs to children from marginalized background** with no access to media or internet: The project will support printing and distribution of learning packs to children from marginalized backgrounds, including for CwD. The printing and distribution of the materials will be carried out at the sub-national level by the provincial/ local government or other agencies/ INGOs/ CSOs. The most effective and efficient medium for printing and distribution of these materials/ packs will be adopted. The Project Implementation Manual will provide details on the modality that will be adopted for this activity.
- (ii) **Sub-component 2.2: Continued Professional Development of Teachers and Head-teachers**: The development of teacher training courses on remote teaching strategies is being supported by UNICEF. The project will (i) fill the financing gap in the contingency plan; and (ii) finance the design and delivery of teacher/ head-teacher professional development opportunities to address students' learning gaps post CoVID 19. These trainings will be practical and short-term delivered through distance learning strategies/ platforms as well as face-to-face upon reopening of schools, following the required protocols. It will focus on conducting formative assessment to assess learning loss; remedial instruction and digital skills. The implementation of training will be carried out by teacher training centers at the provincial level. Other agencies, including INGOs/ CSOs may also be sub-contracted for the delivery of these short-term training. The details will be provided in the Project Implementation Manual.

- (iii) **Sub-component 2.3 Schools grants to schools from selected local governments:** The project will support most disadvantaged local governments (100 to 125) in regions that have been impacted by CoVID-19 through schools grants to ensure safe re-opening of schools and learning¹. Selected LGs will be required to develop a response plan for the implementation of project activities, including a timeline, physical and financial reporting mechanism. Following are the list of activities to be supported through this grant:
- a. **Welcome to School campaigns:** This involves educating parents, caregivers and communities on disease prevention for safe and sustained re-opening of schools, and motivating students to return to school. This will specifically target CwD and adolescent girls who are the most vulnerable to effects of pandemic in terms of their return to school.
 - b. **School sanitation & health protocols,** including health screening: The project will support implementation of school reopening framework at the school-level. The project will support (i) sanitization of schools before reopening, especially schools that have been used as quarantine facilities; (ii) availability of hygiene products, including menstrual hygiene products; (iii) minor refurbishment of WASH facilities (including ensuring availability of water) with a focus on ensuring accessibility for girls and CwD; (iii) safety protocols for school re-opening; (iv) implementation of staggered shifts and alternating weeks to reduce student contact; and (v) psycho-social support for students, parents and teachers at the school level.
 - c. Teaching at the right level, including conducting formative assessments in classrooms when schools reopen to estimate the learning gaps and providing additional support to children falling back, including remedial instruction.
- (iv) **Sub-component 2.4: Grants to schools with resource classrooms and special schools²:** The AF will support special schools and schools with resource classrooms that cater to the education of CwD. Activities under this sub-component will be similar to sub-component 2.3 with a focus on CwD. Selected schools will be required to develop a response plan for the implementation of project activities, including a timeline, physical and financial reporting mechanism.

Component 3 Management, and Monitoring and Evaluation (US\$ 0.591 million): The component will support (ii) analytical work, including evaluation of the remote learning practices with the objective to inform future interventions and expansion; (iii) development and dissemination of school reopening framework and creation of national guidelines and strategies that will enable continued learning of students; (iii) building capacity and coordination among the provinces and LGs to equip them to respond to the effects of COVID-19 and potential further disruptions; (iv) project management, monitoring and evaluation.

Some of the impacts from the proposed activities are as follows: use, storage and disposal of disinfectants, wastewater, storage of construction materials, disposal of solid waste including hygiene and sanitation materials are anticipated from the implementation of component 2 which will support minor refurbishment of WASH facilities (including ensuring availability of water) with a focus on ensuring accessibility for girls and Children with Disabilities (CwD). Likewise, the social risks

¹ LG selection criteria will be detailed in the Project Implementation Manual.

² Schools with resource classrooms and special schools selected under component 2.3 will be excluded to avoid duplication

associated with implementation of components 1, 2 and 3 are risks of exclusion of vulnerable children, high dropouts of children from displaced families, lack of capacity of schools and teachers for outreach, and reduced learning capacity due to digital distance learning and etc.

2. Stakeholder identification and analysis

Project stakeholders are defined as individuals, groups or other entities who:

- Are impacted or likely to be impacted directly or indirectly, positively or adversely, by the project (also known as 'Affected Parties'); and
- May have an interest in the Project ('Interested Parties'). They include individuals or vulnerable groups who may be affected by the Project and who have the potential to influence the Project outcomes in any way.

The Project will place due emphasis on regular consultations and communications with all stakeholders throughout project development and implementation. This will require identification of right persons or groups who may serve as legitimate and capable representatives of their respective stakeholder group, i.e. the individuals who have been entrusted by their fellow group members in advocating the groups' interests in the process of engagement with the Project. In Nepal, elected local representatives of Rural Municipalities and Municipalities, school management committees, school teachers and community leaders, students, can provide helpful insights into the local settings and may act as main conduits for dissemination of the Project-related information and as a primary communication/liaison link between the Project and targeted communities and their established networks. Verification of stakeholder representatives, which involves the process of confirming that they are legitimate and genuine advocates of the community they represent, remains an important task in establishing contact with the community stakeholders. Legitimacy of the community representatives may be verified through an informal survey of community members or opinion leaders, heeding their views on who can be representing their interests in the most effective way.

2.1 Methodology

In order to meet best practice approaches, the Project will apply the following principles for meaningful engagement of the stakeholders:

- **Openness and life-cycle approach:** Stakeholder engagement, public consultations and disclosure of project-related information will be conducted throughout the project lifecycle in a transparent manner, free of external manipulation, interference, coercion or intimidation;
- **Informed participation and feedback:** Information will be provided to and widely distributed among all stakeholders in an appropriate format. Opportunities will be provided to stakeholders for their feedback and comments on information related to the project, and arrangements will be made to addressing appropriate comments and concerns;
- **Inclusiveness and sensitivity:** Stakeholder identification is undertaken to support better communications and build effective relationships. The participation process for the projects is inclusive. All stakeholders are encouraged to be involved in the consultation process. Equal access to information is provided to all stakeholders. Sensitivity to stakeholders' needs is the key principle underlying the selection of engagement methods. Special attention is given to indigenous people, vulnerable groups specially children/students of both gender, women, Dalits, and the elderly, and to the cultural sensitivities of diverse ethnic and caste groups.

For the purposes of effective and tailored engagement, stakeholders of the proposed project(s) can be divided into the following core categories:

- **Affected Parties:** Individuals, groups and other entities within the project Area of Influence (PAI) that are directly influenced (actually or potentially) by the project and/or have been identified as most susceptible to the change associated with the project, and who need to be closely engaged in identifying impacts and their significance, as well as in decision-making on mitigation and management measures;
- **Other Interested Parties:** Individuals/groups/entities that may not experience direct impacts from the project but who consider or perceive their interests as being affected by the project and/or who could affect the project and the process of its implementation in some way; and
- **Vulnerable Groups:** Persons who may be disproportionately impacted or further disadvantaged by the project(s) as compared with any other groups due to their vulnerable status, and that may require special engagement efforts to ensure their equal representation in the consultation and decision-making process associated with the project.

2.2. Affected parties

Affected Parties include local communities, community members and other parties that may be subject to direct impacts from the project. Specifically, the following individuals and groups fall within this category:

- Individuals and households, primarily the children of school going age who will be directly affected by project activities
- Government agencies and other organization which will be directly involved in designing, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the project
- Students, teachers and school staffs who can face temporary restriction on their normal activities due to project related activities
- Firms or individuals directly involved in providing services to various component of the project

2.3. Other interested parties

The project stakeholders also include parties other than the directly affected communities, including:

- Officials of government agencies directly or indirectly linked with the project at federal, provincial and local level, e.g. the Ministry of Education, Science and Technology;
- Elected representatives of Rural Municipality and Municipality, and local politicians;
- Non-Government Organizations (NGOs)/INGOs
- Other national and international organizations involved in education sector in Nepal;
- Businesses and service providers in education sector;
- National and local media;
- Security agencies;
- Interest groups such as National Federation of Indigenous Nationalities (NEFIN) and National Women Commission;
- Suppliers, contractors and contractors' workforce; and,
- General public.

2.4. Disadvantaged/vulnerable individuals or groups

It is particularly important to understand whether project impacts may disproportionately fall on disadvantaged or vulnerable individuals or groups, who often do not have a voice to express their concerns or understand the impacts or benefits of a project. The vulnerability may stem from person's origin, gender, age, education level, health condition, economic deficiency and financial insecurity, disadvantaged status in the community, such as minorities or fringe groups, dependence on other individuals or natural resources, among others. So, the proposed stakeholder engagement

activities focused toward disadvantaged/vulnerable individuals or groups aims to understand specific concerns and cultural or religious sensitivities and ensure a full understanding of project activities and benefits. Engagement with the vulnerable groups and individuals often requires the application of specific measures and assistance aimed at the facilitation of their participation in the project-related decision-making so that their awareness of and input to the overall process are commensurate to those of the other stakeholders.

Within the project, the vulnerable or disadvantaged groups may include, however, not limited to the following individuals or groups:

- The children/students of both genders
- Individuals with chronic diseases and pre-existing medical conditions;
- Indigenous peoples including children/students from that community;
- female-headed households
- Dalits, particularly the children/students from that community
- Children with disabilities;
- LGBTI people;
- Minority religious groups, e.g. Muslims;
- Poor households;
- Communities in remote and inaccessible area; and,
- Disaster-affected populations.

Vulnerable groups within the communities affected by the project will be further confirmed and consulted through dedicated means, as appropriate. The methods of engagement that will be undertaken by the project are described in the following sections.

3. Stakeholder Engagement Program

Given the emergency nature of this operation and the transmission dynamics of COVID-19, consultations during the project preparation phase were limited to relevant government officials and educational experts and institutions working in education sector. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan as well as the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) to be developed under the project will be publicly shared and disclosed. The project ensures adequate resources to implement the actions that are included in the Plan. Detailed activities under these actions will be developed further as part of the updated SEP. The planned activities under the action plan will be commenced at earlier possible date of project effectiveness, which is expected to take place within 30 days after the project negotiation date. The SEP will be continuously updated throughout the project implementation period, as required.

3.1. Summary of stakeholder engagement done during project preparation

- During project preparation, consultation meetings were conducted at the centre in Kathmandu Valley. These consultations involved formal and informal meetings with the government officials of the Ministry and Department and education experts from various local education development partner institutions and the discussions centered around the global COVID-19 situation and the ongoing response by the GoN, potential risks and impacts; both immediate and long term impact of the pandemic on public school education system including all possible options available with the Government to respond the risks and impacts, support from non-government stakeholders, Feedback received during consultations were useful for the Federal government in taking measures to minimize learning loss by introducing remote learning methods, such as distance learning through TV, radio, SMS, internet and printed materials. Concerns were shown for rapid training of teachers and students on digital skills and development of different remedial measures to mitigate learning losses. Similarly, the Federal government was also advised to launch targeted communication campaigns to prevent potential dropouts, particularly among girls and disadvantaged students who are at

higher risks for drop out from schools due to COVID-19 crisis. Suggestions were also provided to support re-enrollment campaigns and offer various incentives, such as extending support to school feeding programs introducing the provision of school uniforms and distribution of books and supporting equipment to schools or payment of school fees. There were also concerns that LGs need to be resourced with adequate information to support stakeholder engagement activities. Moreover, there were suggestions to develop guidelines for WASH facilities and support infection prevention by developing guidelines and providing training local governments. The list of participants/officials from the government ministries and institutions, and those from Local Education Development Partners Group were consulted during the project preparation is attached in the Annex.

3.2. Summary of project stakeholder needs and methods, tools and techniques for stakeholder engagement

The stakeholder engagement strategy for the project will be guided by the WHO Risks Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) Protocol; the World Bank's ESS 10; and Nepal's Education Policy 2019. The SEP is a living document and will be continuously updated as the project evolves to account for emerging needs of stakeholders. Specific targeted approaches will be applied to ensure that the vulnerable and marginalized groups have meaningful participation in the decision making and implementation of the activities.

Rapid perception and/or key informant survey and focused group meetings/discussions, however in small number limiting the gatherings not more than five persons at a time, will be conducted to understand changing perceptions and concerns, influencers and preferred communication channels of key target audiences/stakeholders and high risk groups in addressing the Covid-19 induced issues and impacts on education. The Project's Environmental and Social specialists will take lead role to conduct the surveys with the primary stakeholders, mainly the students, teachers and parents, particularly from the vulnerable groups like women, indigenous people, Dalits and ethnic minorities. The team will visit selected schools and communities for survey, identify difficulties and needs of students on distance learning measures and learning packs designed for students from marginalized groups with no access to media and internet facilities. The feedback from the survey will then be communicated to the management along with the recommended measures to improve the teaching and learning environment.

3.3. Proposed strategy for information disclosure

All relevant information on Covid-19 response plan including Project's ESMF, SEP, GRM etc will be disclosed and made accessible to all stakeholders. The information will be disclosed through all possible means ranging from consultations to hard copies and electronic media so that these are accessible to all beneficiaries, including those in remote areas.

Project stage	Target stakeholders	List of information to be disclosed	Methods and timing proposed
Preparation	Government representatives (Federal, provincial and local)	Project concept (COVID response plan and guidelines), E&S principles and obligations, Consultation process/SEP, ESMF, ESCP, GRM	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> One-on-one meetings, orientation program Consultation meetings, electronic publications Information leaflets and brochures Appropriate adjustments to be made to take into account the need for social distancing (use of audio-visual materials, technologies such as telephone calls, SMS, emails, etc.)

		procedure, project information	
	School management, teachers/students and parents NGOs Media representatives	Project concept, E&S principles and obligations, Consultation process/SEP, ESMF, GRM procedures	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus group meetings, orientation program • Information boards, project websites, project leaflets and brochures; <p>Appropriate adjustments to be made to take into account the need for social distancing (use of audio-visual materials, technologies such as telephone calls, SMS, emails, etc.)</p>
	Affected people/communities Neighboring communities Children/students of both gender Students/parents from Vulnerable and Indigenous peoples	Project concept, E&S procedures, Consultation process/ SEP, Standardized health messages and information, ESMF, SEP, GRM procedures,	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public notices, press releases in the local media and on the project website, • Information leaflets and brochures at schools and RMs and municipalities • Airing of messages through educational programs through community radio, emails, text messages • Separate focus group meetings with IPs and vulnerable groups <p>Appropriate adjustments to be made to take into account the need for social distancing (use of audio-visual materials, technologies such as telephone calls, SMS, emails, etc.)</p>
Implementation	Government representatives (Federal, provincial and local)	Scope of project and activities, regular updates on project development ESMF, SEP and GRM procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project Update Reports, Emails, Meetings, Radio and prints • Electronic publications as well as dissemination of hard copies
	Affected individuals and their families neighboring communities Students/parents from Vulnerable and Indigenous peoples	Scope of project and specific activities, regular updates on project development ESMF, SEP and GRM procedures.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public notices, press releases in the local media and on the project website • Information leaflets and brochures at schools and RMs and municipalities • Airing of messages through educational programs through community radio, emails, text messages • Information desk at local government offices.

3.4. Stakeholder Engagement Plan

Project stage	Topic of consultation / message	Method used	Target stakeholders	Responsibilities
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need of the project • Planned activities • Access, equity and quality • E&S principles, risks and impact management/ESMF • Grievance Redress mechanisms (GRM) • Health and safety impacts including Covid-19 • GBV risks and impacts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Orientation Program/ Training • Phone, email, letters • One-on-one meetings • FGDs • Outreach activities <p>Appropriate adjustments to be made to take into account the need for social distancing (use of audio-visual materials, technologies such as telephone calls, SMS, emails, TV, Radio etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government officials from relevant line agencies at federal/ provincial /local level • Selected Rural Municipalities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment and Social Specialist • Project Coordination Unit of Center for Education and Human Resource Development (CEHRD)
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need of the project • Planned activities • E&S principles, risks and impact management/ESMF • Grievance Redress mechanisms (GRM) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach activities that are culturally appropriate <p>Appropriate adjustments to be made to take into account the need for social distancing (use of audio-visual materials, technologies such as telephone calls, SMS, emails, TV, Radio etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affected individuals (students and teachers) • Local communities • Vulnerable groups • Indigenous peoples 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment and Social Specialist • Project Coordination Unit of Center for Education and Human Resource Development)
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project scope and ongoing activities • ESMF and other instruments • SEP • GRM • Health and safety • GBV Risk Mitigation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and workshops • Disclosure of information through Brochures, flyers, website, etc. • Information desks/centres at municipality/local government offices <p>Appropriate adjustments to</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government officials from relevant line agencies at central/provincial and local level • Educational institutions/schools • Teachers, students, mainly from vulnerable groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment and Social Specialist • Project Coordination Unit of Center for Education and Human Resource Development)

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • E&S concerns • Issues related to access, equity and quality 	<p>be made to take into account the need for social distancing (use of audio-visual materials, technologies such as telephone calls, SMS, emails, TV, Radio etc.)</p> <p>The existing GRM will be strengthened to collect feedback from beneficiaries and stakeholders through different means.</p> <p>GBV Risk Mitigation Action Plan will be developed</p>	<p>and experts</p>	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project scope and ongoing activities • ESMF and other instruments • SEP • GRM • Health and safety • GBV • Environmental concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public meetings in affected municipalities/villages • Brochures, posters • Information desks in local government offices <p>Appropriate adjustments to be made to take into account the need for social distancing (use of audio-visual materials, technologies such as telephone calls, SMS, emails, radio, tv etc.)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affected individuals (students and teachers) • Local communities • Students from Vulnerable groups • Students from Indigenous groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Environment and Social Specialist • Project Coordination Unit of Center for Education and Human Resource Development)

3.5 Future of the project

Stakeholders will be kept informed as the project develops, including reporting on project environmental and social performance and implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and grievance mechanism.

4. Resources and Responsibilities for implementing stakeholder engagement activities

4.1. Resources

An E&S Safeguard Specialist based in Project Coordination Unit (PCU) of the Center of Education and Human Resources Development (CEHRD) will be in charge of the implementation of the SEP and related stakeholder engagement activities. The Director General of the CEHRD will exercise oversight over the implementation of engagement activities and ensure that budget and logistical resources are available to support the Plan's implementation. The budget allocated for SEP is approximately USD 75,000 and is included in component 2 of the project document.

4.2. Management functions and responsibilities

The project implementation arrangements are as follows:

- The MoEST, mainly the PCU at CEHRD will be the lead agency responsible for the implementation of components 1 and 2. The Project Coordinator at Project Coordination Unit (PCU) under the CEHRD will oversee the project activities.
- The provincial/LGs will be responsible for the implementation of Component 2. A Project Implementation manual (with procurement section) will be developed to support the implementation of SEP activities.
- The PCU at CEHRD will appoint an Environment and Social (E&S) safeguard specialist at the centre who will be responsible for the implementation of SEP for components 1 and 2. Each LG at project implementation level will appoint a focal point person who be responsible for implementing the SEP at LG level;
- Each LG focal point person will work closely with CEHRD and LGs, seeking guidance as necessary and providing regular updates;
- CEHRD under the MoEST, will have the overall responsibility for oversight of the proposed project;
- The PCU under CEHRD will have a qualified procurement staff/ consultant to coordinate the procurement related activities. All procurement for project works will be carried out in accordance with the World Bank's Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers for Goods, Works, Non-Consulting and Consulting Services, dated July 1, 2016 (revised in November 2017 and August 2018); and,
- LGs will follow GON procurement guidelines as per the Public Procurement Act/Public Procurement Regulation.

The stakeholder engagement and consultation activities will be documented in the form of reports, minutes, and audio-visual means.

5. Grievance Mechanism

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

- Provide affected people with avenues for making complaints or resolving any dispute that may arise during the course of the preparation and implementation of project;
- Ensure that appropriate and mutually acceptable redress actions are identified and implemented to the satisfaction of complainants;
- Avoids the need to resort to judicial proceedings (at least at first); and,
- In the case of indigenous people, adopt culturally appropriate and accessible means by which IPs can lodge complaints for redress, taking into account their customary dispute settlement mechanisms.

5.1. Description of GRM

The implementation of Project's GRM will be guided by the Grievance Redress Procedure (GRP) 2074 BS developed by CEHRD/MoEST. The Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs) formed at different levels will fully handle the grievances as specified by CEHRD's procedure.

The GRP 2074 has the provision of a Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) which is formed in every school comprising of SMC member, school principal/teacher, member of Parent Teacher Association (PTA), member of children club and other members as relevant. All the grievances at school level will be recorded, reviewed and addressed by this committee at the first point of registration. In view of important role of local governments in basic education, the judicial committee led by deputy mayor or deputy chairperson as per the article 217 of constitution will be considered a second tier GRC at local government level. The Education Officer at local education unit will work as an important member of the committee while addressing education related grievances. Similarly, there will be a GRC at PCU which will work under the guidance of CEHRD. All grievances not resolved by the GRCs will be forwarded to successively higher levels.

The project will publicize GRM on a regular basis. The project will consider the cultural characteristics and accessibility factors while publicizing the GRM in the project area.

The GRM will include the following steps:

- Receive and register all grievances communicated/submitted verbally or in writing through telephone hotlines/toll free numbers, SMS, project staffs etc involved in handling grievances or other staffs that have direct contact with affected communities and if necessary, anonymously.
 - Collecting grievances and acknowledge it within 24 hours
 - The project will track grievances throughout the processing cycle to reflect their status and other important details.
- Review and investigate grievances:
 - Complaints categorized and documented depending on the nature and complexity.
 - Focal person validates the complaints and arrange for investigation by concerned units or departments within 2 days.
- Develop resolution options commensurate with the nature of grievances within 7 days
- Respond to grievances: E&S Safeguard Specialist/Focal person communicates to the complainant advising of findings and the outcome within 24 hours. If the grievance remains open, complainant will be given opportunity to appeal to the MOEST.

Once all possible redress mechanism is applied and if the complainant is still not satisfied then they should be advised of their right to legal recourse. The existing GRM will also be used for addressing GBV-related issues and will have in place mechanisms for confidential reporting with safe and ethical documenting of GBV issues. Further, the GRM will also have in place processes to immediately notify both the MOEST/CEHRD and the World Bank of any GBV complaints, with the consent of the survivor.

The updated version of the SEP will focus on typology of complaints and complainants to provide more efficient management. Detail contact information and GRM procedures will be provided in the updated SEP, which will be finalized within 30 days following the project negotiation date.

6. Monitoring and Reporting

The SEP will be periodically revised and updated as necessary in the course of project preparation and implementation phases in order to ensure that the information presented herein is consistent and is the most recent, and that the methods of engagement remain appropriate and effective in relation to the project context and specific phases of the development. Any major changes to the project related activities and to its schedule will be duly reflected in the updated SEP. Monthly summaries and internal reports on public grievances, enquiries and related incidents, together with the status of implementation of associated corrective/preventative actions will be collated by the Focal Point Person/E&S Safeguard Specialist and referred to the Project Coordinator of the PCU. The monthly summaries will provide a mechanism for assessing both the number and the nature of complaints and requests for information, along with the project's ability to address those in a timely and effective manner. Information on public engagement activities undertaken by the project during the year may be conveyed to the stakeholders in two possible ways:

- Publication of half-yearly report on project's interaction with the stakeholders.
- Monitoring of a beneficiary feedback indicator on a regular basis. The indicator will be determined in the updated SEP and may include:
 - Number of consultations, including by using modern means of communications carried out within a reporting period (e.g. monthly, half-yearly, or annually);
 - Number of public grievances received within a reporting period (e.g. monthly, half-yearly, or annually); and,
 - Number of those resolved within the prescribed timeline; number of press materials published/ broadcasted in the local, regional and national media.

Annex

Government officials consulted

MOEST	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mr. Krishna Kapri, Joint Secretary- Mr. Deepak Sharma, Joint Secretary- Mr. Baikuntha Aryal, Joint Secretary- Mr. Jaya Prasad Acharya, Undersecretary- Dr. Bhojraj Kafle, Undersecretary- Mr. Yadav Acharya, Section Officer
MOF	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mr. Lal Bahadur Khatri, Undersecretary
CEHRD	<ul style="list-style-type: none">- Mr. Imanarayan Shrestha (DDG)- Mr. Ana Prasad Neupane (DDG)- Mr. Ghanashyam Aryal (Director, Planning)- Mr. Gehanath Gautam (Director, Safeguard)- Mr. Shankar Thapa (Director, Data)- Ms. Sarita Khatiwada (Director, Procurement)- Mr. Binod Gelal (Director, Finance)- Ms. Manuja Baral (Section Officer)- Ms. Medinee Prajapati (Environment Specialist)

Local Education Development Partners Group (LEDPG) consulted

1. Mr. Mohan Prasad Aryal, World Bank
2. Ms. Karthika Radhakrishnan, World Bank
3. Ms. Maya Sherpa, World Bank
4. Ms. Rashmi KC, World Bank
5. Ms. Deepika Shrestha, World Bank
6. Ms. Bipana Sharma
7. Mr. Bishwa Raj Basaula, World Bank
8. Ms. Timila Shrestha, World Bank
9. Ms. Jaya Sharma, World Bank
10. Ms. Annu Rajbhandari, World Bank
11. Ms. Shannon Taylor, USAID
12. Mr. Jayakrishna Upadhyay, USAID
13. Mr. Uddhav Bhandari, USAID
14. Ms. Laura Parrot, USAID
15. Ms. Smita Gyawali, ADB
16. Mr. Rajan Acharya, ADB
17. Mr. Joan Casanova, EU
18. Ms. Bandana Thapa, EU
19. Ms. Kati Bose, Finland
20. Ms. Indra Gurung, Finland
21. Ms. Ingrid Buli, Norway
22. Ms. Kamla Bisht, Norway
23. Mr. Krishna Lamsal, JICA
24. Ms. Yukiko Okugawa, JICA
25. Mr. Mark Waltham, UNICEF

26. Mr. Purushottam Acharya, UNICEF
27. Mr. Jimi Oostrum, UNICEF
28. Mr. Dipu Shakya, UNICEF
29. Ms. Lyndsay McLaurin, UNICEF
30. Ms. Sabina Joshi, UNICEF
31. James Russell, UNICEF
32. Mr. Ian Attfield, DFID
33. Ms. Cristina Murphy, WFP
34. Ms. Gopini Pandey, WFP
35. Ms. Neera Sharma, WFP
36. Mr. Manoj Kumar Sah, WFP
37. Mr. BalaramTimalsina, UNESCO
38. Mr. Aagat Awasthi, UNESCO
39. Ashmita Malla, Japanese Embassy
40. Mr. Abhiram Roy, UNFPA
41. RohitaGauchanThakali, UNFPA
42. Ms. Vaishali Pradhan, British Council
43. Dr. Laxmi Paudyal, AIN/EWG/Save the Children
44. Mr. Dilli Ram Paudel, NCE-N
45. Mr. Ram Gaire, NCE-N