Annex 9b

Stakeholder Engagement Plan

to the GCF Funding Proposal

Climate-resilient landscapes in Central Asia

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Version 3

Submitted by:

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

ADB	Asian Development Bank
AE	Accredited Entity
AFOLU	Agriculture, Forestry and other Land Use
APIU	Agricultural Project Implementation Unit
ARIS	Community Development and Investment Agency
BMZ	Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
CIIP	Centre for Implementation of Investment Projects
CIU	Compliance and Integrity Unit
CMS	Compliance Management System
CRLE	Climate Resilient Low Emission
CSO	Civil Society Organisation
E&S	Environmental and Social
EE	Executing Entities
EIB	European Investment Bank
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESMS	Environmental and Social Management System
ESS	Environmental and Social Safeguards
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organisation
FGD	Focus Group Discussion
FPIC	Free, Prior and Informed Consent
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Facility
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
IRM	Independent Redress Mechanism
KII	Key Informant Interview
KPI	Key Performance Indicator
KR / KGZ	Kyrgyz Republic
MoWRAPI	Ministry of Water Resources, Agriculture and Processing Industry
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NCECC	National Committee on Ecology and Climate Change
NDA	National Designated Authority
NGO	Non-governmental Organisation
O&M	Operation and Maintenance
PMT	Programme Management Team

PMU	Programme Management Unit
PSC	Programme Steering Committee
SEAH	Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SGI	Self-government Institution
TJ	Tajikistan
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UZ	Uzbekistan
WUA	Water User Association

1. Introduction

This Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been prepared as part of the Funding Proposal package for the programme *"Climate-resilient Landscapes in Central Asia"* submitted to the Green Climate Fund (GCF) by the Accredited Entity (AE), Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH. It documents the stakeholder engagement undertaken during programme preparation and set outs the process, methods, responsibilities, and resources for meaningful stakeholder engagement throughout programme implementation.

Meaningful stakeholder and consultation process is embedded in the programme's Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) and in alignment with:

- GCF's Revised Environmental and Social Policy (E&S Policy)[1];
- GCF's Gender Policy[2];
- Other relevant GCF operational documents[3][4]

As part of the ESMS, this SEP is linked to relevant safeguard instruments, including the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and the Gender Action Plan (GAP).

The SEP is intended to ensure that stakeholders, especially programme-affected people, local communities, vulnerable or marginalized groups, women, civil society, private sector actors, and relevant public institutions, are informed, consulted, and able to participate in decisions that may affect them. It also aims to ensure that stakeholder engagement serves as an opportunity to improve programme design and implementation, rather than merely to validate or confirm existing positions.

To support the comprehensive and meaningful integration of relevant stakeholders, including their concerns and recommendations, into the programme, consultations with relevant parties as part of the stakeholder engagement process were conducted. During this process, the stakeholder needs were assessed, recommendations and concerns were gathered, potential environmental and social impacts reviewed, and discussions and feedback on the proposed programme were actively facilitated. This collaborative approach aimed to address potential adverse effects while identifying opportunities to maximise positive impacts. The consultation process is documented in the Summary of Consultations (Annex 9a). Building on these consultations, this SEP will guide stakeholder engagement throughout the programme period.

Stakeholder engagement is considered a central element in ensuring the sustainability, acceptance and success of the GCF programme. Stakeholders play an important role in providing input and feedback on the programme design and validation as well as throughout implementation. The SEP will be updated as needed to reflect the involvement of new stakeholders and the emergence of new risks, issues, or engagement needs.

2. Programme background

The regional programme directly addresses the critical climate risks impacting the AFOLU sectors in the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan, concentrating on the highly vulnerable and ecologically important Fergana Valley, and Surkhandarya, and Khatlon regions. Ranging from plains dominated by agriculture to pastures and forests widely distributed on foothills and mountain slopes, the selected intervention areas are interconnected, and inseparable elements of continuous and transboundary landscapes characterised by different land uses and natural ecosystems that necessitate an integrated regional approach.

The programme's integrated landscape approach fully recognises the interconnectedness of the selected transboundary landscapes and addresses climate risks by institutionalising climate-informed AFOLU planning, coordination, and monitoring. It strengthens climate and land-use decision-support systems, enhances capacities to access and manage climate finance, and promotes the adoption of

[1] revised-environmental-and-social-policy.pdf
[2] Gender policy | Green Climate Fund
[3] sustainability-guidance-stakeholder-engagement-may2022.pdf
[4] stakeholder-engagement-and-country-ownership-summary.xlsx

CRLE practices and technologies through improved sub-national planning, extension services, and targeted investments in agriculture, forests, and pastures. At the regional level, the programme will reinforce cooperation through foresight processes, regional AFOLU pathways, knowledge exchange, and a climate investment platform to coordinate and mobilise finance for transboundary adaptation actions.

The programme's overarching goal is to enhance the resilience of the most vulnerable groups[5] and the transboundary ecosystems they depend on in Central Asia.

To achieve its overall objective, the programme will be implemented through three interlinked components, that collectively catalyse and sustain a paradigm shift toward a CRLE development pathway in the AFOLU sectors at the national, local, and regional levels.

- The **first component** (national) establishes the foundation for systemic transformation by creating an enabling environment for change. It strengthens climate informed land-use planning and decision-support systems, improves the public finance landscape and promotes innovative financing mechanisms that mobilise both public and private resources to support the transition beyond the programme period.
- Building on this foundation, the **second component** (local) supports large-scale investments and field-level implementation, directly contributing to the programme's climate adaptation and mitigation objectives.
- The **third component** (regional) addresses the transboundary nature of ecosystems and climate challenges by promoting coordination and collaboration across countries, facilitating the exchange of knowledge and innovation, and establishing financing vehicles for the collaborative management of ecosystems.

As part of the funding proposal package, a number of ESMS related annexes, including an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), a Gender Assessment and Gender Action Plan (GAP) are being developed to meet the GCF's environmental and social safeguards (ESS) and gender-related principles and requirements.

The GCF proposal development requires evidence-based planning, backed by both scientific and technical assessments and inputs from relevant stakeholders. Jointly with its partners, GIZ conducted consultations with pertinent parties as part of the stakeholder engagement process to ensure the comprehensive and meaningful integration of relevant stakeholders, along with their concerns and recommendations, into the programme proposal. Throughout this process, GIZ assessed the partners' needs, gathered recommendations and concerns, assessed environmental and social (E&S) impacts and actively engaged in discussions and feedback collection regarding the initial programme measures. This collaborative approach aimed to address adverse effects and uncover opportunities for maximising positive impacts.

2.1 Programme implementation

GIZ, serving as both the Accredited Entity (AE) and one of the programme's Executing Entities (EE), has significant implementation experience in the programme regions, including regional offices, well-established partner networks, contacts with local authorities and communities as well as in-depth knowledge of local contexts and barriers. This underlines the programme's ability to achieve impacts at scale within the implementation regions across the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan and Uzbekistan.

In its capacity as an AE, GIZ will bear oversight responsibility of the programme, including ensuring compliance and providing overarching management of the environmental and social safeguards system. The programme will be implemented in cooperation with national Executing Entities, namely the Community Development and Investment Agency (ARIS) and the Ministry of Water Resources, Agriculture and Processing Industry (MoWRAPI) in the Kyrgyz Republic, the Centre for Implementation of Investment Projects (CIIP) in Tajikistan and the National Committee on Ecology and Climate Change (NCECC) in Uzbekistan. In each country, GIZ and the national EE(s) will form Programme Management

[5] Vulnerable groups are defined as individuals or groups who, due to their socio-economic status, gender, age, physical or mental condition, geographic location, or marginalisation within social or institutional systems, may be disproportionately affected by project impacts or face barriers in accessing project benefits, participating in consultations or using grievance mechanisms.

Units. The PMUs will be responsible for the implementation and monitoring of the ESMP, GAP, and SEP. Each EE will have adequate resources, including staff and budget, to ensure proper planning, implementation, and monitoring of the ESMP, GAP, and SEP.
Further details of the programme's governance structure and implementation arrangements are outlined in chapter six of the Environment and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA).

3. GCF requirements for meaningful stakeholder engagement

This SEP has been prepared in line with GCF guidance on meaningful stakeholder engagement and is based on the principles of transparency, accountability, inclusiveness, non-discrimination, and "do no harm". The SEP provides for:

- A process for effective engagement stakeholders who are affected or potentially affected by GCF-funded activities, including vulnerable and marginalised groups and individuals.
- A process for disclosure and meaningful consultation in a culturally appropriate, accessible, and gender-responsive manner.
- Procedures for Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), where required; and
- A programme-level grievance redress mechanism (GRM) that is aligned with GIZ's grievance procedures and the GCF's Independent Redress Mechanism.

Stakeholder engagement is guided by the following principles:

- **Adaptive management:** stakeholder engagement processes are designed to remain flexible and to adapt to changing national and local contexts, stakeholder needs, and programme requirements.
- **Meaningful, early and continuous engagement:** Stakeholder engagement is a continuous, two-way process that begins early enough during programme preparation and continues throughout implementation.
- **Accessibility and cultural appropriateness**: relevant information is presented in formats and local languages that are understandable, inclusive, and culturally appropriate. Communities will have access to information on programme objectives, status, potential risks and impacts, eligibility criteria, benefits allocation, stakeholder roles and responsibilities, and available GRM channels, including the SEAH grievance protocol.
- **Inclusion and non-discrimination:** processes are designed to ensure effective participation of women, men, indigenous peoples, minority ethnic or social groups, and other individuals or groups who may be excluded or disproportionately affected. Barries to participation will be identified and addressed through tailored consultation and engagement approach.
- **Documentation and feedback:** meetings, issues raised, commitments made, and follow-up actions will be recorded and communicated back to stakeholders.
- **Shared ownership:** relevant stakeholders will be encouraged to participate actively in programme design, implementation, and monitoring, in line with their roles and interests.

4. Stakeholder identification and analysis

4.1 Introduction

Stakeholders are identified and categorised based on their role in the programme, level of influence, degree of impact and engagement needs. The mapping distinguishes between stakeholders involved during programme design and those critical during implementation, while recognising that many stakeholders span both phases.

4.2 Stakeholder categories

Stakeholders can be categorised using a multi-dimensional analytical framework, considering the following:

- influence, i.e., the ability of a stakeholder to affect programme design, implementation or outcomes:
  - high influence: national ministries, regional authorities
  - medium: local institutions (water user associations [WUAs], municipalities)
  - low: individual beneficiaries

- impact, i.e., the degree to which stakeholders are affected by programme activities:
    - high: smallholder farmers, women, low-income households
    - medium: local institutions
    - low: national agencies
- interest **in the programme implementation**:
    - decision-makers (policy, funding, oversight)
    - implementers (local authorities, institutions)
    - beneficiaries/affected groups
    - intermediaries (non-governmental organisations [NGOs], extension services)

4.3 Access and inclusion constraints

Special consideration is given to stakeholders who:

- have a limited voice in decision-making
- face barriers to participation (gender norms, time, literacy, access)
- are disproportionately affected by climate risks.

4.4 Country-specific institutional context

Stakeholder structures differ across countries:

- Kyrgyz Republic: strong importance of pasture resources and its management at local level, transfer of pasture committees' responsibilities to self-government institutions (SGIs) and local self-government institutions (local SGI)
- Tajikistan: importance of dehkan farms and jamoat-level governance
- Uzbekistan: key role of mahalla institutions and state-managed systems.

This differentiation ensures that engagement strategies are context-specific rather than generic.

The stakeholder mapping and engagement approach will be updated regularly throughout programme implementation to reflect evolving stakeholder dynamics, emerging risks, and lessons learned. This adaptive approach ensures that stakeholder engagement remains inclusive, context-specific and aligned with GCF E&S standards.

4.5 Stakeholder mapping

Table 1: Stakeholder mapping

Stakeholder category	Stakeholder group	Level	Programme phase	Interests/ expectations	Influence	Impact/ vulnerability	Engagement strategy
Government: National	Ministries (Committee) of Ecology/ Environment/ Climate	National	Design and implementation	Policy alignment, climate targets, environmental outcomes	High	Low	Formal coordination, reporting, technical meetings
	Ministries of Agriculture	National	Design and implementation	Agricultural productivity, rural development	High	Low	Technical coordination, integration into planning
	Ministries of Water Resources/ Irrigation	National	Design and implementation	Water efficiency, infrastructure management	High	Low	Policy alignment; coordination
	Ministries of Labour/ Employment	National	Implementation	Labour standards, employment outcomes	Medium	Low	Coordination on labour awareness and compliance
	Ministries of Finance/Economy	National	Design and implementation	Economic efficiency, funding alignment	High	Low	Strategic consultations, reporting
	State Forest Agencies	National	Design and implementation	Policy alignment, climate targets, environmental/economic outcomes	High	Low	Formal coordination, reporting, technical meetings
Government: Sub-national	Regional (Oblast/Region) administrations	Regional	Implementation	Regional development, service delivery	High	Medium	Regular coordination meetings, reporting
	District authorities (Hokimiyat, Hukumats, Akimats)	District	Implementation	Local development, infrastructure, livelihoods	High	Medium	Continuous engagement, joint planning
	Local self-government (municipalities, jamoats, ayil okmotu)	Local	Implementation	Community needs, service delivery	Medium	High	Community-level coordination, participatory planning

	State Forest Enterprises	District	Implementation	Sustainable forest management in collaboration with communities	Medium	Medium	Continuous engagement, joint planning
Community Institutions	WUAs	Local	Implementation	Water access, irrigation efficiency	Medium	High	regular engagement
	Pasture user groups and/or committees	Local	Implementation	Sustainable pasture use	Medium	High	Capacity building, participatory planning
	Joint Forest User Groups/ Joint Forst Enterprises	Local	Implementation	Sustainable forest management	Medium	High	Capacity building, participatory planning
	Mahalla Associations (Uzbekistan)	Local	Implementation	Community welfare, dispute resolution	Medium	High	Community outreach, information dissemination
Beneficiaries/ affected communities	Smallholder farmers (men)	Local	Implementation	Productivity, income, access to inputs	Low	High	Consultations, training, demonstration activities
	Women farmers/ female-headed households	Local	Design and implementation	Access to resources, participation, benefits	Low	High	Targeted engagement, gender-sensitive approaches
	Pasture/forest users	Local	Implementation	Pasture access, animal health	Low	High	Training, participatory planning
	Youth	Local	Implementation	Employment, skills development	Low	Medium	Outreach, skills programmes
	Low-income/ vulnerable households	Local	Implementation	Livelihood support, resilience	Low	High	Inclusive targeting, tailored communication

Private sector	Agricultural cooperatives/ farmer groups	Local/regional	Implementation	Market access, productivity	Medium	Medium	Value chain support, partnerships
	Financial institutions (banks, MFIs)	National/regional	Implementation	Lending opportunities, financial products	Medium	Low	Partnerships, product development
	Input suppliers / agri-businesses	Local/regional	Implementation	Market expansion	Medium	Low	Market linkage facilitation
CSOs/NGOs	Local NGOs and community organisations	Local/regional	Design and implementation	Community development, inclusion	Medium	Medium	Collaboration on outreach and awareness
	Women's organisations	Local/regional	Design and implementation	Gender equality, empowerment	Medium	High	Targeted engagement, co-design activities
Technical stakeholders	Agricultural extension services	Regional/local	Implementation	Knowledge dissemination	Medium	Medium	Training, capacity building
	Environmental authorities/ inspectors	Regional/national	Implementation	Compliance, monitoring	Medium	Low	Monitoring coordination
	Research institutions/ academia	National/regional	Design and implementation	Data, innovation	Low	Low	Technical input, studies
	International partners (World Bank, Food and Agriculture Organisation [FAO], United Nations Development Programme [UNDP], etc.), WFP, ADB	International	Implementation	Development outcomes, safeguards compliance	High	Low	Coordination, reporting

Source: Own elaboration

5. Stakeholder engagement during programme development

5.1 Stakeholder engagement during Concept Note and Funding Proposal development

5.1.1 Concept note stage

Aimed at enhancing country ownership and country-driven programming, GIZ conducted extensive multi-stakeholder engagements throughout the concept note and funding proposal development. Concept note stage commenced officially in February 2024. From May to December 2024, GIZ **consulted with 318 individuals** (217 men and 101 women; with some being double counted) **representing 106 institutions**, including national governmental bodies, international and regional organisations, civil society, and private and financial sector entities.

Main concept note consultations at the national level were conducted from October 28 to November 28 2024, culminating in **a two week-long mission** where the GIZ programme development team (head office & in-country staff) and external consultants facilitated over **forty individual and group meetings with key stakeholder** groups. Importantly, **three national consultation workshops** were held in Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz Republic, and Tajikistan to gather critical inputs on the programme elements, including implementation arrangements, intervention areas, executing entities, and priority value chains. Discussions also encompassed countries' contributions and the role of private sector actors. Concurrently, tripartite meetings involving GCF, NDA, and GIZ took place in Uzbekistan and Kyrgyz Republic.

Feedback from these **consultations shaped the programme design and complemented the desk review and analysis** of climate risks, vulnerabilities, and barriers to transitioning to a climate-resilient, low-emission (CRLE) development in the AFOLU sectors. **Partners established priorities and targets for the proposed programme**, by identifying the most vulnerable and underinvested transboundary regions, priority value chains, possible financing mechanisms, and implementation partners as well as activities for strengthening policy and institutional frameworks, climate investment, and regional cooperation.

5.1.2 Funding proposal stage

In addition to the comprehensive stakeholder consultations conducted during concept note stage (February 2024 until March 2025), GIZ together with its national partners carried out extensive stakeholder consultations across the Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan, and Uzbekistan over seven months from October 2025 until April 2026. GIZ **consulted with 1323 individuals** (925 men and 398 women, some double-counted) **representing more than 273 institutions**, including national governmental bodies, international and regional organisations, civil society, and private and financial sector entities. Engagement methods included bilateral and/or group exchanges and interviews, as well as focus group discussions held during national consultation workshops.

Besides broad national-level engagements, these also included **a series of consultation workshops held in multiple regions** in Tajikistan (Khujand, Bokhtar, Devashtich, and Qubodiyon), in the Kyrgyz Republic (Osh, Batken, Manas, Kara-Suu, and Bazar-Korgon), and in Uzbekistan (Namangan, Termez, Yangikurgan, and Besharik). Stakeholder feedback gathered through these consultations played a critical role in shaping and refining the funding proposal. It complemented the desk review and in-depth analysis of climate risks, environmental and social vulnerabilities, and systemic barriers to achieving climate-resilient, low-emission (CRLE) development in the AFOLU sectors. Stakeholders contributed to defining programme priorities and targets, including the identification of the most vulnerable transboundary regions, priority value chains, financing mechanisms, and implementation partners. Furthermore, consultations informed the design of activities aimed at strengthening policy and institutional frameworks, enhancing climate investments, and fostering regional cooperation.

A **regional validation workshop held in Tashkent on 1 April 2026**, which brought together key stakeholders, validated the overall programme design, including the intervention logic, financial mechanisms, and implementation arrangements.

Further, GIZ's programme development team engaged in **several exchanges** with development partner, particularly **World Bank** and **Asian Development Bank (ADB)** to ensure **full complementarity and coherence with on-going and planned projects in the region** as well as to consider their implementation lessons learned in the programme design. Throughout the programme preparation, GIZ coordinated and engaged intensively with the European Investment Bank (EIB), which is the programme's strategic co-financing partner.

A **detailed summary of all stakeholder consultations**, feedback, and how it has been integrated into the programme design can be fund in **Annex 9a**.

5.1.2.1 Local-level ESS, gender and climate risk assessment validation stakeholder engagement

Stakeholder engagement continued in January and February 2026 through workshops, FGDs and KIIs undertaken by the three country-based GIZ teams together with international consultants and local sub-consultants in each target country. This led to six multi-purpose workshops (two in each target country), as well as FGDs and KIIs.

Multi-purpose workshops

The objectives of the workshops were as follows:

- Confirm appropriateness of the proposed programme measures and intervention logic, considering climate risks and their impacts on and needs and vulnerabilities of the local population, and obtain inputs to shape the appropriateness of the interventions.
- Provide feedback and confirm the programme's climate rationale, i.e., preliminary findings and results of the climate risk and vulnerability assessment.
- Provide inputs concerning potential E&S impacts of the proposed programme, including gender-specific risks and measures, and necessary E&S management framework.
    - Provide input on E&S issues where input and/or validation of baseline data is required.

As part of the E&S and social safeguards discussions, the workshops also supported screening undertaken in accordance with ESS7 and the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy. Participants were invited to identify whether any Indigenous Peoples or other culturally distinct communities, as defined under the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy, were present within or used the proposed intervention areas, whether any such groups could potentially be affected by programme activities, and whether additional consultation requirements might apply. The screening also considered the presence of customary institutions, traditional land and natural resource use, cultural attachment to programme landscapes, and any concerns relating to cultural identity or customary rights.

Participants

Workshop participants included a wide range of stakeholders:

- oblast-level representatives of line ministries and other state agencies (agriculture, forest management, water/hydromets, emergency situations, land management, socio-economic development)
- rayon-level representatives of line ministries and other state agencies (agriculture, forestry, land management, environment, water, emergency situations)
- local authorities (local governments, local parliament members) and technical services, extension services
- CSOs, universities, academy of science, farmers' associations, gender experts and community representatives, including youth, women, marginalised groups, farmers, and water user associations, forest users, pasture users.

Workshop schedule

Table 2 details the workshop schedule per country and the specific land-use focus applicable to each locality.

Table 2: Workshop schedule

Country	Date	Location	Land-use focus
Uzbekistan	4 February	Yangikurgan district, Namangan region	Irrigated annual systems
	6 February	Beshariq district/Kokand area, Fergana region	Irrigated perennial systems
Tajikistan	9 February	Devashtich district, Sughd region	Pasture/forest systems (dry northern zone)
Kyrgyzstan	10 February	Kara-Suu district, Osh region	Rain-fed annual systems
Tajikistan	12 February	Qabodiyon district, Khatlon region	Pasture/forest systems (dry southern zone)
Kyrgyzstan	13 February	Bazar-Korgon district, Jalal-Abad region	Pasture/forest systems (wet northern zone)

Workshop topics

Each workshop was divided into four sessions, and a number of topics were covered during these sessions (Table 3).

Table 3: Topics covered during the workshop sessions

Session	Title	Agenda
Session 1		• Presentation of programme objectives, components, partners and implementation approach • Overview of the proposal preparation process • Current status of preparation and timeline • Cooperation arrangements
Session 2	Climate risks and vulnerabilities in agriculture, forestry and land use	• Validation and collection of stakeholder feedback on key climate hazards, risks, impacts and vulnerabilities affecting local land-use systems and their users • Presentation of adaptation options, land-use planning processes and feasibility of activities in relevant land-use systems
Session 3	ESS and Gender (separately)	• Presentation on initial E&S assessment findings • Discussion on information gaps • Discussion potential gender barriers affecting adoption of proposed measures by women and youth • Identification of opportunities to overcome these barriers
Session 4	Presentation of results and next steps	

Source: Own elaboration

5.1.2.2 FGDs and KIIs

Workshops were arranged in such a way that there was opportunity for the local teams to complete FGDs and KIIs during the same mobilisation. The main purposes of these engagements were to:

- validate workshop findings;
- examine E&S feedback in greater depth;
    - address information gaps.

The FGDs and KIIs also served as an important component of the Indigenous Peoples screening process. Discussions with local authorities, community representatives, Water User Associations, pasture user groups, forest user groups, women's organisations, youth representatives and other locally knowledgeable stakeholders included consideration of whether Indigenous Peoples or other culturally distinct communities meeting the criteria of ESS7 or the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy were present within the programme intervention areas, whether such groups maintained distinct customary institutions or collective attachment to ancestral territories or natural resources, and whether programme activities could result in differentiated impacts requiring application of the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy.

During these sessions, specific attention was also given to understand gender relations in target communities, and FGDs were organised with community representatives, local organisations, and groups representing women and youth. Key discussion topics included:

- roles of women, men and youth in current land-use practices;
- how climate change affects these groups differently;
- gender relations in target communities (access to assets, rights, participation, time use, decision-making power);
- detailed discussion of solutions to barriers and preferences for interventions.

The numbers of FGDs and KIIs conducted in each target country are indicated in Table 4

Table 4: Number of FGDs and KIIs conducted per country during the ESIA phase

Country	FGDs	KIIs
Uzbekistan	5	13
Tajikistan	7	16
Kyrgyzstan	6	15

5.1.2.3 Summary of stakeholder feedback

Table 5 summarises stakeholder feedback and recommended programme responses.

Based on the combined findings of the desktop review, national and local stakeholder workshops, FGDs, KIIs and consultation records prepared by the national consultation teams, no Indigenous Peoples, as defined under ESS7 and the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy, were identified within the proposed programme intervention areas. Stakeholders consistently identified vulnerable groups in terms of gender, poverty, remoteness, age and livelihood dependence on natural resources, but did not identify any communities possessing the collective characteristics described in the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy that would trigger application of the Policy or the requirement for FPIC. Accordingly, application of the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy does not alter the findings of the environmental and social screening, although implementation will remain responsive to any new information that may emerge during programme implementation.

Table 5: Stakeholder feedback and recommended programme responses

Stakeholder group	Location	Key issues raised	Concerns/risks identified	Suggested programme response/ integration
Smallholder farmers (male)	All countries (especially Uzbekistan, Tajikistan)	Water shortages, irrigation inefficiency, declining soil fertility, pest outbreaks	Reduced agricultural productivity; unequal water distribution; limited access to inputs and markets	Promote climate-resilient irrigation systems; strengthen WUA coordination; support access to inputs and training; improve water allocation transparency
Women farmers/ female-headed households	All countries	Limited access to land, finance, and training; high workload due to male migration; limited participation in decision-making	Exclusion from programme benefits; lack of voice in WUAs and local governance; time constraints	Targeted outreach and training for women; ensure inclusion in WUAs and consultations; design gender-sensitive benefit targeting and scheduling
Forest Users and Joint Forest Enterprises	All countries	Dependence on forest resources for livelihoods; forest degradation; limited access to sustainable forest management practices; unclear benefit-sharing mechanisms.	Overexploitation of forest resources; reduced ecosystem services; potential conflicts over resource use and access.	Strengthen community-based forest management; clarify user rights and benefit-sharing arrangements; provide capacity building and support for sustainable forest-based livelihoods.
WUAs	All countries	Weak institutional capacity; poor maintenance of irrigation infrastructure; unclear roles	Inefficient water distribution; infrastructure deterioration; local conflicts	Capacity building for WUAs; clarify roles/responsibilities; support O&M planning and financing mechanisms
Local government (district/municipal authorities)	All countries	Limited financial resources; fragmented institutional responsibilities; weak coordination between sectors	Poor implementation of projects; sustainability risks; limited community engagement	Strengthen inter-agency coordination; provide technical support; align programme with local development plans
Rayon agriculture officers. Pasture user groups / committees/ local SGI; livestock farmers, pasture users	Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan	Overgrazing, pasture degradation, lack of fodder, animal health issues	Reduced livestock productivity; land degradation; resource conflicts	Support sustainable pasture management; improve fodder systems; provide veterinary and livestock support
Agricultural extension services/technical specialists	All countries	Limited outreach capacity; lack of updated knowledge and resources	Low adoption of climate-resilient practices; poor dissemination of information	Strengthen extension services; provide training and demonstration activities; support knowledge transfer
Financial institutions/ banking-sector representatives	Uzbekistan, Kyrgyz Republic	Limited tailored financial products for agriculture; collateral constraints; low uptake of credit	Limited investment in agriculture; exclusion of smallholders and women	Develop climate-smart financial products; improve financial literacy; link farmers to credit schemes

Stakeholder group	Location	Key issues raised	Concerns/risks identified	Suggested programme response/ integration
Community members (mixed groups)	All countries	Climate impacts (drought, salinity, water scarcity); declining yields; infrastructure issues	Livelihood insecurity; increased vulnerability; potential local tensions over resources	Implement integrated landscape approaches; improve infrastructure; ensure equitable resource allocation
Women's groups/gender activists	Uzbekistan, Tajikistan, Kyrgyz Republic	Limited participation in decision-making; lack of access to information; social barriers	Marginalisation from project processes; unequal benefit distribution	Ensure gender-responsive engagement; use female facilitators; provide targeted information dissemination
Youth	All countries	Limited employment opportunities; migration pressures; lack of training	Outmigration; limited local economic development	Provide skills development and livelihood support; engage youth in programme activities
Environmental authorities/specialists	All countries	Land degradation, deforestation, biodiversity loss, weak enforcement capacity	Long-term environmental decline; insufficient monitoring	Strengthen environmental monitoring; integrate ecosystem restoration measures; improve coordination
NGOs/CSOs	Kyrgyz Republic, Tajikistan	Need for stronger community engagement; gaps in awareness and participation	Limited inclusiveness; weak accountability mechanisms	Involve NGOs in outreach and awareness; strengthen participatory processes
Farmers' cooperatives/ associations	Uzbekistan, Tajikistan	Limited integration into value chains; lack of processing and storage facilities	Post-harvest losses; low income; weak market access	Support value chain development; improve storage/processing; strengthen cooperative capacity
Government-sector specialists (water, agriculture, ecology)	All countries	Fragmented mandates; limited data sharing; weak coordination	Inefficiencies in planning and implementation	Enhance cross-sector coordination; support integrated planning tools

Source: Own elaboration

6. Stakeholder engagement process for programme implementation

The implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is considered a critical building block for the success of the programme and is therefore crosscutting across all programme activities. Overall responsibility for its implementation will rest with GIZ. Each EE will establish a multidisciplinary project team comprising experts in project management, technical implementation, communications, gender and safeguards, and monitoring and evaluation. They will coordinate stakeholder engagement across all phases of the programme, from inception through implementation, monitoring, and closure, and will report on SEP-related activities to the PMU. Stakeholder engagement will be maintained as a continuous, two-way process, with approaches tailored to stakeholder relevance and the nature of programme activities. To support this, the programme will apply a range of consultation, participation, disclosure, coordination, and feedback mechanisms to ensure engagement remains responsive to stakeholder needs and programme developments.

6.1 Objectives of the SEP

This SEP has been developed with the following objectives:

- Clarify programme objectives, scope, planned activities, and potential risks and benefits, and manage expectations.
- Provide timely, accessible and culturally appropriate information disclosure throughout the programme cycle.
- Create meaningful opportunities for stakeholders to ask questions, provide feedback, and raise concerns during programme preparation and implementation.
- Ensure adaptive management by integrating stakeholder feedback into decision-making.
- Build and maintain trust and social acceptability of the programme.
- Identify and address environmental, social, gender, inclusion, and conflict-related risks early.
- Foster strong relationships between the programme and stakeholders, at all levels.
- Enhance programme design, implementation, and outcomes through ongoing stakeholder engagement.
- Establish accessible channels for complaints, concerns and grievances.

The SEP also serves as orientation to the programme implementation team by:

- Identifying and analysing relevant stakeholders, including affected and potentially affected groups.
- Defining appropriate engagement methods, communication approaches, and disclosure tools for different stakeholder groups.
- Clarifying the roles and responsibilities of the actors involved in implementing the SEP.
- Enabling documenting, monitoring, and reporting on stakeholder engagement activities.

6.2 Methods of stakeholder consultations

GIZ’s stakeholder’s engagement methods are guided by a strong commitment to addressing stakeholders’ needs, with special consideration given to vulnerable groups. The engagement process in GIZ’s projects is designed to be participatory, inclusive, with all stakeholders being encouraged to actively engage in the consultation process.

For all implementation activities with the local communities, participation is voluntary. Agreements will be sought with all participating communities and settlements prior to the implementation of interventions. All planned activities will be implemented in a pure participatory manner. Programme staff will be trained on gender and social inclusion issues, to promote the participation of diverse stakeholders, including women and members of different ethnic groups.

6.3 Information disclosure, communication, awareness-raising

A comprehensive communication and information dissemination plan will be developed during the programme’s start-up phase. Annual implementation plans will detail strategies for proactive stakeholder engagement. Stakeholder engagement will be undertaken through public meetings, formal meetings and FGDs to support the following objectives:

- Disseminate clear and accessible information about the programme, its activities and progress to diverse stakeholders at national, regional and local levels.
- Actively invite stakeholders to participate in meetings, workshops and official events related to the programme, fostering their involvement.
- Strengthen professional relationships with stakeholders across different levels, promoting collaboration and trust.
- Create dedicated spaces for gathering valuable input, feedback and perspectives from beneficiaries, ensuring their voices are integral to the programme's development.

6.4 Consultations, training and workshops

Consultations will be undertaken throughout programme implementation to keep stakeholders informed of programme progress, obtain feedback, support capacity building and implementation activities, and raise awareness of programme objectives. Consultations will also support the validation of relevant programme outputs and findings.

Stakeholder engagement activities will be undertaken throughout the programme period. The following considerations will guide the design and implementation of consultations.

6.4.1 Accessibility and cultural appropriateness

Consultations will be designed and implemented in a manner that is accessible and culturally appropriate, taking into account the needs of different stakeholder groups. Considerations will include gender, literacy levels, language and the accessibility of technical information.

6.4.2 Clear objectives and outcomes

The objectives and expected outcomes of each consultation will be clearly defined to ensure that participants understand the purpose of the consultation and how their input will inform programme activities.

6.4.3 Contextual relevance

The design of consultations will take into account the characteristics and needs of different stakeholder groups, including their interests, cultural context and preferred forms of engagement considering the respective country contexts.

6.4.4 Transparency and inclusivity

Information shared during consultations will be transparent, easily understandable and will promote inclusivity and gender sensitivity.

The consultations will be facilitated by qualified individuals trained in social inclusion and gender equality to ensure respectful and equitable dialogue. All consultations will prioritise transparency and accuracy in their documentation and reporting processes. Attendance sheets, summaries (and potentially photographs; in accordance with EU general data protection regulation) will be collected for each meeting, with comprehensive records maintained by the PMUs and reports prepared by the management team of the programme.

6.5 Documentation, reporting, and feedback loops

GIZ will provide regular updates on the implementation of the programme, through various media sources (online, print, workshops, among others). Online communications and information sharing will be encouraged, including on EE's websites and social media. Where appropriate, information will be provided in relevant local languages to ensure accessibility for different ethnic groups.

Table 6: Stakeholder approach during implementation

Stakeholders	Engagement objective	Engagement process	Responsibility	Frequency and timing	Staff resources
Overarching	Develop communication and information dissemination plan during the start-up phase of the programme.		GIZ	Year 1 (inception)	GIZ communication specialist
	Ensure annual implementation (operational) plans include information on planned stakeholder engagement.		GIZ,	Annually	GIZ communication specialists
	Setup and communicate a GRM.		All EEs	Year 1 (inception)	GIZ & EEs safeguard specialists GIZ & EEs communication specialists
Government units (national, regional, local)	Ensure effective collaboration between GIZ and government authorities at national, regional and local levels. This aims to align the programme's actions with government policies and priorities, ensure institutional support,promote the sustainability of the programme and strengthen their role in monitoring implementation of local adaptation plans and supporting adaptive management.	Identify points of contact within government units at national, regional and local levels. These may include line ministries, regional authorities and local authorities in the intervention localities. Hold regular meetings with representatives of government units. These meetings will provide an opportunity to discuss the programme's strategy, alignment with national or regional policies, progress, challenges and synergies with other projects. Provide continuous technical guidance through the GIZ and EE M&E specialists to support participatory monitoring of local adaptation plans as part of routine programme implementation.	GIZ	Year 1 (inception): For the identification of points of contact at national and regional level and prior to the roll-out of the activities in the respective districts or locality for local level Two meetings every year at national level Quarterly meetings at regional level	GIZ country coordinators GIZ communication specialists GIZ & EEs monitoring specialists GIZ safeguard and gender specialists

Stakeholders	Engagement objective	Engagement process	Responsibility	Frequency and timing	Staff resources
Programme beneficiaries (State Forest Enterprises, Forest user groups, pasture user groups / committees; smallholder farmers etc.	Ensure inclusive and informed participatory engagement with smallholder farmers, pasture users, forest users, producer organizations, and local enterprises in designing, monitoring and implementing sustainable, CRLE measures and value-chain activities, while identifying local priorities and risks, promoting equitable access to benefits, and supporting adoption of responsible practices through consultations, training, and coordinated outreach.	Meaningful community consultation and outreach; participatory mapping; seasonal planning. Meetings aligned with e.g. grazing calendars; local outreach through facilitators or extension workers; and peer learning exchanges. Participate in monitoring implementation of local adaptation plans and provide feedback through regular stakeholder consultations and field engagement to support adaptive management.	All EEs	Continuously	GIZ & EEs communication specialists Technical field staff GIZ & EEs monitoring specialists

Stakeholders	Engagement objective	Engagement process	Responsibility	Frequency and timing	Staff resources
Private sector	Establish strong partnerships with companies and private sector actors involved in the agricultural value chains. This aims to foster private investment, the adoption of climate smart practices, improve the efficiency of value chains and create mutually beneficial opportunities for the programme and the private sector.	Identify key companies and private-sector actors involved in the targeted agricultural value chains. This can include farmers, processors, distributors and other stakeholders in the sector. Establish partnerships with companies for the implementation of adapted solutions. Work with businesses to ensure a demand for and supply of quality agricultural products. This may involve initiatives to provide training, access to finance or share best practices.	All EEs	Year 1 (Inception): For the identification of focal points in the private-sector organisations and identification of cooperation potential Annual planning meeting with private-sector organisations involved in the implementation of the projects Regular meetings to monitor collaboration and performance indicators, usually quarterly or as needed Ad hoc meetings in case of specific needs or opportunities for innovation	GIZ country coordinators GIZ monitoring specialists GIZ safeguard and gender specialists GIZ & EEs technical field staff
CSOs	Foster active participation, open communication and collaboration with these organisations, particularly at the local level. This aims to integrate the perspectives and needs of local communities, promote the transparency of the	Consult CSOs active in the area before each intervention on the ground involving communities' participation Organise consultations and participatory workshops that allow CSOs to express their views on issues related to the programme, voice their concerns and contribute	All EEs	Prior to starting activities in each locality, initiate consultation with CSOs active in the locality At least once a year in each programme district, public consultations to gather	GIZ communication specialists GIZ technical staff GIZ & EEs technical field staff GIZ & EEs monitoring specialists

Stakeholders	Engagement objective	Engagement process	Responsibility	Frequency and timing	Staff resources
	programme and build citizen support.	to key decisions during the intervention. Involve locally based CSOs in participatory monitoring of programme implementation, including collection of stakeholder feedback and participation in periodic review of implementation progress, where relevant.		feedback on key programme issues Involve CSOs in the ongoing monitoring of the programme annually, including ad hoc meetings in case of specific needs	

Source: Own elaboration

6.6 Personnel and timeline for implementation

GIZ and the national EEs will recruit specialists in gender, ESS, communication and M&E. Their primary responsibilities will include coordinating and implementing the programme's activities related to stakeholder consultation, gender, ESS and M&E. This will also involve monitoring the present implementation of the SEP.

The responsibilities of the Gender, ESS, communication and M&E specialists include:

- Liaising with programme stakeholders.
- Overseeing programme communications and stakeholder engagement.
- Disseminating information on the grievance mechanism to programme partners, local communities, CSOs, and other relevant stakeholders.
- Identifying local and regional actors/CSOs for collaboration in community outreach, information dissemination, and other programme activities.
- Facilitating dialogue between the programme and local communities.
- Overseeing the implementation, monitoring and reporting of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM).
- Monitoring programme progress, particularly with respect to the implementation of the ESMP and the GAP and supporting adaptive management where necessary.

Table 7 provides information about the timing of key and continuous SEP interventions as coordinated by GIZ and the mentioned specialists.

Table 7: Calendar of Stakeholder Engagement Activities

Activity	Programme Phase	Timeline	Responsible
Disclosure of ESS documents	At least 30 days prior to GCF Board Meeting		GIZ Kyrgyz Republic (KG) GIZ Tajikistan (TJ) GIZ Uzbekistan (UZ)
Recruitment of staff responsible for Gender, ESS, communication and M&E	Inception	Y1	GIZ Kyrgyz Republic (KG) GIZ Tajikistan (TJ) GIZ Uzbekistan (UZ)
Communication of up-to-date contact information for the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)	Inception	Y1	GIZ Gender and ESS specialists GIZ Communication specialists
Identification and training of staff and trainers responsible for community mobilization and sensitisation	Inception	Y1	GIZ technical staff GIZ gender and ESS specialists GIZ communication specialists
Community Engagement and Outreach	Implementation	Y1-Y6	GIZ technical staff GIZ gender and ESS specialists GIZ communication specialists EEs gender and ESS experts EEs communication experts
Ongoing stakeholder engagement events integrated into programme activities	Implementation	Y1-Y6	GIZ management staff GIZ technical staff GIZ gender and ESS specialists GIZ communication specialists EEs gender and ESS experts EEs communication experts
Periodic stakeholder update meetings and information dissemination	Implementation	Y1-Y6	GIZ management staff GIZ technical staff GIZ gender and ESS specialists GIZ communication specialists
Regular monitoring and periodic reporting of programme implementation	Implementation	Y1-Y6	GIZ gender and ESS specialists GIZ M&E specialists
Dissemination of lessons learned & programme outcomes	Closure	Y7	GIZ communication specialists EEs communication experts

Source: Own elaboration

6.7 Inclusion measures for women and vulnerable groups

Among the stakeholders, the programme's beneficiaries also include vulnerable groups. The identification of potentially vulnerable groups is based on their exposure to risk and their limited capacity to cope with potential impacts. In this context, vulnerability is understood as the combination of exposure to risk and reduced capacity to cope.

Children, elderly, disabled, extremely poor people and women are among those globally recognised as most vulnerable groups to climate change impacts.

Women are considered among the groups that may be more vulnerable in the context of the programme, particularly within the agricultural sector. Although women play important roles at various levels of agricultural value chains, they face significant inequalities related to traditional gender roles in the target country societies. These include constraints related to land inheritance and exclusion from decision-making processes.

In addition, women often have limited access to agricultural inputs, market information and capital, which increases their vulnerability. These challenges may be further exacerbated in the context of climate change. A gender-responsive approach will therefore be applied in the design and implementation of the programme.

Detailed information related to gender issues in the context of the programme, the regions of intervention, partners and target groups were collected during the ESS and gender consultations in February 2026.

To ensure the full participation of vulnerable groups during the programme implementation, and to safeguard their rights and benefits, the programme should incorporate suitable measures such as:

- facilitating effective communication through appropriate methods (social media, or meetings) to foster understanding, including the establishment of a GRM. Programme staff will arrange individual meetings at mutually convenient locations and times to provide information and solicit feedback.
- designing interventions, wherever possible, to address the specific needs and interests of vulnerable groups
    - providing transportation support for vulnerable individuals to attend programme related meetings when necessary and building capacity to facilitate the engagement of these vulnerable groups.

6.8 Integration of stakeholder feedback into management decisions

Feedback and results from consultations and workshops will be shared with the Programme Management Units (PMUs) as essential inputs to facilitate informed decision-making. The PMUs will adaptively manage the programme, responding to stakeholder feedback to ensure that implementation aligns with participatory decision-making principles and respects social and environmental safeguards.

The PMUs (one in each country) will include key personal from GIZ and national EEs including safeguards and M&E specialists responsible for overseeing the programme's adherence to E&S safeguards and implementing stakeholder engagement measures. The PMUs will ensure continuous management of E&S issues throughout the programme period.

During programme inception, planning documents, standard operating procedures, guidelines and management systems will be established or refined. The safeguards experts will ensure that these frameworks promote gender equality and social inclusion while addressing stakeholder concerns.

To strengthen adaptive management, monitoring results from stakeholder engagement activities will be systematically analysed and directly integrated into the decision-making process through regular review sessions conducted by the PMUs. These sessions will evaluate stakeholder feedback, identify recurring themes or concerns and prioritise actionable insights for programme adaptation. Specific findings will be shared with relevant programme units and implementing partners, guiding adjustments in implementation plans, resource allocation and engagement strategies. A summary of these adaptations and decisions will also be communicated back to stakeholders, ensuring transparency, accountability and a continuous feedback loop that enhances programme responsiveness.

Close coordination with programme partners and specialists will further support inclusive and equitable programme activities, ensuring responsive implementation. By integrating stakeholder feedback into every stage, the programme can effectively address unforeseen changes and maintain alignment with its objectives.

6.9 Integration of stakeholder feedback into programme management

Integrating stakeholder feedback into adaptive management is a key strategy of this programme's implementation. The programme will institute a feedback loop so that inputs from stakeholders directly inform decision-making and programme adjustments over time.

6.9.1 Documentation and communication feedback

Following stakeholder consultations, including workshops, meetings and community discussions, the programme team will compile and document the feedback and outcomes. Summaries of stakeholder feedback will be shared with the PMUs in a timely manner.

Consultation reports from community-level engagements will document local needs and proposed solutions. These reports will be circulated internally and shared with stakeholders as appropriate. Key issues raised through stakeholder consultations will also be discussed during PMU meetings.

6.9.2 Internal review and adaptive management

The programme's PMUs will regularly review stakeholder feedback and incorporate it into programme execution. The PMUs will treat stakeholder inputs as essential inputs for informed decision-making. This may include adjustments to work plans, allocation of resources, or modifications to specific activities where required. Where stakeholders identify potential risks or challenges, such as possible conflicts over resource use, the programme will consider appropriate mitigation measures through relevant programme components. Such changes will be made in consultation with the relevant stakeholders to ensure the solutions are agreeable and effective.

To support adaptive management, stakeholder feedback will be systematically tracked through consultation reports and a feedback-response matrix documenting key issues raised, proposed actions, responsible parties, implementation timeframe, budget implications and follow-up status. The PMUs will review this information together with inputs from the grievance redress mechanism (GRM), safeguards monitoring and programme implementation reports. Where appropriate, agreed actions will be incorporated into programme activities, implementation schedules, annual and quarterly work plans, procurement plans, budgets, the programme risk register and relevant environmental and social management instruments, including the SEP and ESMP. Particular attention will be given to feedback from women, vulnerable groups and other stakeholders facing barriers to participation. Issues requiring strategic guidance will be escalated to the PSC. Implementation of agreed actions will be monitored through subsequent stakeholder engagement activities, creating a continuous cycle of consultation, assessment, action, monitoring and learning.

6.9.3 Feedback in decision forums

Stakeholder feedback will also be formally fed into governance forums. The multi-country PSC will receive updates on stakeholder engagement at each meeting. The PMUs will present how stakeholder recommendations have been addressed and seek guidance for any unresolved issues. This creates accountability, i.e., senior representatives (NDA, programme political partners, etc.) will verify that the programme is remaining responsive to beneficiaries and partners.

Representatives of local stakeholders and CSOs may be invited to PSC meetings where agenda items directly concern implementation in the respective intervention areas.

6.9.4 Inclusive and equitable integration

Particular attention will be paid to feedback from women, youth and vulnerable groups. The programme recognises that these groups may have distinct needs or face greater barriers to participation. Measures will in place to capture their feedback (such as female facilitators). Programme management will prioritise addressing issues raised by these groups, for instance, if women farmers highlight the need for childcare during training or safety concerns in fieldwork, the programme can respond by adjusting activities to be more gender sensitive.

6.9.5 Feedback to stakeholders

Integrating feedback also means informing stakeholders about how their input was used. During subsequent engagements, facilitators will explicitly mention changes made thanks to earlier stakeholder input. This confirms to stakeholders that their voices matter, builds trust and encourages continued engagement.

By embedding stakeholder feedback into the programme’s management routines, the programme will remain flexible and responsive, thereby improving its effectiveness and sustainability. This adaptive management approach will be documented in programme reports and will help demonstrate to the GCF and other observers that stakeholder inputs meaningfully influence programme outcomes, fulfilling the GCF’s requirements for participatory programme implementation.

7. Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)

A GRM will be established for the programme to handle any concerns, complaints or grievances that stakeholders may have during programme implementation. The GRM is a key part of ensuring accountability and responsiveness, and it will be designed in a culturally appropriate and gender-responsive manner, complementing GIZ's existing grievance systems and the GCF's independent redress mechanism. The following outlines the GRM for the Climate-Resilient Landscapes in Central Asia programme.

7.1 Objectives

The GRM aims to promptly address and resolve any issues that arise from programme activities, thus preventing the escalation of conflicts or adverse impacts. Any stakeholder, whether an individual community member, programme worker or institutional partner, can seek redress through this mechanism. Grievances will be taken seriously and handled expediently, with the goal of resolving complaints as quickly as possible to avoid tension or conflict. The GRM provides a transparent process for resolution and ensures that feedback from stakeholders is incorporated into programme management. It upholds principles of fairness, confidentiality (when requested) and non-retaliation, encouraging stakeholders (including women and vulnerable groups) to voice concerns without fear.

7.2 Information and communication of the GRM

The programme will ensure stakeholders are well-informed about how to access the GRM. Information about the GRM (procedures, contact points and rights of complainants) will be distributed at all inception workshops and community meetings and in local languages.

Grievances may be submitted anonymously. Anonymous submissions will be recorded and investigated; however, feedback cannot be provided to the complainant where contact details are not available.

Multiple channels will be available for the submission of grievances. The channels available for submitting grievances are presented in Table 8

Table 8: Channels for the submission of grievances

Channel	Description
In-person	Stakeholders can submit a complaint verbally or in writing to programme facilitators during consultations or by visiting the programme's local offices. Community facilitators and local NGO partners will be trained to receive and log complaints during their routine interactions with communities.
Telephone hotline	A telephone number will be established in each country (or a central regional hotline with multiple language options) where complainants can call or send text/voice messages. This line will be staffed part-time or connected to voicemail to record grievances.
Email and web	An email address and an online platform (or a section of GIZ's programme webpage) will allow stakeholders to submit grievances electronically. This can be useful for NGOs or stakeholders comfortable with digital communication.
Mail	Complaints can be sent via post to the PMU office in each country (address will be provided in GRM flyers).

7.3 Grievance receipt and registration

All grievances received will be formally recorded in a grievance register (database). A dedicated safeguards/grievance officer in the programme team (or within each EE) will be responsible for logging each complaint with details such as date, complainant (if known), complaint summary, and the channel received. Each complaint will be assigned an identification number and its status will be tracked through resolution. This tracking system will ensure traceability of complaints and accountability for follow-up.

7.4 Categorisation of complaints and grievances

Grievances can take many forms such as complaints, claims, denunciations or suggestions. Table 9 outlines grievance categories.

Table 9: Grievance categories

Category	Characteristics
Category 1: Grievance	An expression of dissatisfaction related to: • the quality and non-conformity of the services provided by the programme and its staff • the effects or impacts of programme activities on the socio-economic environment of beneficiaries • alleged violations of human rights
Category 2: Claim	A statement indicating that planned actions or programme activities are considered non-compliant with applicable standards, procedures or agreed arrangements, including non-compliance with procurement procedures.
Category 3: Whistleblowing	Reports of suspected misconduct, including the dissemination of false information, fraud or corruption.
	Reports of suspected misconduct, including but not limited to: • Corruption and bribery • Misappropriation, fraud, and embezzlement • Conflict of interest • Sexual misconduct (harassment) and sexual exploitation • Violations of human rights • Violations of environment-related obligations (violations of environmental law).

7.5 Complaint and grievance process

The GRM will follow a structured process to receive, assess and resolve grievances, as outlined in Table 10.

Table 10: Grievance process steps

Steps	Details
Step 1: Filing	The GRM may be accessed through multiple channels, including telephone, messaging services, post or in person submission. Grievances may be submitted anonymously. Grievances may be submitted verbally or in writing.
Step 2: Triage	Registered grievances will be screened and assessed by the safeguard officer(s). Depending on the nature and complexity of the grievance, the safeguard officer will ensure coordination and engage with the PMU. Grievances that go beyond the remit of the safeguard specialist (gender -based violence, SEAH, corruption, etc.) will be forwarded to relevant competent bodies
Step 3a: Resolution	Resolution through dialogue, negotiation or mediation will be pursued as the preferred approach. Recourse to the courts is made as a last resort when no agreement is reached or no solution satisfactory to both parties concerned is found. Once agreements have been reached between the parties involved, the file will be closed by the safeguard specialist. The safeguards officer will ensure formal communication of the outcome to the complainant
Step 3b: Severity or dissent	In cases of extreme severity or where an agreement cannot be reached, Compliance and Integrity Advisory Services at GIZ Headquarters should be contacted first, followed by GCF as the next escalation point

Step 4: Monitoring, tracking and consolidation of data	In line with European Union's General Data Protection Regulation and applicable national legislation (s): • the programme GRM will have a register for the collection of grievances. This system will be used to collect both written and verbal complaints. • the database will support the tracking and traceability of grievances and the documentation of grievance resolution measures implemented at programme and national levels. • GRM resolution will be part of the M&E system. A KPI will be set to monitor efficient GRM implementation. The KPI is zero open grievances after the set grievance resolution time.

7.5.1 SEAH-specific survivor-centred reporting and response procedure

The programme will implement a dedicated survivor-centred procedure for handling SEAH incidents within the programme's GRM. This procedure will be aligned with GIZ's internal SEAH prevention and case management mechanisms and will follow internationally recognised survivor-centred principles, including safety, confidentiality, respect, non-discrimination, and informed consent.

SEAH incidents may be reported at any time through confidential reporting channels, including the GIZ Gender and ESS specialists, trusted community focal persons, or other GRM reporting channels communicated to stakeholders during programme awareness-raising activities. Survivors are free to choose the channel they consider safest and most appropriate. All reports will be handled exclusively by trained and authorised personnel in accordance with the strict confidentiality and "need-to-know" principles. Information related to SEAH cases will be documented safely and ethically in a restricted-access confidential register to ensure the protection of survivors and complainants.

Upon receipt of a report, the programme will provide the survivor with clear information on available options and support services. With the survivor's informed consent, referrals may be made to appropriate medical, psychosocial, legal, or protection services, depending on the survivor's needs and the availability of service providers in the programme areas. Where allegations involve programme staff, contractors, or partners, appropriate accountability measures will be applied, including internal disciplinary procedures, contractual sanctions, or referral to the competent authorities, where relevant. Survivors will retain the right to seek external support or legal recourse at any stage of the process.

Implementation of this protocol will be overseen by the GIZ Gender and ESS specialists in coordination with the PMU, to ensure that SEAH complaints are managed in a gender-responsive, culturally appropriate, and survivor-centred manner throughout the programme period. Specific SEAH prevention and awareness-raising measures are further detailed in the GAP (Annex 10a).

7.5.2 Information of complaint and grievance process

GIZ has established a company-wide Compliance Management System (CMS) based on Assurance Standard 980 issued by the German Institute of Public Auditors and the international management standard DIN ISO 37301. The CMS forms part of GIZ's corporate governance framework and functions as an equitable mechanism that encompasses key elements of an independent grievance and redress mechanism. It applies to all core, support and management processes and covers GIZ's business activities worldwide.

Responsibility for organising compliance management is delegated to GIZ's **Compliance and Integrity Unit (CIU)**, which reports directly to the Management Board. The CIU coordinates, organises and steers the CMS and is institutionally separated from organisational units responsible for programme or project implementation, environmental and social matters, and programme management. Its staff act with professional independence, objectivity and without instruction in the exercise of their duties. In this way, the grievance function is independent from programme implementation structures throughout the programme cycle.

In addition to its coordination role, the CIU is responsible for corruption prevention, compliance and integrity advisory services, the whistleblower system, central case management systems, advice and case processing relating to discrimination, sexual misconduct and bullying, and the internal control system. In disputes relating to these issues, the CIU provides binding company-wide guidance. The unit is mandated to initiate and review improvements to the CMS, monitor the handling and resolution of compliance issues, demand end-to-end investigation and follow-up of incidents, investigate cases itself in exceptional situations, review proposed responses and sanctions, require improvements where processing is inadequate, and escalate cases to the Management Board where necessary.

Compliance management relies on reports and information provided by stakeholders, both within and outside the company. An easily accessible **whistleblower system** (web, email, phone, letter) is available to the entire workforce and the general public (https://www.giz.de/en/aboutgiz/39089.html) and it can be used anonymously. The system serves as a key early warning system for identifying problems and introducing counter measures. The aim is to avert or minimise potential damage within and outside of the company at an early stage.

The following concerns in particular can be reported using the whistleblower system:

- **Corruption and bribery**
- **Misappropriation, fraud, and embezzlement**
- **Conflict of interest**
- **Sexual misconduct and sexual exploitation**
- **Violations of human rights**
- **Violations of environment-related obligations** (violations of environmental law).

Each of the various reporting channels can be used anonymously if required:

- Justified suspicions of compliance violations relating to GIZ's work can also be sent directly to GIZ's Compliance and Integrity Advisory Services. (compliance-mailbox@giz.de
- The compliance officers working in compliance and integrity advisory services and in the **Stop-It contact point** (stop-it@giz.de) for reporting discrimination, sexual misconduct and bullying are part of the Compliance and Integrity Unit.
- In addition, **an external ombudsperson** (Dr. Edgar Joussen ombudsmann@ra-js.de) is available as a point of contact outside the company for making confidential reports about violations of laws and regulations in connection with GIZ. The ombudsperson will contact the company and communicate the evidence to GIZ only with prior approval from the whistleblower in order to ensure her/his protection.
- The **online whistleblower portal** (https://www.giz.de/tell-us) is available worldwide, around the clock and in a number of languages. It can be used to anonymously report suspected infringements and to communicate in accordance with the highest technical security standards, without being required to provide an email address or telephone number.
- In addition, **low-threshold access to GIZ's whistleblower system/Stop-it grievance system** (complaint officers in GIZ country offices) has been developed. It takes account of special considerations about submitting reports of sexual misconduct, discrimination and bullying.
- At operational level, programme-specific grievance procedures and guidelines will put in place and information will made available through different means

The protection of whistleblowers and victims is a high priority[6] and GIZ ensures it through a system built around anonymous reporting, confidentiality, independent contact points, non-retaliation commitments, low-threshold access, a central case-management process, dedicated sexual-misconduct complaint channels, and survivor-centred and gender-responsive grievance handling in programme contexts.

GIZ seeks, to the extent possible, to ensure that persons who report concerns in good faith do not suffer negative consequences. All information and reports received are reviewed and duly investigated by the CIU, which ensures fair, thorough and impartial case handling. In doing so, the CIU involves the responsible organisational units as necessary, applies company-wide quality standards, exercises rights of access to information for case clarification, and reviews the adequacy of the resolution and follow-up measures. This ensures end-to-end handling of complaints and compliance cases, including the implementation of appropriate corrective measures and consequences where warranted.

The GIZ GRM in Uzbekistan is accessible through the following channels:

- GIZ GRM focal points:
    - Nigina Mavlyanberdiyeva

[6] See URL: https://www.giz.de/en/downloads/Code%20of%20ethics.pdf (last visited on 24.04.2026).

    - Phone: +998 933868232, email: nigina.mavlyanberdieva@giz.de)
    - Bobur Joraxojayev
    - Phone: +99893111046, email: bobur.joraxojayev@giz.de
    - GIZ Office in Tashkent, Chimkent street 7a, 100029 Tashkent, Uzbekistan
- Gender focal point:
    - Madinabonu Ishmuradova
    - Phone:+998 937000117, email: madinabonu.ishmuradova@giz.de

The GIZ GRM in Kyrgyz Republic is accessible through the following channels

- Gender focal points:
    - Mr. Erlan Amiraev;
    - Email: erlan.amiraev@giz.de
    - Ms. Svetlana Uzakbaeva: email:
    - Email: svetlana.uzakbaeva@giz.de
    - Erkindik Blvd. 22, 720040 Bishkek, Kyrgyzstan
    - Phone: +996 312 90 90 82

The GIZ GRM in Tajikistan is accessible through the following channels

- GRM
    - Email: compliance-tj@giz.de
    - GIZ Office Dushanbe, Business complex „Jayhoon“ 2/1 N. Huvaydulloev Street, 734049, Dushanbe, Tajikistan. e.
    - Phone: +992 44 6006 107
- Gender focal point
    - Nargis Tosheva
    - Email: nargis.tosheva@giz.de
    - Phone: +992 92 889 0303

Information on the GCF Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM)

- Independent Redress Mechanism Unit
    - Address: Green Climate Fund, Songdo Business District, 175 Art center-daero, Yeonsu-gu, Incheon 22004, Republic of Korea
    - Email: irm@gcfund.org
    - Phone: +82 32-458-6186 (alternatively +82 10-4296-1337) Fax: +82 32-458-609