

Grievance Mechanism Checklist

Note 1: For the purpose of this Checklist, a Grievance Mechanism is a system which allows not only grievances, but also queries, suggestions, positive feedback, and concerns of project-affected parties related to all kinds of project related issues, including its environmental and social performance, to be submitted and responded to in a timely manner.

Note 2: This document is intended primarily for World Bank staff. However, the Checklist may be used in interaction with Borrowers as and when appropriate, though it may need further elaboration depending on their level of familiarity with feedback/grievance handling processes, related terminology, and best practices.

Project Preparation

1. Have you surveyed existing formal and informal Grievance Mechanisms (GMs) already in use in the project context¹?
2. Have you asked different stakeholder groups how they would prefer to voice their feedback/grievances related to the project²?
3. Are you proposing a variety of feedback/grievance uptake channels or options for stakeholders to submit grievances (e.g., in-person at a physical facility, letter, email, telephone/hotline, online form on a website, text message, social media, tablet/smartphone application, grievance boxes)?
4. Have you tailored these feedback/grievance submission options to make sure they are easily accessible for vulnerable groups³?
5. Have you developed operating procedures for the GM which include⁴:
 - a. A definition of the types of project-related feedback/grievances that can be received⁵?
 - b. A clear process for submitting feedback/grievances?
 - c. A clear set-up for the GM and adequate staffing⁶?
 - d. A system for acknowledging feedback/grievance receipt within a stipulated timeframe?

¹ This means exploring existing ways in which people in the project area currently express and address feedback/grievances, whether formally (e.g., through existing hotlines or written correspondence) or informally (e.g., by contacting community leaders verbally).

² This can be done as part of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) preparation process, through formats such as dedicated meetings, focus group discussions, door-to-door visits, existing forums (e.g., religious gatherings and barazas), meetings with organizations or individuals representing or possessing deep knowledge of these groups, one-to-one interviews, and surveys.

³ E.g., provide users with assistance to submit feedback/grievances where needed, hire community liaison officers, include representatives of vulnerable groups on grievance committees, provide documentation in Braille/sign language/captioned videos, simplify documents (e.g., conveying content in plain language, easy to understand for the public), provide visuals/pictures for users with low literacy levels, translate documents into all languages relevant to your target audience (for example, other national languages and English for foreigners), adapt GM processes to the requirements of specific groups (e.g., offer a woman the option of interacting with a female interlocutor; ensure that the physical reception offices for grievances are accessible to people with mobility restrictions; propose dedicated channels for refugees, internally displaced persons, indigenous peoples, and others).

⁴ The operating procedures should be made available to all staff, beneficiaries, and potential users, and should be written in the local language. In some cases, drafting a grievance manual for staff may also be warranted. The operating procedures may include a sample feedback/grievance form.

⁵ Non-project related grievances may be received. If this happens, they should be referred to the appropriate Ministries/Departments for further follow up, and the complainant should be notified of this process.

⁶ It may be appropriate to have several levels of grievance handling (e.g., local-level committees combined with a high-level Project Implementation Unit committee). It is also important to identify and assign people to work on the GM at each level.

- e. A process for investigating and resolving grievances depending on their seriousness and complexity⁷?
 - f. Information about how and how often complainants will receive status updates about their case?
 - g. Information about appeals processes?
 - h. Business standards for the process and timing with which grievances/feedback are resolved and/or responded to?
 - i. Information on how the feedback/grievance will be recorded and aggregated at the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) level⁸?
 - j. Dedicated guidelines regarding confidentiality guarantees⁹?
 - k. Safeguards and sanctions for the breach of confidentiality/inappropriate disclosure of sensitive information?
 - l. A process for receiving anonymous feedback/grievances?
 - m. Specific guidelines outlining how labor complaints and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Sexual Harassment complaints will be handled, including how they will be referred to quality local Gender-Based Violence (GBV) services?
6. Have you budgeted the feedback/grievance management activities in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)¹⁰? Is contingency funding available in the project's budget to support the resolution of well-founded grievances?
 7. Is a training plan associated with the GM roll out being designed and budgeted for, including training for project stakeholders tasked with handling SEA/SH complaints?
 8. Have you designed, published, and disseminated communication materials about the GM, in a way that is culturally appropriate¹¹?
 9. Have you developed a list of possible feedback/grievance categories, tailored to the project context, so that submissions can be sorted into different categories upon receipt?
 10. Have you designed a feedback/grievance registration and monitoring database¹² which provides information on outcomes/responses provided? Does this database capture disaggregated data about people submitting the feedback/grievance, for example vulnerability-related data¹³? Does the system provide for the safe and ethical documentation, monitoring and reporting of sensitive complaints, including those related to SEA/SH?

⁷ Specific procedures should be in place to ensure that sensitive and urgent grievances are appropriately handled (e.g., an accelerated process, referral to another department, or notification of higher management).

⁸ E.g., paper log or grievance book, spreadsheet, dedicated management information system

⁹ Users should notably be informed if and why their personal data are being collected, and who will have access to their case.

¹⁰ Typical budget categories include, but are not limited to: GM staffing costs, GM management information system, communication materials, trainings, and suggestion/grievance boxes.

¹¹ It is recommended to use a variety of communication channels and provide materials in a variety of formats/languages to ensure broad outreach, e.g. online video, website, social media, display boards, posters, banners, billboards, magazine or newspaper advertisements, radio spots, television spots, printed information brochures and/or flyers, public meetings (e.g., roundtable discussions and seminars), local leaders, nongovernmental organization and/or civil society partners, events (e.g., road shows and community theater), SMS/texts, public criers. Materials may need to be adapted to help address barriers to information by the most vulnerable groups, including children and persons with disability.

¹² The database should, at minimum, provide an easy overview of the number of feedback/grievances received, type of uptake channel used, resolution time and compliance with business standards, issues raised in feedback/grievances, type of remedial action taken, and satisfaction of the complainant with resolution proposed.

¹³ Vulnerability-related data regarding a feedback provider/complainant could be, for example: gender, age, disability, geographical location, belonging to a specific group (e.g., indigenous, linguistic, or ethnic minority), employment status, or language.

11. Is the GM connected to the main decision-making body of the project, so that grievances flagged can be immediately addressed by decision-makers?

Project Implementation

12. Are you monitoring the implementation of the grievance management procedures?
13. Are you carrying out spot checks to ensure quality control (e.g., verifying grievance logs at random times without prior warning), to ensure that grievances have been resolved satisfactorily?
14. Has staff been assigned GM responsibilities at each level of the GM?
15. Are you training staff and/or providing refresher training on grievance redress at various levels?
16. As part of the ongoing stakeholder engagement activities outlined in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan, are you checking if the grievance uptake channels are adequate, effective, and easy to use for project-affected parties and vulnerable individuals and groups? (E.g., by regularly asking vulnerable groups or their representatives about their knowledge and views on the GM, including its accessibility, during focus group discussions and consultation meetings).
17. Are grievance forms or signs displayed prominently and readily accessible on project sites? Are contact details of staff receiving feedback/grievances published and displayed in public areas (including in local languages), as well as mentioned on the project website?
18. Have you looked for any bottlenecks in the grievance resolution process?
19. Are you maintaining a comprehensive communications campaign around the GM to make sure all project-affected people and other interested parties are aware of the mechanism?
20. Are you recording all feedback/grievances, both verbal and written, in the database?
21. Are you including a section on feedback/grievances in regular progress reports?
22. Are you analyzing trends in grievance data¹⁴ and using findings to improve project performance and/or limit future recurrences?
23. Are you collecting feedback from complainants to evaluate if they are satisfied with the resolution provided by the GM (e.g., by carrying out user satisfaction surveys)?
24. Are you publicly disclosing (safe and anonymized) data about grievance resolution and action taken as a result of citizen feedback?

¹⁴ Examples of data which can be analyzed based on a comprehensive grievance log include the total number of grievances submitted by year/month; the total number of grievances submitted by access channel; the grievance resolution rate (i.e., the total number of received/resolved grievances), the total number of grievances resolved within the stipulated time frames, and the average grievance resolution time.