



**Food and Agriculture  
Organization of the  
United Nations**

## **Afghanistan Emergency Food Security Project (P178280)**

### **Additional Financing-2**

OSRO/AFG/140/WBK

Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

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## LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ANDMA	Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority
AWAAZ	An Inter-Agency Communications and Accountability Center implemented by UNOPS
CDC	Community Development Council
CFM	Complaint Feedback Mechanism
CGIAR	Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers
CO	Country Office
DAIL	Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock
DAP	Di-Ammonium Phosphate
EFSP	Emergency Food Security Project
ESCP	Environmental and Social Commitment Plan
EWSC	Early Warning System Communities
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FMA	Filed Monitoring Associate
GM	Grievance Mechanism
GRC	Grievance Redress Committee
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
ICARDA	International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas
ICRISAT	International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics
IDPs	Internally Displaced Persons
IFDC	International Fertilizer Development Center
ILRI	International Livestock Research Institute
IP	Implementing Partner
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEAL	Monitoring, Evaluation, Accountability and Learning
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NHLP	National Horticulture and Livestock Project
NRM	Natural Resource Management
OHS	Occupational health and safety
PDO	Project Development Objective
PA	Productive Alliance
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
SEA/SH	Sexual Exploitation Abuse/ Sexual Harassment
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SOP	Standard Operation Procedure
TPM	Third-Party Monitoring
UNICEF	United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund

## Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

### 1. Introduction/Project Description

The Emergency Food Security Project (EFSP) was approved and became effective on June 3, 2022. The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to improve resilience of agriculture production system for target beneficiaries. The parent project has 3 components implemented in all 34 provinces of Afghanistan: (i) Component 1: Restoring Agriculture Production, (ii) Component 2: Provision of Water and Resilience Service, and (iii) Component 3: Implementation Support. The project is implemented by the Food and Agriculture Organization of UN (FAO) with a dedicated Project Implementation Unit (PIU) based in Kabul. About 15 national and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and 67 private sector construction companies are subcontracted by FAO to implement project activities under components 1 and 2.

The project's progress towards achieving the PDO, and Implementation Progress have been rated satisfactory. The parent project is compliant with key legal covenants, including audit and financial management reporting requirements. All project components are being implemented satisfactorily as described below. An additional financing of US\$100 million was approved in February 2024, increasing the total project's budget to US\$295 million. To date, out of the total project amount of US\$295 million, 82 percent (US\$ 244 million) has been disbursed.

The parent project was designed to address a critical food and nutrition security crisis, primarily focusing on supporting smallholder farmers in restoring food production and maintaining essential services. Under the AF, the project's scope was scaled up to include the commercialization of the seed sector, the development of small-scale agro-processing facilities, and the promotion of high-value crop production. The combined key targets of the parent project and the AF include reaching 1.4 million smallholder farmers in IPC3+ provinces, increasing wheat production for the target households by 25%, and expanding irrigation and drainage services to cover 21,800 ha of land.

The **first additional financing** was proposed to scale up and expand key activities. This includes increasing the distribution of wheat cultivation packages and crop training to new food-insecure households, enhancing technical assistance for private seed enterprises to diversify beyond wheat, and adding support for value addition in horticulture. Watershed management efforts will also be expanded to include agroforestry and improved grazing land management. Additionally, irrigation and water management projects will undergo procurement and implementation. These efforts aim to improve regional equity, increase water availability, and enhance cropping intensity across targeted areas.

The **second additional financing** is proposed to further scale up the project's impact on food security and expand the scope of interventions to harness the potential of the agri-food sector and emerging regional and domestic market opportunities for growth and poverty reduction. According to the recent Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC) report, Afghanistan continues to experience marginal improvements in Food security since the worst situation following the political transition in 2021. Currently, a third of Afghanistan's population (14.2 million) are experiencing high levels of acute food insecurity (IPC phase 3 or above) compared the same period in previous years (for example 18 million in 2022 and 15 million in 2023). These improvements can be attributed to the scale of coordinated humanitarian food emergency agricultural production assistance (including EFSP) and favorable weather in 2023.

Despite these improvements, food insecurity levels remain high. Afghanistan ranks among the top 5 food insecure countries requiring support to prevent further deterioration of food and nutrition security crisis. Afghanistan has one of the world's highest rates of stunting in children under five, at 41 percent (UNICEF 2020). The rate of wasting, the extreme manifestation of severe acute malnutrition, in Afghanistan is extremely high: 9.5 percent, one in three adolescent girls suffers from anemia, and only 12 percent of Afghan children aged 6-24 months receive the right variety of food in the quantity needed for their age.

Afghanistan's food system is significantly underdeveloped, facing challenges in multiple areas that hinder its growth and effectiveness. Limited diversification in crop and livestock production is a major issue, as the reliance on a narrow range of agricultural products makes the system vulnerable to pests, diseases, and market fluctuations. While the private sector largely dominates the agriculture industry- from importing production inputs to processing and exporting of the high value agricultural products and had demonstrated resilience to the economic shocks, the agribusiness sector remains underdeveloped. A low diversified cropping system, coupled with limited investments in value addition and processing, stifles economic growth hinders the sector's ability to capitalize on opportunities for economic growth, creating jobs and boosting incomes in. Additionally, the adoption of improved agricultural technologies is low, impeding productivity gains and resilience. The institutional capacity to deliver agricultural services is inadequate, with a stark shortage of extension agents—often one for every 1,500 farmers—limiting the reach and effectiveness of support services. High post-harvest losses, estimated at around 30%, further exacerbate food insecurity and waste. The agricultural export sector is also weak, with a significant gap between the country's potential and its actual export performance.

To address the challenges facing Afghanistan's food system, a multifaceted approach is essential. Scaling up transformative climate-resilient agricultural technologies and investments can significantly enhance food and nutrition security by increasing productivity and reducing vulnerability to climate-related shocks. Promoting diversification in crop and livestock production is crucial for enhancing food security and dietary diversity, as it reduces dependency on a limited range of products and improves resilience against market and environmental fluctuations. Additionally, investing in inclusive and gender centric sustainable agriculture value chains, improving market access, and strengthening the commercialization of key agricultural commodities will help to develop a more robust agribusiness sector. These measures will not only boost rural incomes and create job opportunities but also facilitate better integration into global markets, ultimately contributing to economic prosperity and poverty alleviation.

## **Changes the components under Additional Financing-2**

**1. The current component 1 Restoring Agriculture Production” title will be revised to Building Resilience for Food Security:** This component will continue to respond to food and nutrition security crisis by financing provision of input packages to ensure the production of food by farmers in Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (IPC3) + areas. The proposed additional financing will allocate additional resources to scale up food security crisis response support to an additional 293 000 food insecure HHs in IPC3+ areas. The input packages will include seeds (for wheat, maize, legumes and vegetables), fertilizer and technical advice on production practices. In addition to the technical assistance support for seed enterprises, this component will pilot a voucher mechanism to promote market-based input supply system between agro-dealers and farmers. A

subcomponent will be added to scale up transformation climate resilient technologies through the Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers (CGIAR). Considering the dedicated focus on promoting competitiveness of agriculture value chains and support to agribusinesses, subcomponent 1.2: Agriculture Diversification and Value Addition' will move to the new standalone component that will be created to finance investments that promote competitiveness of climate resilient agriculture value chains. component 1 be restructured around the following 3 subcomponents.

**Subcomponent 1.1:** Food crisis response support. This subcomponent, previously named as 'Emergency Wheat Production Support' will finance a scaling up of the distribution of agriculture input packages to produce food crops that include wheat, maize, legumes and vegetables to an additional food insecure household. This subcomponent will pilot an input voucher system to deliver input packages to target beneficiaries. The objective is to stimulate local input markets and support local input traders as part of the food system. A proportion of the target beneficiaries will receive paper-based vouchers redeemed for their preferred inputs at authorized local input suppliers/dealers. The project will undertake a verification of the voucher's issues against the list of target beneficiaries and reimburse the providers for the amount provided.

**Subcomponent 1.2:** Promote improved technologies and production methods. Increasing agricultural productivity is vital to enhance food security. Improving farmers access to quality seeds of preferred varieties and equipping them with knowledge on improved production practices adapted to current agroecological conditions are crucial to improve productivity across all production systems. This subcomponent will finance strategic partnership with CGIAR agencies (International Center for Agricultural Research in the Dry Areas (ICARDA), International Crops Research Institute for the Semi-Arid Tropics (ICRISAT), International Livestock Research Institute (ILRI), Integrated Food Security Phase Classification (CIP) and International Fertilizer Development Center (IFDC) to scale up availability of high-quality seeds and contribute to dissemination of knowledge on resilient production methods to farmers. The following activities will be implemented:

(i) Introduction of climate resilient seed varieties. High quality seeds for various crops (wheat, barley, potato, chickpea, lentil, perennial sorghum, forage/fodder crops) will be introduced to Afghanistan from selected Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers (CGIAR) center gene banks for adaptive testing for technical efficacy and farmer demand. Based on the results the testing/evaluation, selected seed varieties will be promoted through the respective CGIAR partners for production by local seed companies and village-based seed growers. The local seed companies and village-based seed growers will produce, and market quality seeds of farmer demanded crops and varieties for the respective local markets.

(ii) Promote agronomic advisory services on improved and innovative production methods. Improved, efficient and agroecologically appropriate cropping systems technologies, including conservation agriculture, precision agriculture, Natural Resources Management (NRM) based technologies such as laser land levelling, mechanized crop establishment, weed control and harvesting, crop-appropriate irrigation methods, alternate furrow irrigation in potato, and crop storage systems will be introduced and demonstrated to farmers for adoption. These and other innovative technologies will be scaled out through innovative knowledge dissemination mechanism by engaging with NGOs currently partnering with the project, farmers groups and agribusiness.

(iii) Digital agro-advisory platform. Develop an online database with up-to-date information on climate resilient production technologies and practices that can be accessed by agriculture service providers for developing agro-advisory services.

**Component 3:** Competitiveness of agriculture value chains. This component builds on past investments to enhance value addition, income, and market access. Previous projects, like National Horticulture and Livestock Project (NHLP), supported many farmers diversifying to high-value crops, such as fruits and nuts, which are highly demanded in local and regional markets. However, farmers do not realize the full benefit due to limited post-harvest knowledge, lack of tools, and weak market connections. Processors and traders also face challenges working with fragmented farmers, raising transaction costs. In partnership with the key value chain actors this component will finance investments to improve the competitiveness of selected agricultural value chains through climate smart value addition, strengthen market linkages for producers and promote diversification towards high value agriculture. The component activities are structured around two sub-components.

**Subcomponent 3.1:** By deploying the productive alliance (PA) model, this subcomponent the subcomponent will seek to address the key gaps in post-harvest processes and build productive linkages between farmers and agribusiness across a range of value chains. The project will provide partial matching grants to agribusiness that seek to invest further in their value chains to improve competitiveness, including through value addition and production of high-quality commodities that meet required standards. The matching grants will be administered through a competitive mechanism initiated through a call for proposal to privately owned agribusiness. The goal is to strengthen productive alliances between smallholder farmer groups and agribusinesses to improve the competitiveness, sustainability, and resilience of Afghanistan’s agricultural value chains. This approach will facilitate integrating smallholder farmers into formal markets, enhancing their access to quality inputs, technical services, and financial support, while promoting value addition and climate-smart agricultural practices. These partnerships will help farmers secure long-term market relationships, increase their productivity, and reduce post-harvest losses through improved value chain infrastructure such as storage and processing facilities. Agribusinesses will benefit from a consistent supply of produce while contributing to value addition. Through this approach the project will promote the application of climate-smart agricultural practices to mitigate the effects of climate change, build resilience, and ensure sustainable agricultural production.

**Subcomponent 3.2:** Will promote agriculture diversification and value addition. This subcomponent was originally under component 1 and it will now be structured under component 3 and will continue to implement the original activities. While no other changes are proposed, the targets will be adjusted to reflect on the increased support to the same activities

**Component 4:** Implementation Support. Additional allocation is proposed under this component to support project management and Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) for the additional activities proposed. No other changes will be made.

The EFSP additional Financing-2 applies the World Bank’s Environment and Social Framework (ESF) and FAO’s Framework for Environmental and Social Management (FAO).

## 2. Objective/Description of SEP

The overall objective of this Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is to define a program for stakeholder engagement, including public information disclosure and consultation, throughout the inception, construction and operation phase of the proposed projects. The SEP outlines the ways in which the implementing agency and contractors will communicate with stakeholders and includes a mechanism by which people can raise concerns and provide feedback about Implementing Agency (FAO), the contractors, and the project itself. The SEP is a useful tool for managing communications between the implementers of a project and its stakeholders, including beneficiaries.

The detailed objectives of the SEP are summarized as follows:

- Outlines the stakeholder engagement requirements of World Bank's Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs) and FAO's FESM.
- Provide guidance for stakeholder engagement, including the timing and methods of engagement with stakeholders throughout the life cycle of the project.
- Identify key stakeholders that are affected, and/or able to influence the project.
- Describe the measures that will be used to remove obstacles to participation, and how the views of differently affected groups will be captured.
- Identify effective ways and methods to disseminate project information as per the needs of the stakeholders.
- Guide FAO, Implementing Partners (IPs) and Contractors and the supervision consultant building mutually respectful, beneficial and lasting relationship with stakeholders.
- Establish project-level grievance redress mechanism(s).
- Define roles and responsibilities for the implementation of the SEP.

Communicating early, often and clearly with stakeholders helps manage expectations and avoid risks, potential conflict, and project delays. The involvement of the local population is essential to the success of the project to ensure smooth collaboration between project staff and local communities and to minimize and mitigate environmental and social risks related to the proposed project.

The Environmental and Social Standard 10 (ESS10) of World Bank's ESF and the Operation Pillar-2 (stakeholder engagement) under FAO's FESM requires preparing and implement a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP).



### 3. Stakeholder identification and analysis

#### 3.1 Methodology

For the EFSP additional Financing-2, a list of relevant stakeholders has been updated and the following stakeholders have been identified and mapped for project: Provincial Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock Departments, Sub-River Basins, Community Representative groups, Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA-Department), Private Sector (Agri-businesses, Seed Producers), input traders, suppliers/dealers, beneficiaries, and NGOs working in the area. The key stakeholders for AF2 are the same as identified under the parent project and AF1, except for Private Sector (Agri-businesses, Seed Producers) who are new stakeholders.

**Provincial Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock Departments:** As the Agricultural, irrigation and livestock department plays a crucial role as a stakeholder in a food security project by contributing expertise, resources, and facilities access to market to ensure the project's success.

**Sub-River Basins:** Sub-river Basin has important role in the current context of climate change as a stakeholder can help providing baseline data for enhancing the watershed's resilience to challenges such as droughts, floods, and shifting rainfall patterns.

**Community Representative Groups/former CDCs:** CRGs as a stakeholders play a crucial role in ensuring that the project's benefits are distributed fairly and inclusively. Additionally, by leveraging their local expertise and fostering meaningful participation, these groups contribute significantly to project management and problem-solving and sustainability, thereby enhancing the community's capacity to respond to future emergencies independently.

**Farmers:** The first beneficiaries of the project are participating farmers benefiting climate resilient food production systems and increased incomes from productivity improvements and/ or value addition. During project implementation their opinion will be sought using various tools such as platform.

**Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA-Department):** ANDMA plays a key role as the central disaster management body, in identifying vulnerable locations and populations, enabling timely and effective interventions to prevent or mitigate food crises. In addition, facilitating coordination among various government agencies, humanitarian organizations, and community groups to ensure a unified approach to addressing food insecurity during emergencies.

**Private Sector (Agri-businesses, Seed Producers):** Seed producers as a stakeholder play a crucial role in diversifying crops, from wheat to other crops, in order to produce high-quality wheat seeds and a variety of other crops such as rice, corn, soybean, mung bean, chickpeas, okra, potatoes, and fodder crops. Additionally, they help create a farmer-oriented market through the voucher system.

**Input traders, suppliers/dealers:** Suppliers as a key stakeholder, play an essential role in providing tools, materials, quality fertilizers, and the delivery of wheat seeds, fertilizers, and machinery including installation and training, to the Community Interest Groups (CIGs) members.

**NGOs working in the area:** NGOs working in the area play an essential role in providing baseline information and sharing their experience in working with community groups and local authorities.

**FAO's Implementing Partners:** The implementing partners play a key role as a stakeholder in the Emergency Food Security Project. Their responsibilities include involvement in input delivery, beneficiary selection, distribution of inputs, and the provision of training to ensure that FAO requirements are effectively communicated to the beneficiaries.

### **3.2. Affected parties**

Affected parties include local communities, farmers benefiting from improved irrigation management, female beneficiaries, including agribusiness along the value chain and other parties that may be subject to direct impacts from Project activities. They include the following groups:

Agriculture service beneficiaries (smallholder farmers, female farmers/FHHs and individuals affected by the project including farmers living or working in the project areas).

- Those impacted by temporary land donations,
- Vulnerable people eligible for assistance should be identified early stage of the project. This helps anticipate potential concerns, build trust, and shape strategies that address their interests, to ensure leading to smoother project execution and better community alignment. Understanding the affected parties requires analyzing how each group's needs, expectations, or routines may be influenced.
- Communities in the vicinity of planned Project activities
- Residents, business, such as agribusiness, dealers/suppliers, and small traders in the area of the project that can benefit from the employment, training, and business opportunities
- Community representative groups and Mirabs that represent local residents and other local interest groups, and act on their behalf.

### **3.3. Other interested parties**

Other interested parties may not experience direct impacts from the Project. However, they may consider or perceive their interests as being affected by the Project, and thus may affect the Project's implementation. They include:

- Community representative groups (CRGs) members and decision-makers
- Residents of the other local communities within the project area, who can benefit from Business owners and providers of services, goods and materials within the project area that will be involved in the project's wider supply chain or may be considered for the role of project's suppliers in the future.
- Workers, such as local workers which will be engaged for cash-for-work activities under component 2.
- FAO's Implementing Partners (national and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and private sector construction companies) that are/may be involved in implementation
- Provincial Agricultural, Irrigation and Livestock Department Authorities,
- Provincial River Basin Department Authorities,
- Disaster Management Authorities,
- National seed production companies,
- Small traders.

- Academia (Public and private universities)

These stakeholders will be engaged to facilitate information sharing, leverage their expertise, and ensure their voices are heard. Their influence and support will be integral to successful project implementation.

### 3.4. Disadvantaged / vulnerable individuals or groups

Vulnerable groups and persons may be disproportionately impacted or further disadvantaged by Project activities, and thus may require special engagement efforts to ensure their equal representation in the consultation and decision-making process associated with Project activities. Vulnerability may stem from a person’s origin, gender, age, health condition, economic deficiency and financial insecurity, or disadvantaged status in the community. These include marginalized groups such as vulnerable Farming Households, female headed households or those dependent on other individuals. Engagement with the vulnerable groups and individuals will be carried out through a gender-sensitive citizen engagement to facilitate their participation in Project-related decision making, to ensure that their understanding of and input into the overall process are commensurate to those of the other stakeholders.

Within the Project, the vulnerable or disadvantaged groups may include but are not limited to the following:

- Female farmers
- Female headed households,
- Persons with disabilities,
- Youth, elderly and the cultural sensitivities of diverse ethnic groups and those living in remote or inaccessible areas.

FAO will continue to seek the views of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups during consultations and take these views into account during Project implementation. Information sharing and consultation techniques will be tailored according to the nature and common types of stakeholders. The following tailored measures will apply. See Table 1 below.

Table 1: FAO Tailored Stakeholder Engagement Measures (Disadvantaged/Vulnerable Individuals or Groups).

Stakeholder Group	Limitations to Engagement	Measures/Resources to Facilitate Engagement
Female farmers and female header households	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May feel uncomfortable sharing opinions or raising concerns in the presence of men</li> <li>• Mobility restrictions at local level can prevent women from gathering for consultations or focus groups</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Female facilitators conduct workshops / FGDs, and female data collectors conduct TPM / beneficiary interviews.</li> <li>• Locations of public consultation are close to the homes of those whose engagement is sought; If the community allows, consultations will be conducted at home to provide safer and inclusive environment</li> <li>• Timings of consultations do not interfere with</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Group	Limitations to Engagement	Measures/Resources to Facilitate Engagement
		<p>household / family commitments / obligations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Hold small, gender-disaggregated meetings where female farmers are more comfortable asking questions or raising concerns</li> <li>• Consider adding a back-up, phone-based consultation option when in-person consultation is not possible.</li> </ul>
IDPs and returnees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May feel unwelcome to attend events (fear of discrimination)</li> <li>• May not be informed about public events because they do not access host community communication channels</li> <li>• Varying needs among returnees and potential challenges in accessing consistent educational services</li> <li>• Limited resources and infrastructure</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community and religious leaders usually have a good understanding of the people living in their community and can be engaged to facilitate participation in stakeholder engagement activities through community outreach programmes to understand their specific needs and creating tailored educational resources</li> <li>• Conduct targeted communications aimed at IDP communities to inform them of public consultations</li> <li>• Organize separate engagement events specifically for IDP communities to ensure their particular needs are taken into account</li> </ul>
Pastoral nomads (Kuchis),	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited diversification in livestock production is a major issue</li> <li>• Climate change is expected to increase temperatures, exacerbate drought conditions, may negatively impacting livestock production.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting diversification in livestock production is crucial for enhancing food security and dietary diversity, mostly the Kochies will be included, where applicable.</li> </ul>
Persons with disabilities, Women managed agribusiness	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Not be informed on service delivery</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To engage persons with disabilities and women-managed agribusinesses, it is vital to ensure accessibility through physical accommodations, digital tools, and transportation support.</li> <li>• Encouraging participation via capacity building, mentorship, and leadership opportunities is</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Group	Limitations to Engagement	Measures/Resources to Facilitate Engagement
		<p>key, along with fostering networking through inclusive events.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Providing specialized resources like assistive technologies and market access, as well as collaborating with relevant organizations, ensures sustainable and inclusive engagement in agribusiness development.</li> </ul>
Youth, elderly and the cultural sensitivities of diverse ethnic groups and those living in remote or inaccessible areas.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May have limited knowledge in sustainable practices, technology use, and financial management.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Prioritized to receive tailored support to promote their active participation in agricultural value chains (production of organic and bio-fertilizer, seed production and diversification, high value and horticulture value chain development, soyabean value chain, and dairy production value chain).</li> </ul>

Description of the methods of engagement that will be undertaken by the project is provided in the following sections.

### 3.5 Summary of Project Stakeholder Needs

Table 2 below presents the specific needs identified based on FAO's prior experience.

**Table 2: Project Stakeholder Needs (Summary)**

Stakeholder Group	Consultation Methods	Specific Needs (accessibility, large print, childcare, daytime meetings)
<p>Authorities at provincial, district, and Ministry level</p> <p>[Provincial Agricultural, Irrigation and Livestock Department Authorities, Provincial River Basin Department Authorities, Disaster</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Emails</li> <li>• Nontechnical summary documents</li> <li>• Progress reports</li> <li>• In person meetings</li> <li>• Coordination meetings</li> <li>• Information sharing</li> <li>•</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correspondence and nontechnical documents or progress reports to be shared in English, Dari and Pashto</li> <li>• Meetings during standard working hours</li> <li>• Limited facilities for on-line meetings</li> <li>• Most meetings in Pashto</li> <li>• To support the program at the field level.</li> <li>• To contribute during potential conflict resolution efforts</li> <li>• Conduct face-to-face meetings as needed or meet through implementing partners (IPs).</li> <li>• To ensure transparency</li> </ul>

Stakeholder Group	Consultation Methods	Specific Needs (accessibility, large print, childcare, daytime meetings)
Management Authorities,]		
Local authorities at provincial, district level, who are engaged in the agriculture sector.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Official letters</li> <li>• Emails</li> <li>• Nontechnical summary documents</li> <li>• Progress reports</li> <li>• In person meetings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Correspondence and nontechnical documents or progress reports to be shared in English, Dari and Pashto</li> <li>• Meetings during standard working hours</li> <li>• Limited facilities for on-line meetings</li> <li>• Meetings in local languages, tailored to the context and audience.</li> </ul>
Community leaders and the communities living in the targeted areas, including beneficiaries and vulnerable groups, including vulnerable adolescent youth.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• In person meetings</li> <li>• Banners</li> <li>• Posters</li> <li>• Flyers</li> <li>Radios</li> <li>• In-person meetings</li> <li>• GRM</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All information to be shared in local languages during consultation meetings.</li> <li>• Printed materials in local languages to be in large font, based on community needs.</li> <li>• Information to be shared in formats accessible to non-literate and low-literate audiences.</li> <li>• Meetings in local language.</li> <li>• Time agreed meetings to enable stakeholders to meet family/professional commitments to participate actively.</li> <li>• Ensure confidentiality and protection of personal information when discussing potentially sensitive topics.</li> <li>• Use animation instead of words to communicate specific messages to illiterate groups of the targeted communities.</li> </ul>
FAO's Implementing Partners (national and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and private sector construction companies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Cluster working group in-person meetings</li> <li>• Email</li> <li>• Phone</li> <li>• Flyers</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• All materials to be shared in both English, Dari and Pashto</li> <li>• Printed material to be in large font</li> <li>• Meetings during agreed time working hours</li> <li>• On-line meetings possible</li> </ul>

#### **4. Stakeholder Engagement Program**

To meet best practice approaches, the project will apply the following principles for stakeholder engagement:

- Openness and life-cycle approach: public consultations for the project(s) will be arranged during the whole lifecycle, carried out in an open 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 are provided for communicating stakeholders' feedback, for analyzing and addressing 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 at all times 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 vulnerable groups, in particular women, internally displaced persons (IDPs), returnees, pastoral nomads (Kuchis), persons with disabilities, youth, elderly and the cultural sensitivities of diverse ethnic groups and those living in remote or inaccessible areas.
- Cultural appropriateness. The activities, format, timing, and venue will respect local customs and norms.
- Conflict sensitivity: Considering the complex country context and referring to the humanitarian principles of neutrality and impartiality.
- Gender sensitivity: Consultations will be organized to ensure that both females and males have equal access to them. As necessary, the implementing agencies will organize separate meetings and focus group discussions for males and females, engage facilitators of the same gender as the participants, and provide additional support to facilitate access of facilitators.
- Transparency: Be open and honest with stakeholders about project objectives, limitations, and potential impacts. Share the right information continuously to build trust and avoid misunderstandings.
- Respect: Respect each stakeholder's views, values, and concerns, show empathy by understanding their unique perspectives and the reasons behind their priorities
- Responsiveness: Listen actively and respond to stakeholder feedback. Address concerns promptly and adapt project strategies when feasible, showing stakeholders that their input matters.

##### **4.1. Summary of stakeholder engagement done during project preparation**

Under the Parent Project, FAO has conducted several rounds of consultations with stakeholders (community members) and project affected parties in various provinces. Consultations were held by FAO international and national staff members. At least 13 formal meetings and/or consultation were held at institutional and community levels, including but not limited to interviews and

consultations with farmers and livestock owners, women headed households, Seed Certification Laboratory and Private Seed Enterprises (PSEs), Displaced wheat farmers, River Basin Authority.

In addition, consultations for revision of the SEP were conducted with water users, Mirabs, Key farmers, representatives from watershed benefiting villages and provincial water and agriculture stakeholders in following regions; Kandahar region from 08-12 October 2023, Eastern region from 5-9 November 2023, Southeast region, West region from 10-14 December 2023, and in north region from 18-20 December 2023. During consultation, the participants expressed their appreciation for the EFSP services and supports which includes improved wheat seed, fertilizer distribution, rehabilitation of canals, excavation of trenches and construction of micro check dams for harvesting of rainwater and restoration of rangelands in their respective regions. From the watershed management, the community representatives mentioned that the rainwater harvested in the recent rainfall in the check dams and trenches and livestock owners are using from the stored water, similarly, they satisfied from all EFSP services and supports through improvement of irrigation and agriculture. They requested FAO to continue these types of services as they are facing drought and water shortage, the watershed management and canal rehabilitation reduced the impacts of droughts on their livelihoods.

The SEP was updated for the Additional Financing 1 and consultations were conducted with FAO water users, Mirabs, lead farmers, representatives from watershed benefiting villages and provincial water and agriculture stakeholders in following regions; Kandahar region from 08-12 October 2023, Eastern region from 5-9 November 2023, Southeast region 10-14 December 2023, West region from 10-14 December 2023 with two FAO teams, and in North region from 18-20 December 2023. During consultation, the participants expressed their appreciation for the EFSP services and actions including highlighting the criticality of the support provided through improved wheat seed, fertilizer distribution, rehabilitation of canals, excavation of trenches and construction of micro check dams for harvesting of rainwater, riverbank protection, drainage cleaning, canal rehabilitation/lining, and restoration of rangelands in their respective regions.

The summary of the consultation carried out throughout the parent project and AF-1 Is presented in Annex 3.

During project preparation, twenty-five (25) consultation meetings were conducted Between October 13-17, 2024, meetings were held with stakeholders across eight regions. Three meetings took place in the Eastern Region from October 13-14, four in the Central Region from October 14-15, four in the Northeast Region from October 13-14, three in the Southeast Region from October 14-15, four in the Western Region from October 15-16, four in the Northern Region from October 16-17, and three in the Bamyan Region from October 15-16, 2024. The targeted stakeholders were the representatives from the Department of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Livestock (DAIL), NGOs, and community representative groups (CRGs), with each of the eight regions holding three to four meetings with the stakeholders. Additionally, two (2) more meetings were held: one with representatives from the Directorate of Disaster Management and another with Sub-River Basin Authorities. The summary of the initial consultation meetings conducted as part of the project preparation is presented in Table 3, including a summary of the main concerns and recommendations provided.



**Table 3. Summary of the initial consultations carried out as part of the Additional Financing 2 project preparation.**

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
Sub-River Basin Authorities	<p><b>Summary of the main concerns:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• There is an urgent need for support in cleaning canal facilities, many of which are inactive due to recent floods. The importance of protecting canal infrastructure to ensure the continuity of essential water management services for farmers.</li> <li>• Ensuring sustainable land use practices and the maintenance of irrigation canals.</li> <li>• There are persistent concerns about floods resulting from changes in rainfall patterns and heavy floods with sedimentation, which could damage the weak banks of rivers in the future. Ensuring sustainable land use practices and the maintenance of irrigation canals.</li> </ul>	<p><b>Summary of main Recommendations:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Restoration and conservation of natural floodplains.</li> <li>• Immediate improvement of flood-affected irrigation systems to increase access to water through canal cleaning and the restoration of collapsed or poorly managed water infrastructure along the affected irrigation systems.</li> <li>• Implement river basin activities to increase access to water through canal cleaning and the restoration of collapsed or poorly managed water infrastructure.</li> <li>• Strengthen infrastructure backup systems to ensure resilience.</li> </ul>
Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (DAIL) Representatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Secondary and tertiary canals are badly affected by recent floods, disrupting on-farm water management systems. Farmers cannot convey irrigation water to their agricultural land, necessitating immediate cleaning and rehabilitation of affected irrigation structures along the canals.</li> <li>• The impact of floods on crops and livestock highlights the need for irrigation water post-floods and financial support for farmers for crop and livestock losses.</li> <li>• Current crops and land have been damaged by floods, and households are affected and have no source of income to support them.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Creation of job opportunities for local communities through the implementation of canal rehabilitation and cleaning in the affected communities.</li> <li>• Increased focus on flood management through the protection of riverbanks, improvement of damaged irrigation schemes, and protection of other irrigation schemes threatened by floods.</li> <li>• Strong need for agricultural input support, in particular: (i) High-quality / high-yielding wheat seeds irrigated land (for both higher productivity but also to replenish seed supplies); (ii) Need for fertilizer (DAP/UREA) to ensure higher productivity; and (iii)</li> </ul>

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The Department of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock expressed concern about the persistent flooding, stating that the type and timing of rainfall have changed, vegetative cover has been removed, and floods are destructive.</li> <li>• Requested for extension and longtime support and expressed significant constraints accessing agricultural inputs, most particularly quality seeds, and fertilizer. Local seed supplies were reduced due to lower harvests and lack of cash.</li> <li>• In many cases, farmers reported that the only seeds they had planted were seeds provided by FAO.</li> <li>• Livestock has been mentioned as the major source of livelihood stated by women and men, feed for livestock has been mentioned as important need to sustain this basic source.</li> <li>• Women are primarily responsible for livestock management, women become key player in food security.</li> <li>• Poor condition of livestock owners to provide feeding for their livestock during winter season.</li> <li>• A shortage of animal feed, animal treatment, and vaccines for the affected community.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for spring and off-season crops to supplement food production and incomes.</li> <li>•</li> <li>• Support livestock owners through provision of fodder crops and provision of concentrated animal feeds during winter season, as FAO provided in the past years, requested for extension of support.</li> <li>•</li> <li>• The livelihood of population is mostly dependent on livestock, in continuation of animal health services is incredibly important to support famers households.</li> <li>•</li> <li>• Provision of livestock inputs to the affected communities and facilities for treatment of affected animals.</li> </ul>
Directorate of Disaster Management Representatives	<p><b>Support for natural disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An assessment of areas predicted to be at high risk is needed to avoid natural flood disasters and hazards.</li> <li>• Provision of support for natural disaster mitigation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of Early Warning System Communities (EWSC) in all provinces.</li> <li>• Provide sustainable support for mitigating, preparing for, responding to, and recovering from natural disasters.</li> </ul>

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishment of immediate response mechanisms.</li> <li>• Need for support in natural disaster mitigation, preparedness, response, and recovery.</li> <li>• Evaluation of high-risk areas to mitigate natural flood disasters and hazards.</li> <li>• Implementation of immediate response mechanisms.</li> </ul>	
Community Representative Groups (CRGs) s in all regions	<p><b>Support for canal cleaning facilities:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for support in canal cleaning due to inactive facilities caused by lack of capacity and equipment.</li> <li>• Safety concerns, property damage, compensation, and participation in decision-making highlight the need for support for canal cleaning facilities, many of which are inactive due to lack of capacity and equipment. Similarly, there is a request for extension of canal cleaning efforts.</li> <li>• Farmers are concerned about ongoing flash flooding.</li> <li>• There is a highlighted need for animal feeding as their crops have been damaged by floods, potentially affecting their ability to feed their animals.</li> <li>• Livestock has been identified as a major source of livelihood by both women and men, with feed mentioned as crucial needs to sustain this basic source.</li> <li>• Women, primarily responsible for livestock management, become key players in food security.</li> <li>• Canal cleaning has been carried out by the farmers, but recent floods have filled the canals, causing farmers to face such blockages for the first time.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community-level activities to restore poorly managed water infrastructure.</li> <li>• Rehabilitation of small-scale irrigation infrastructures to improve water access through cash-for-work modalities.</li> <li>• Provision of animal feed, treatment, vaccines, and carcass disposal for affected communities, as most of the feeding crops were damaged by floods.</li> <li>• Support affected people through cash and agricultural input packages.</li> <li>• Creation of employment opportunities for people through the rehabilitation of irrigation infrastructures along rivers, where the riverbanks have been affected by flood impacts.</li> <li>• Support farmers through provision of improved wheat seed and fertilizer to enable smallholder’s farmers to produce high amount of wheat yield from their land and avoid migration to outside from country.</li> <li>• High-quality / high-yielding wheat seeds irrigated land for high production.</li> </ul>

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Some portions of the canals require machinery and construction materials for the people to ensure water flow.</li> <li>• Poor farmers and water users are unable to clean sediments with their own resources.</li> <li>• Request for extension and longtime support.</li> <li>• agricultural inputs, the financial capacity of the farmers is very low, they could not purchase certified wheat seeds and fertilizers, the packages distributed by FAO create more benefit to the farmers. There are not any problems in the quality of wheat seed and fertilizers, need to be add the number of packages to the farmers.</li> <li>• People or communities are faced with a lack of financial resources and other essentials for a minimum standard of living. As such, they cannot meet their basic human needs.</li> <li>• People are getting lose their income resources, young generation leave their houses for seeking daily wage to support their family to outside of the country to Iran, Pakistan and even to European country.</li> </ul>	
NGOs working in the Area	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of irrigation water due to canal sedimentation.</li> <li>• Need improvement of water resources such as canals, riverbank protection, watershed management for recharging of ground water and flood controls.</li> <li>• Restoration and improvement of grazing areas for supporting livestock owners and extension of vegetative coverage of the land.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Irrigation schemes to be rehabilitated, including secondary and tertiary canals, through cash-for-work modalities, as most of the villagers lost their income resources such as crops and livestock.</li> <li>• Canal cleaning, construction, repairing.</li> </ul>

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Support villager through high value and cash crops</li> <li>• Train the farmers, how to link with the market for sailing their product.</li> <li>• Support village women through kitchen gardening packages for their income generation to support their family as per current context.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provision of livestock support in terms of providing animal feed, treatment, prevention.</li> <li>• Support women through kitchen gardening packages.</li> <li>• Support farmers through high value crops as a cash crop to avoid migration outside of the country.</li> </ul>
Private Sector (Agri-businesses, Seed Producers), Parwan-e-Basatan and Jabalsiraj-e-Sabz seed producers.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interest in collaboration to improve agricultural value chains.</li> <li>• Need for investment in modern production and processing facilities.</li> <li>• Limited access to capital for agribusiness expansion.</li> <li>• Insufficient climate-resilient infrastructure for processing and storing crops.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Foster alliances between agribusinesses and farmers to connect with markets.</li> <li>• Encourage investment in climate-resilient technologies and production methods.</li> <li>• Provide financial support mechanisms or access to credit for agribusinesses.</li> <li>• Build climate-resilient infrastructure, such as storage and processing facilities.</li> </ul>
Pastoral nomads (Kuchis),	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Limited diversification in livestock production is a major issue</li> <li>• Climate change is expected to increase temperatures, exacerbate drought conditions, may negatively impacting livestock production</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promoting diversification in livestock production is crucial for enhancing food security and dietary diversity, mostly the Kochies will be included, where applicable.</li> </ul>
IDPs and returnees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May feel unwelcome to attend events (fear of discrimination)</li> <li>• May not be informed about public events because they do not access host community communication channels</li> <li>• Varying needs among returnees and potential challenges in accessing consistent educational services.</li> <li>• Limited resources and infrastructure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Community and religious leaders usually have a good understanding of the people living in their community and can be engaged to facilitate participation in stakeholder engagement activities through community outreach programmes to understand their specific needs and creating tailored educational resources</li> <li>• Conduct targeted communications aimed at IDP communities to inform them of public consultations.</li> </ul>

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organize separate engagement events specifically for IDP communities to ensure their needs are considered.</li> </ul>

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

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan below (Table 4) outlines the engagement process, methods, including sequencing, topics of consultations and target stakeholders. The World Bank and FAO do not tolerate reprisals and retaliation against project stakeholders who share their views about Bank-financed projects.

Table 4: SEP Summary Table

Project stage	Target stakeholders	Topic of consultation / message	Method used	Responsibilities	Frequency/Timeline
Preparation stage	Community Representative Groups (CRGs)	Restoring Agriculture Production Provision of Water and Resilience Service Agriculture value chains	Community consultations Focus Group discussion	FAO/Through IPs	Once during data collection and regularly during information dissemination
	Agriculture, livestock and irrigation department / sub-River Basin	Restoring Agriculture Production Provision of Water and Resilience Service Agriculture value chains	Consultation (information dissemination and information collection)	FAO/Through IPs	Once during data collection

	NGOs working in the Area		Consultation (information dissemination and information collection)	FAO through IPs	Once during project preparation and then as needed
	Afghanistan National Disaster Management Authority (ANDMA-Department)	Information collection on seasonal floods damaging agricultural land, crops and water resources structures	Consultation (information dissemination and information collection)	FAO through IPs	Once during project preparation and then as needed
	Local Farmers and Cooperatives in Kapisa	Market Access Climate-resilient seeds and inputs Financial Facilities	Consultation (information dissemination and information collection)	FAO	Once during project preparation and then as needed
	Private Sector (Agribusinesses, Seed Producers), Parwan-e-Basatan and Jabalsiraj-e-Sabz seed producers	Agriculture value chains Market linkage	Meeting	FAO/IPs	As needed

	Female farmers, landless people,	Restoring Agriculture Production Provision of Water and Resilience Service Agriculture value chains	Consultation (information dissemination and information collection)	FAO/IPs	As needed
	Smallholder farmers	Assisting with improved wheat cultivation package	Information dissemination on Wheat cultivation and sound application of fertilizer	FAO/IPs	During distribution
Implementation stage	Community Representative Groups	Project GRM, Feedback, awareness training on (OHS measures, risks during construction works, waste and hazardous materials management precautions, PPE, ect.)	Consultation meeting, training session	FAO through IP	As needed
	Agriculture, livestock and irrigation department	Information dissemination, feedback, discussion on implementation of their role and responsibility	Consultation meeting, training	FAO through IP	As needed



	Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers- (CGIAR)	Climate resilient seed varieties, high quality seeds for various crops (wheat, barley, potato, chickpea, lentil, perennial sorghum, forage/fodder crops)	Consultation Information collection	FAO	As needed
	NGOs working in the Area	Feedback, information dissemination	Consultation meeting	FAO through IP	As needed

#### 4.3. Proposed strategy to incorporate the views of vulnerable groups

The project will seek the views of vulnerable people such as women headed households, landless, aged people, IDPs and youth through the following methods physical consultation. The following measures will be taken to remove obstacles to full and enabling participation / access to information:

- Offering flexible meeting times: schedule consultations at various times, including weekends, to allow participation from people with different work schedules and personal commitments.
- Proposal for consultation meeting in accessible location.
- Engagement of trusted community leaders to share information and encourage participation from vulnerable groups.
- Ensure clear and simplified communication and allow participants to express their ideas and suggestions without pressure.

Consultations with women from the community will be conducted by IPs' female staff, with the approval of community elders, to gather the views of female-headed households.

## 5. Resources and Responsibilities for implementing stakeholder engagement

FAO as the main implementation agency for the original EFSP project will remain responsible for the implementation of the second Additional Financing to the EFSP project components, with additional partnership with Consortium of International Agricultural Research Centers (CGIAR) agencies and private sector players following the project’s procurement arrangements. FAO already has an existing management structure to implement the project which includes qualified staff and resources to support management of E&S risks and impacts of the project. FAO has one International E&S Specialist, two local Senior E&S Specialists, one Security Advisor, a Plant Protection Specialist, one Gender Specialist, and a PSEA/compliance specialist supporting the project. In addition, the project has engaged 11 regional E&S Safeguard Assistants, of which five positions are under recruitment Process with support from their HQ E&S team.

The management, coordination and implementation of the SEP and its integral tasks will be the responsibility of dedicated team members within FAO PIU and local subcontractors. The Environmental and Social Safeguard Team will oversee the stakeholder engagement activities. The overall responsibility for SEP implementation lies within the Project Implementation Unit (PIU).

FAO has well-demonstrated operational capacity to deliver time-critical development actions across all 34 provinces of Afghanistan. Currently, FAO has 225 national staff in Afghanistan and 15-18 international staff at any one time in-country. FAO has four offices in Kabul, 5 regional offices, and 2 district-level offices. Approximately 71 staff are based in the regional and district offices.

The Implementation Partners (IPs) NGOs and contractors will be continued to be engaged by FAO to implement project activities and work closely with farmers, users and agri-business who will contribute to the project’s implementation through the existing relevant Community Representative Groups (CRGs), Mirabs, and Irrigation Associations. FAO will ensure cascading responsibility of E&S requirements through relevant contractual provisions with contractors and other implementing partners.

The World Bank Monitoring Agent (ARTF-TPMA) will continue to monitor and report on implementation and compliance with the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), ESCP and other environmental and social (E&S) risk management measures.

### 5.1 Implementation Arrangements and Resources

The roles and responsibilities of the organizations are presented below in Table 5. The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) will be responsible for the preparation and physical implementation of the SEP. In case the internal resources at the project appear to be insufficient, the project will also consider engaging a reputed third party in the form of the organization familiar with the region and acceptable to the community. The NGOs would then not only serve as a link between project and the community

Table 5: Organizational Roles and Responsibilities

Role	Responsibility / Accountability
<b>FAO Project Implementation Team</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure proper implementation and follow up of the SEP.</li> <li>• Ensure that contractor’s and FAO employees are informed and trained on the SEP.</li> <li>• Ensure the FAO ESS team reports on time and with the expected and agreed points.</li> <li>• Provide resources to ensure that interests of stakeholders are represented and taken into consideration during implementation of</li> </ul>

	Program.
<b>FAO Project Team Leader</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ensure that employees and subcontractors have in their contracts a stakeholder engagement/community relations management clause and they are aware and trained on the SEP.</li> <li>• Coordinate required SEP support and trainings for staff in coordination with ESS team and Human Resources Manager.</li> </ul>
<b><u>Environmental Social Safeguards Team</u></b>	<p>As the primary interface between the Project and stakeholders, including the local community, the team will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lead the SEP Plan design and implementation and coordinate the results and actions to be taken with the Environmental Specialist and later with the Subcontractor/NGOs Team</li> <li>• Review the SEP viability</li> <li>• Lead day-to-day implementation of the SEP and Community Grievance Mechanism, including proactively maintaining regular contact with affected communities through regular community visits to monitor opinions and provide updates on Project activities, and ensuring communication with vulnerable groups.</li> <li>• Produce stakeholder engagement monitoring reports and submit to Project Implementation Team</li> <li>• Supervise/monitor and coordinate activities with the Project Team Leader to ensure that staff and all sub-contractors comply with the SEP.</li> <li>• Manage the day-to-day working, utilization, implementation of SEP by all parties engaged on the Program.</li> </ul>
<b>NGO, IPs and Contractors</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Comply with requirements stated under this document - Non-compliance will be treated as a disciplinary matter.</li> <li>• Provide assistance if needed to ensure compliance with this plan.</li> <li>• Perform assigned tasks towards meeting SEP objectives.</li> <li>• Communicate concerns, questions or views to their supervisor or the FAO Environmental and Social team.</li> <li>• Provide data related to SEP performance/monitoring as required.</li> </ul>
<b>PIU technical specialists or a private sector technical service provider</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• To provide regular hands-on technical capacity building to the agribusinesses especially on business planning, business expansion.</li> <li>• To outreach and linkages to farmers at farmgate level.</li> <li>• Adoption of innovate technologies on value addition, marketing, branding, ISO / other certifications.</li> </ul>

## 5.2 Resources Required

Effective stakeholder engagement requires sufficient resources. An estimated total of US\$ 500,000 will be needed to implement the SEP activities (see Table 6 below). The budget outlined below does not include the fees for appointed staff, which may be subject to review and adjustment based on consultation needs identified during implementation.

**Table 6: Budget for SEP Implementation**

No	Key activities	Quantity	Estimated Budget (USD)	Remarks
1	Advertisements: social media (Facebook, WhatsApp): visual/written and audio-visual content sent to a network of local actors, female only networks, and other stakeholder groups, including those representing vulnerable groups, and collating feedback, translations). Posting project ESF documents, videos introducing the project, and other promotional materials, and monitoring comments.	Lump sum	0	Embedded within cross sectoral allocation which funds communication within AF
2	Consultation meetings and GRM implementation (events, workshops, printing project brief, GRM posters, and GRM flyers for stakeholders' distribution, notepads, refreshments, etc.). Collaboration with community leaders, water user associations and Mirab in targeted locations to inform about project components and gain support of community members.	Lump sum	100 000	
3	Improvement of the complaints management system (forms, training and monitoring of focal points) and dissemination strategy	Lump sum	50 000	
4	Communication and awareness (in person and over the phone involving local actors, influencers and beneficiaries representing different communities)	Lump sum	50 000	
5	Training for regional teams, Implementing Partners, Contractors and communities (includes training materials, room rental, snacks and team travel)	Lump sum	150 000	
6	Field visits (monitoring and feedback; per diem, transportation, etc.).	Lump sum	150 000	

7	Satisfaction survey to measure the level of satisfaction on services delivery among beneficiaries under the AF EFSP.	Lump sum	0	Embedded within planned activity budget within monitoring component of AF.
<b>Total</b>		<b>500 000</b>		

## 6. Grievance Mechanism (GM)/ Complaint and Feedback Mechanism (CFM)

The objective of a Grievance Mechanism (GM) is to provide a clear, transparent, and efficient process for resolving complaints related to the project. The GM aims to resolve complaints in a timely, effective and efficient manner. Project-level GMs can provide the most effective way for stakeholders to raise issues and concerns about the project that affects them. The GM provides a transparent and credible process for fair, effective and lasting outcomes. It also builds trust and cooperation as an integral component of broader stakeholder engagement, that facilitates corrective actions and helps the community to have ownership of the project. The GM is designed to meet the standard of World Bank's ESS10 ensuring that all grievances, including those related to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) are handled with the utmost sensitivity and care.

FAO Afghanistan is dedicated to being accountable to the affected populations in its operations, and to achieve this commitment, the Country Office (CO) has established a centralized Compliance Unit to oversee its Complaint and Feedback Mechanism (CFM). The primary goal of the CFM is to ensure that beneficiaries, community members, etc. have safe, accessible, and confidential channels to voice any concerns regarding the implementation of FAO's program in Afghanistan. The mechanism will be both proactive and reactive and allow the CO to receive both positive and negative feedback and complaints from beneficiaries, community members, etc., thus ensuring that FAO's programme implementation is continuously improving, adapting as necessary, and beneficiaries are treated fairly. Specifically, the collected feedback and complaints data will guide corrective actions, shaping programmatic and senior management decision-making to foster continuous adaptation and improvement in assistance delivery.

A Grievance Mechanism is a system that allows not only grievances, but also queries, suggestions, positive feedback, and concerns of project-affected parties related to the environmental and social performance of a project to be submitted and responded to in a timely manner.

### 6.1. Description of Grievance Mechanism (GM)

Table 7 below describes the steps for grievance management, as well as the processes involved, the timeframe, and the responsibilities.

Table 7: Grievance Mechanism Steps	Description of process (e.g.)	Timeframe	Responsibility
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GM structure	<p>The EFSP Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) operates on a multi-level to address and resolve complaints efficiently. The first tier focuses on resolving grievances at the local or project level, where community members can voice their concerns directly to project staff. If unresolved, refer the issue to the regional office (the second tier) for further investigation. The third level addresses grievances at the national level, covered by the Central Feedback Mechanism (CFM). The GRM system is functional, received and solved grievances during parent project and in additional financing.</p> <p>The Team has established clear Standard Operation Procedure (SOP) and Guidelines to support the implementation of FAO's CFM/ GRM processes, handling cases at all levels of FAO's operations.</p>	<p>N/A</p> <p>Local GM: 7 days</p> <p>Regional GM: 15 days</p> <p>National GM: 30 days.</p>	<p>FAOAF Compliance Unit, ESS Team, MEAL Unit, Programme Unit.</p>
Grievance uptake	<p>Complaints, Feedback and Grievances can be submitted through the following channels:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Toll-free telephone hotline: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ +93 72 867 0001 operated by FAOAF Call Centre/Compliance Unit,</li> <li>○ AWAAZ (410) which is operated by UNOPS.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Short Message Service (SMS) to +93 72 867 0001</li> <li>• E-mail to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ FAOAF-Compliance@fao.org</li> </ul> </li> <li>• qinvestigations-hotline@fao.org faoaf-feedback@fao.org/faoaf@fao.org</li> <li>• FAO Office of the Inspector General: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ FAO Ethics Point hotline</li> <li>○ investigations-hotline@fao.org</li> </ul> </li> <li>• In-person:</li> </ul>	<p>Always Ongoing</p>	<p>FAO Compliance Unit /</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Grievance Redressal Committees (GRCs) and distribution desks managed by FAO and implementing partners (IP).</li> <li>○ Field Monitoring Associates (FMAs)</li> <li>○ Third Party Additionally, interactions take place through Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) assessments, Field Monitoring Associates (FMA), Provincial Safeguard Monitoring Associates (PSMA), and field missions conducted by the compliance unit. This multifaceted approach ensures comprehensive support and facilitates direct communication between beneficiaries and the organization, promoting transparency and effective resolution of grievances.</li> <li>● Grievance and suggestion boxes are strategically placed at distribution points to facilitate easy access for beneficiaries, ensuring that their feedback and concerns are collected efficiently.</li> <li>● The system is fully functional, and number of cases registered are now closed and reported to the Bank.</li> </ul>		
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Sorting, processing	Any complaint received is promptly forwarded to the compliance unit, where it is logged into the CFM database. Complaints are carefully categorized as either sensitive or non-sensitive based on the nature of the issue. Non-sensitive cases are shared with the relevant team, with a resolution sought within 14 days. Sensitive cases, however, are escalated to the OIG for further action, ensuring appropriate and thorough handling according to established protocols.	7-14 days	Compliance Unit/OIG
Acknowledgement and follow-up	Upon receiving a grievance or complaint, the compliance unit promptly acknowledges receipt to the complainant, either through an email or a phone call. This immediate response ensures that the complainant is informed that their issue is being addressed and reassures them that the matter is under review.	Within 48 hours	Compliance Unit
Verification, investigation, action	The investigation process for a complaint depends on its type and nature. For non-sensitive complaints, the compliance unit conducts a fact-finding process to address the issues raised, rather than a formal investigation. In contrast, if the complaint is classified as sensitive, the Office of the Inspector General (OIG) undertakes a full investigation. Once a proposed resolution has been developed by either the compliance team or the OIG, it is communicated to the complainant by the compliance team, ensuring transparency and timely closure.	Non-sensitive 7-14 days  For Sensitive cases is not clear but must be reported within 24-48 hours	Complaint Unit

Monitoring and evaluation	For effective monitoring and evaluation, the Compliance team consistently gathers data through the Complaint Feedback Mechanism (CFM) on a regular basis. This data is meticulously monitored to track issues and assess patterns across various locations. Based on the insights gained, evaluations are conducted to identify trends, address recurring concerns, and improve service delivery. This systematic approach ensures that the team remains proactive in resolving issues while continuously enhancing the overall quality of the program.	Always Ongoing	Compliance Unit
Provision of feedback	Feedback from complainants on their satisfaction with the resolution of their complaints is actively collected through both surveys and direct phone calls, employing both reactive and proactive approaches. This dual method ensures that the compliance team receives comprehensive insights into the complainants' experiences. Proactive outreach allows for real-time feedback, while surveys provide a structured way to gauge overall satisfaction. This feedback loop is crucial in refining the complaint resolution process, ensuring transparency, accountability, and continuous improvement in addressing the needs and concerns of beneficiaries.	7-14 days and it depends on the nature of the feedback	Compliance Unit

Training	<p>Training needs for staff/consultants in the PIU, Contractors and Supervision Consultants. EFSP has delivered GM trainings to various parties. Per updates from the previous mission, trainings were provided to GRC members (514 participants, of which 24 were women across 8 regions) to strengthen their capacity on grievance management.</p> <p>The Project team has updated GRM manual to include additional guidelines and clarity for grievances resolution under additional financing-1.</p>	As needed	ESS Team
Appeals process	<p>If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, he or she will be informed of further options. The GM will not prevent access to judicial and administrative remedies.</p>	As needed	Compliance Unit

The Labor Management Procedures (LMP) provides a grievance mechanism for workers to raise workplace concerns, which will be followed. Workers will be informed of this grievance mechanism at the time of recruitment and the measures put in place to protect them from any reprisal for its use. The project will put in place measures to make the worker grievance mechanism easily accessible to all project workers. The project will also ensure that the grievance mechanism is easily accessible to all project workers. Additionally, FAO Complaint Feedback Mechanism (CFM) is fully functional, with dedicated hotline numbers for each region. Leaflets outlining the complaint registration procedures, translated into local languages, are usually distributed by FAO Compliance team and implementing partners (IPs) working in the field. Furthermore, GRM awareness training will be provided to all workers, teaching them how to safely report grievances or suggest solutions. Contractors must induct the employees on the applicable workers grievance mechanism and make them aware of their rights. All records of induction shall be kept and made available for inspection by FAO or The World Bank. In case of violation, the aggrieved employee must capture and present the details of the grievance to the person they report to or the supervisor's superior in case of conflict of interest. The supervisor will verify the details and seek to address the matter within the shortest time (up to 48 hours). The supervisor will escalate the matter if not resolved within 48 hours. Where the formal courts are accessible and functional, when the complaint has regards with national law and when no resolution is found, the employee can escalate the matter to the sector specific institutions or courts who will resolve the matter between employer and employee. The current practice for GM awareness training involves Senior Environmental and Social Safeguard Specialists conducting GRM training for regional Social and Environmental Safeguard (E&S) officers and relevant project staff. This training enables them to educate GRC members about their roles and responsibilities, as well as to inform contractors and IP staff. The regional E&S officers will support GRC members, contractors, and IP GRM focal points in disseminating GRM information to

project areas, ensuring stakeholders and beneficiaries are informed about the GRM services. The project will also continuously monitor the functioning of the GRM, including the types of complaints registered and beneficiary feedback. Regional E&S officers are responsible for disseminating information among project beneficiaries and stakeholders about grievance uptake channels, procedures, and timelines. FAO's CFM team has developed leaflets and posters on how to register complaints or grievances, which are distributed in project areas to inform people on how to use the grievance service.

GM functionality under the parent and AF projects:

Prior to initiating construction work, the FAO's IPs establish Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs) at the sub-project level during the planning and design stage. Following dissolution of CDCs, the Community Representative Groups (CRGs) represent their respective communities in the GRCs. During consultation with CRGs, IPs describe the roles and responsibilities, including functionality and services of the GRC members. The community usually selects a representative from a village who can organize, lead and persuade the villagers.

The Affected Person/complainant (or his/her representative) can submit his/her complaint in several ways e.g. by written letter, phone, SMS messages and email to the GRC or, alternatively, raise his/her voice in a public or individual meeting with project staff. If resolution at subproject/community level is unsuccessful, the Affected Person (AP)/complainant can take his or her complaint to a Project level GRC.

A delay in grievances resolution could constitute another grievance or could result in mistrust which could damage the project image and willingness to resolve complaints. Grievances will be handled promptly within the specified period.

The local GRCs also help in disseminating GM information in their respective areas to inform people on various channels to access the GRC, FAO and partners. Grievances from women refers by the men or women representatives to the project staff.

Based on consultations and endorsement from CRGs, the female farmers nominate elderly female members to act as GRC members. Elderly women have less restriction as compared to a young woman. The elderly female who has reached an advanced age can play a vital role in their respective communities and through them, other women in the community can be reached. They have the capacity, wisdom and life experience to represent female farmers and other female beneficiaries. This is the approach adopted to ensure inclusion of women and girls throughout the project implementation. This step involves informing those who have raised complaints, concerns, or grievances of the resolutions to the issues they have raised. Whenever possible, complainants should be informed of the proposed resolution in person, which gives them the opportunity to ask follow-up questions. If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, he or she will be informed of further options. The GRM would not prevent access to judicial and administrative remedies. Each complaint must be closed within thirty (30) days of receipt - either resolved, withdrawn, or escalated.

In addition, the FAO call center function is centralized, ensuring efficient management of data by trained professionals while prioritizing confidentiality.

Telephone Hotline: The complainant can report his/her grievance verbally to a dedicated telephone hotline (the number of which will be disseminated in the Project areas). This number will be active during official times: from 8:00am to 4:30 pm from Sunday to Thursday except during public holidays. Table 8 includes all the numbers in all the regions:

Table 8: Telephone number for each region

Phone Hotline Number/ Email/ Suggestion box	Region
0728670001	Kabul
0728670002	Bamyan
0728670003	Mazar
0728670004	Kunduz
0728670005	Nangarhar
0728670006	Gardez
0728670007	Herat
0708210210	Kandahar
410	Awaz Afghanistan
+93708210210	WhatsApp (including voice messages)
(+39) 06 570 55550	Fax
Investigations-hotline@fao.org	Email of the OIG
Suggestion box address	All Project site

FAO also maintain a partnership with AWAAZ's Afghanistan's Interagency call center (410) and have close coordination for managing beneficiaries' concerns related to FAO interventions.

To ensure the effectiveness of the GRM, several grievances and complaints have been received, resolved, and reported in the World Bank Implementation Support Mission, as well as in the Quarterly Progress Reports (QPRs) regularly. To further strengthen the GRM/CFM under additional financing, the Safeguard and Compliance teams have jointly planned regional Environmental and Social Safeguard and Compliance Awareness Training for FAO staff, implementing partners (IPs), construction company staff, Provincial Safeguard Monitoring Associates (PSMAs), and Field Monitoring Associates (FMAs) in the regions including awareness trainings on SEA/SH issues and Anti-Fraud. Training has been completed in North, Central, East, West, Southeast and Central Highland regions, with the remaining two regions, South and Northeast, scheduled for November 2024. Participants are encouraged to relay the requirements and information to the targeted beneficiaries. FAO through its Office of the Inspector General (OIG) inspection officer might engage sanction toward contractors according to the Vendor Sanction Policy. Where the formal courts are not accessible, do not exist in an area, or cannot render a judgment, the matter shall be reported to and handled under the PIU, through the Project Grievance Mechanism (GM).

The contractor shall keep records of all proceedings of grievance redress that are within their jurisdiction and provide all details as part of the periodic progress reports to FAO. In case of risk of retaliation, the employee may immediately escalate to the court system or to the PIU as noted under. If confidentiality is requested, the PIU will ensure it to avoid any risk of retaliation, including in its follow-up actions. FAO has whistleblower protection policy to promote integrity, transparency, and accountability by enabling FAO employees and partners to report misconduct, including fraud, harassment, and abuse. It offers confidentiality, anonymous reporting options, and

protections against retaliation, fostering a safe environment for raising concerns. The Environmental and Social Safeguards team will disseminate this policy among the stakeholders and include relevant aspects in the trainings sessions.

All grievances of sexual nature (GBV/sexual harassment/Sexual Exploitation and Abuse) should follow the GBV/SEA/SH Action Plan referral pathways and complaints resolution mechanism. The reporting process of incidents (or grievance mechanism) regarding GBV/SEA/SH related misconducts or prohibited practices involves in-country Focal Point on the matter, the Head of Office, the Ethics Officer based at the Headquarters and the OIG. This procedure is intended for all GBV/SEA/SH related matters involving FAO project personnel, including implementing partners and contractors. If any of the standards and policies are revised during the lifetime of the project, the latest versions will be respected. FAO should report allegation of SEA/SH through the UN's SEA iTracker and inform the Bank within 48 hours of having opened an investigation into a SEA/SH case.

For GBV-GM and reporting, the incidence response guidance on SEA/SH will be followed. For ease of reference, specific guidance on considerations for GMs receiving SEA/SH complaints is included in the Interim Technical Note: Grievance Mechanisms for SEA/SH in World Bank-financed Projects. Guidance on effective response and reporting of cases to management is set out in Chapter 5 of the Major Civil Works GPN (page 53) and in Human Development Operations (page 38)<sup>1</sup>.

### **GM functionality under the parent and AF projects**

EFSP reported a total of 221 (parent 117 and AF: 104) submissions of feedback and complaints during 2023 to 2024. All submissions were by male and the cases are closed. The most common complaint reported were about beneficiaries' selection (inclusion & exclusion issues, registration and entitlement) 33 percent, followed by delivery time of packages (seeds and fertilizer along with necessary tools and technical advice) 22 percent, and quality of service (1.4 percent) and the remaining 43 percent were inquiries and feedback.

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<sup>1</sup> In some projects, the GM could be adapted to receive SEA/SH allegations/complaints. If so, the responses should follow a survivor-centered approach that prioritizes survivors' dignity, confidentiality and safety, and the project accountability and response framework. Kindly refer to the Good Practice Notes on Addressing SEA/SH in Investment Project Financing involving [Major Civil Works](#) (page 53) and in [Human Development Operations](#) (page 38).

## **7. Monitoring and Reporting**

### **7.1. Summary of how SEP will be monitored and reported upon**

The SEP will be monitored based on both qualitative reporting (based on progress reports) and quantitative reporting linked to results indicators on stakeholder engagement and grievance performance.

The project will rely on direct field monitoring of FAO regional and central staff during field visits, regular implementing agency reports, Third-Party Monitoring Agent (TPMA), Media Monitoring, and Remote Monitoring, where applicable, and verification processes of Project implementation. At decentralized Provincial and District levels through real monitors, will be included in regular follow-up and monitoring to ensure that activities are carried out according to the objectives and indicators defined in the project document.

FAO's responsibilities include:

- Monitoring progress against planned activities and indicating the delays and challenges of planned implementation.
- Determining and addressing the causes for the delay or non-implementation of activities in the annual plan; and information sharing and reporting on implementation progress, delays and challenges in implementation.

SEP reporting will include the following:

- (i) Progress reporting on the ESS10-Stakeholder Engagement commitments under the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).
- (ii) Cumulative qualitative reporting on the feedback received during SEP activities, in particular (a) issues that have been raised that can be addressed through changes in project scope and design, and reflected in the basic documentation such as the Project Appraisal Document, Environmental and Social Assessment, Resettlement Plan, Indigenous Peoples Plan, or SEA/SH Action Plan, if needed; (b) issues that have been raised and can be addressed during project implementation; (c) issues that have been raised that are beyond the scope of the project and are better addressed through alternative projects, programs or initiatives; and (d) issues that cannot be addressed by the project due to technical, jurisdictional or excessive cost-associated reasons. Minutes of meetings summarizing the views of the attendees can also be annexed to the monitoring reports.
- (iii) Quantitative reporting based on the indicators included in the SEP.

### **7.2 Reporting back to stakeholder groups**

The SEP will be revised and updated as necessary during project implementation.

The SEP will be periodically revised and updated as necessary during project implementation to ensure that the information presented herein is consistent and is the most recent, and that the identified 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 SEP.

Periodic 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 designated GM officer, and referred to the senior management of the project. The 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.

Monthly summaries and internal reports on public complaints, inquiries and incidents, together with the status of implementation of the correction/prevention associated with the actions will be compiled by the responsible staff and sent to the PIU. Monthly summaries will inform the number and nature of complaints and requests for information, as well as the project’s ability to address them in a timely and effective manner. The quarterly report on stakeholder engagement will be prepared and submitted to the World Bank.

### 7.3. Indicators

Table 9: key Project GRM performance indicators

#	INDICATOR	RESPONSIBILITY
1	Percentage of public grievances received within a reporting period (e.g. monthly, quarterly, or annually) and number of those resolved within the prescribed timeline. Sex-disaggregated data should be provided.	FAO
2	Number of channels and frequency of information provided to stakeholders	FAO
3	Number of community awareness and training on the functioning of the GRM;	FAO
4	Number of press releases published or broadcasted in local, regional and national media;	FAO
5	Number of training programs on GM management for key project stakeholders;	FAO
6	Number of complaints handled within the prescribed time;	FAO
7	Number of complaints received regarding GBV/SEA/SH.	FAO

The monitoring of indicators will involve employing reliable data collection methods to track progress through regular evaluation. This process can incorporate quantitative methods, such as tracking percentages, counts, or ratios, alongside qualitative approaches. Conducting periodic reviews and making necessary adjustments will ensure alignment with objectives, enabling timely responses to challenges and maximizing overall effectiveness.



## Annexes

- Annex 1. Template to capture minutes/records of consultation meetings
- Annex 2. Sample Table: Monitoring and Reporting on the SEP

### Annex 1: Template to Capture Consultation Minutes

Stakeholder (Group or Individual)	Summary of Feedback	Response of Project Implementation Team	Follow-up Action/Next Steps

### Annex 2. Sample Table: Monitoring and Reporting on the SEP

Key evaluation questions	Specific questions	Evaluation	Potential Indicators	Data Collection Methods
<p><b>GM.</b> To what extent have project-affected parties been provided with accessible and inclusive means to raise issues and grievances? Has the implementing agency responded to and managed such grievances?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are project-affected parties raising issues and grievances?</li> <li>• How quickly/effectively are the grievances resolved?</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usage of GM and/or feedback mechanisms</li> <li>• Requests for information from relevant agencies.</li> <li>• Use of suggestion boxes placed in the villages/project communities.</li> <li>• Number of grievances raised by workers, disaggregated by gender of workers and worksite, resolved within a specified time frame.</li> <li>• Number of Sexual Exploitation, and Abuse/Sexual</li> </ul>	Records from the implementing agency and other relevant agencies

		<p>Harassment (SEA/SH) cases reported in the project areas, which were referred for health, social, legal and security support according to the referral process in place. (if applicable)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of grievances that have been (i) opened, (ii) opened for more than 30 days, (iii) resolved, (iv) closed, and (v) number of responses that satisfied the complainants, during the reporting period disaggregated by category of grievance, gender, age, and location of complainant.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Stakeholder engagement impact on project design and implementation.</b> How have engagement activities made a difference in project design and implementation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Was there interest and support for the project?</li> <li>• Were there any adjustments made during project design and implementation based on the feedback received?</li> <li>• Was priority information disclosed to relevant parties throughout the project cycle?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Active participation of stakeholders in activities</li> <li>• Number of actions taken in a timely manner in response to feedback received during consultation sessions with project affected parties.</li> </ul>	<p>Stakeholder Consultation Attendance Sheets/Minutes</p> <p>Evaluation forms</p> <p>Structured surveys</p> <p>Social media/traditional media entries on the project results</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of consultation meetings and public discussions where the feedback and recommendation received is reflected in project design and implementation.</li> <li>• Number of disaggregated engagement sessions held, focused on at-risk groups in the project.</li> </ul>	
<p><b>Implementation effectiveness.</b> Were stakeholder engagement activities effective in implementation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Were the activities implemented as planned? Why or why not?</li> <li>• Was the stakeholder engagement approach inclusive of disaggregated groups? Why or why not?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Percentage of SEP activities implemented.</li> <li>• Key barriers to participation identified with stakeholder representatives.</li> <li>• Number of adjustments made in the stakeholder engagement approach to improve projects' outreach, inclusion and effectiveness.</li> </ul>	<p>Communication Strategy (Consultation Schedule)</p> <p>Periodic Focus Group Discussions</p> <p>Face-to-face meetings and/or Focus Group discussions with Vulnerable Groups or their representatives</p>

Annex 3. Summary of concerns raised from stakeholders' consultations during the Parent project and Additional Financing 1 implementation.

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
<p>Wheat farmers in Herat – November 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Significantly <b>reduced wheat harvests</b> in 2021, largely due to heavy <u>drought</u> conditions.               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Rain-fed wheat production was typically 60-80% below normal yields and some farmers reported total crop failure.</li> <li>○ Irrigated agriculture was less affected, with yields typically 20-30% below historic averages.</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Lack of <b>employment/cash-earning</b> opportunities: following August 2021 transition, a dramatic decline in seasonal/casual labour opportunities, both in agricultural sector and urban informal sector. Led to dramatic cash shortages in households.</li> <li>➤ Very limited/inexistent <b>cash earning opportunities</b> led to dramatic increase in debts. Rural households began experiencing debt in Q4, with borrowing the only option for food expenditures plus all other consumption.</li> <li>➤ Significant constraints <b>accessing agricultural inputs</b>, most particularly quality seeds and fertilizer. Local seed supplies</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Strong need for agricultural input support, in particular               <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High-quality / high-yielding wheat seeds irrigated land (for both higher productivity but also to replenish seed supplies).</li> <li>○ Need for fertilizer (DAP/UREA) to ensure higher productivity.</li> <li>○ Need for spring and off-season crops to supplement food production and incomes.</li> <li>○ Need to increase access to water (rehabilitation of small-scale irrigation infrastructures using cash-for-work (double objective))</li> </ul> </li> <li>➤ Need for income earning opportunities given household liquidity challenges/debts</li> </ul>

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
	<p>reduced due to lower harvests and lack of cash.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ In many cases, farmers reported that the only seeds they had planted were seeds provided by FAO.</li> <li>➤ The only employment opportunities were <b>in Iran</b>, (given that there were no opportunities in Herat/Kabul) although authorities were making this increasingly difficult.</li> <li>➤ Farmers were worried about the <b>continuing drought</b>.</li> </ul>	
<p>Displaced farmers from Ghor – November 2021</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Displaced farmers reported that up to <b>25-30% of households had been forced to move</b> from districts in Ghor due to almost complete crop failure in the 2021 wheat season on irrigated land.</li> <li>• <b>Dramatic livelihood collapse</b> reported in households with no cash to access food/agricultural inputs.</li> <li>• The only households that remained were those with <b>limited livestock holdings</b>. Once households had been forced to sell their last livestock they were forced to leave.</li> <li>• <b>No labour opportunities</b> in Herat or Kabul.</li> <li>• <b>Need agricultural inputs and cash to return</b> to their communities.</li> <li>• Suggested that the drought/economic collapse-induced crisis was</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for return package to support return (seeds/cash)</li> <li>• Need for livestock feed/support to animal health (potentially in addition to cash; Cash + approach)</li> </ul>

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
	<p>the <b>worst that had been seen for 50+ years.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>None had received humanitarian assistance</b> in Herat and all were relying on handouts from “passers-by”.</li> </ul>	
<p>Farmers and livestock owners/pastoralists in 6 districts of Kandahar - January/Feb 2022</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultations in six districts with farmers and livestock owners/pastoralists/livestock market traders/fruit growers (pomegranate)/ agri-business players (juice)</li> <li>• Acute crisis reported. <u>Farmers reported.</u></li> <li>• <b>Deep debt</b> amongst farmers. The worst that they had seen in their lifetimes.</li> <li>• <b>Widespread crop failure</b> in rainfed areas and <b>moderate reductions in irrigated</b> areas.</li> <li>• Having <b>exhausted cash reserves</b>, due to reduced harvests and total collapse of seasonal or irregular employment opportunities.</li> <li>• <b>Having to borrow</b> from multiple sources, even for the smallest of purchases (e.g. milk for children).</li> <li>• <b>Heavy asset depletion</b> (particularly livestock).</li> <li>• <b>Very marginal sharecropping arrangements (80:20)</b></li> <li>• Despite recent rains, farmers reported that the vast majority were <b>only planting very limited areas on irrigated land,</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Need for large-scale response to support both short-term and medium-term needs.</li> <li>• Need to prevent livelihood collapse in the short term and to enable farmers to escape the debt trap.</li> <li>• In particular <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Agricultural inputs (wheat/vegetable/summer crops etc. + fertilizer)</li> <li>○ Livestock support</li> <li>○ Cash/employment opportunities key to address debt and re-introduce liquidity into households.</li> </ul> </li> <li>• Support to increase access to water both in terms of restoring collapsed/poorly managed water infrastructure (using cash for work modality) and to support the development of larger irrigation schemes.</li> <li>• Need to generate labour/employment opportunities, given the contraction in traditional labour sectors (orchards / casual urban labour)</li> </ul>

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
	<p>with some planting on rainfed areas.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farmers <b>receiving FAO wheat packages</b> reported that they were not planting any other seeds due to lack of cash.</li> <li>• Deep concerns regarding <b>livelihood fragility and the potential for collapse</b> and inevitable displacement, given very high levels of debt and very poor cropping sharing arrangements.</li> <li>• The critical importance of <b>water access</b> highlighted, whether from kharez, wells or gravity irrigation <u>Pastoralists (kuchi) reported.</u></li> <li>• <b>High levels of distress selling</b> since mid-2021 with herd reductions ranging from 60-80%.</li> <li>• <b>Continued weekly/monthly selling of livestock</b> to (1) pay for food for families; and (2) pay for feed for livestock (livestock selling normally peaks in October, but the last nine months had seen continuous selling).</li> <li>• Many animals were in very poor conditions, with clear evidence of pests and disease in the herds (e.g. PPR).</li> <li>• Herders were holding on to <b>healthy young females for restocking.</b></li> <li>• It would take <b>them 2-4 years to restock.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Livestock feed / animal health support</li> <li>• Support to restocking</li> <li>• Income-earning/employment opportunities</li> </ul>

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One elderly pastoralist reported the situation was the <b>worst that he had seen in his lifetime</b> (his herd had been 160 in January 2021 and was reduced to 18 by late January 2022). He was selling 2 sheep for AFS200 for food for his family and feed for his surviving animals.</li> </ul> <p><u>Livestock market traders reported:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>Virtual disappearance of urban demand</b> for animals for slaughter.</li> <li>Continuous <b>distress selling</b> of low value/low-quality animals <b>with 80% reductions in prices</b> (as compared to healthy animals).</li> <li>Some sellers were <b>building up stocks</b> of animals for later selling given the very low prices (and upcoming demand for female livestock for restocking).</li> </ul> <p><u>Fruit producers (pomegranate/grapes) highlighted:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Market collapse for both domestic and international (Pakistan/India) markets.</li> <li>Payment challenges for exports.</li> <li>Reported on their significant reductions in labour demand given market contraction.</li> </ul> <p><u>Agri-business</u></p>	



Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Visited a <b>medium-size business</b> owners with a juice bottling and canning factory (mainly pomegranate)</li> <li>• His market was 60% domestic / 40% international</li> <li>• He reported <b>significant drops in demand</b> and losses</li> <li>• <b>Factory was not working</b> during our visit. Was working same time previous year.</li> </ul>	
Injil and Guzara districts, Herat	<p>Consultations with women dependent on agriculture and livestock-based livelihoods:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Low nutritional-awareness:</b> Most of the women involved in the consultations reported that they have no or very limited information on soybean nutritional benefit/value and proper utilization in rural and urban areas in the country</li> <li>• <b>Low nutritional-awareness:</b> Women reported that soybean is still not accepted by households due to a lack of awareness regarding its nutritional benefits and cooking methods.</li> <li>• <b>Market availability:</b> Women reported that soybean flour is often unavailable in local markets, constraining its use at the household level with limited awareness amongst retailers of the</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Increase training programs for women in particular regarding both the nutritional benefits of soybean and on the preparation of food/meals</li> <li>• Conduct an awareness-raising program for retailers and wholesalers regarding the storage and value of soybean.</li> <li>• Design and implement trainings aimed at empowering women by considering all other social and cultural factors such as access to resources and gender relations in order to plan for their influence on the training outcome.</li> <li>• Training: Create groups of female trainers to raise awareness of soybean products and undertake training-of-training activities to build their capacity in this regard. Identify activities to raise overall community awareness and acceptance of soybean products.</li> <li>• Increase women’s knowledge and capacity with regard to soybean production (as some of them own or have access to suitable land) as a basis for increased income-generation and diversification.</li> </ul>

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
	<p>potential market/demand for soybean products.</p>	<p>Ensure that principles of justice, equality and dignity shape beneficiary selection (thereby minimising the risks of distortionary selection by community leaders).</p>
<p>Consultations with Women’s Groups in Sholger and Dihdadi Districts in Balkh Province and Sheberghan District in Jowzjan Province and various districts in Takhar Province</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Impact of economic crisis:</b> Almost all rural households have been heavily affected by the post-August 2021 economic crisis. The poorest households were often hit hardest. The loss of jobs, incomes and casual labour opportunities reduced cash availability in households.</li> <li>● <b>Continuing effects of COVID-19:</b> The economic lockdown linked to COVID-19 hit rural households through reduced income-earning opportunities and market constriction. Women lost jobs, both formal and informal, and overall job insecurity increased. This had direct negative impacts on household poverty levels.</li> <li>● <b>Nutritional status of children:</b> Women reported that the nutritional status of children, particularly those under-five years old, deteriorated significantly in 2021.</li> <li>● <b>Lack of processing knowledge and capacity:</b> Women identified a lack of knowledge about soybean processing and on the one hand and the under-development of local soybean markets as</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Support continuous involvement of women in Common Interest Groups (CIGs).</li> <li>● Continue to provide inputs to encourage soybean uptake (e.g provide seed, equipment for the preparation of soybean food items and to support the economic empowerment of women/women’s groups)</li> <li>● Upscaling: Expand this programme to other districts/provinces with high-potential for soybean uptake with a focus on both household’s diets and small enterprise development</li> <li>● Conduct the awareness-raising programs focussed on nutrition/consumption and small business development</li> <li>● Conduct awareness-raising programmes retailers/wholesalers</li> <li>● Provide integrated support packages to women, focusing on the most vulnerable and food insecure (including female-headed households/mothers with very young children) Provision of required input and machinery</li> </ul>

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
	<p>significant constraints. Most of women in both cities and districts lacked awareness about the potential nutritional value of contribution of soybean to daily diets.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Importance of training:</b> Training participants highlighted the value, importance and utility of training, in particular with regard to demonstration of soybean processing and its utilization and its positive impact on family nutritional status and diets.</li> <li>● <b>Impacts on food insecurity:</b> Food insecure farmers and consumers benefit from increased availability, access and utilization of improved soybean seed and soya flour and commercially produced nutritious soya-based food products.</li> <li>● <b>Sustainability challenges:</b> Women recognised the potential value and contribution of soybean in terms of food security and livelihoods but recognised that more direct support would be required (in terms of agricultural inputs, support to processing and training) for soybean to be adopted sustainably.</li> </ul>	
Helmand River Basin Authority	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Support to watershed management facilities:</b> highlighting the need for support to upstream facilities, many of which are inactive due to lack of capacity/equipment. The</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Community-level activities to increase access to water by restoring collapsed/poorly managed water infrastructure (using cash-for-work modalities)</li> </ul>

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
	<p>importance of these facilities/stations for water measurement and early warning system were highlighted.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Community-level catchment structures:</b> Highlighted the importance of community-level construction of local water catchment structures to be built to store more water and recharge underground areas.</li> </ul>	
<b>Afghanistan Seed Sector</b>		
<p>Head of Urdo Khan Research Farm, Enjil district, Herat Province (Jan 2022)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Seed security risks:</b> Highlighted risks to the current seed supply sector, in particular with regard to (1) Breeder Seeds (BS) (2) Foundation Seeds (FS) and Certified Seeds (CS) in 2022/2023</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Identify modalities for ensuring sufficient production of breeder, foundation and certified seeds in 2022/2023 in ways that do not cross “red lines” regarding sanctions (and licenses).</li> </ul>
<b>Community Representatives</b>		
<p>Community Representatives in Gardiz Kandahar (08-12 Oct-2023)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Support to watershed management facilities:</b> highlighted the need for support to upstream facilities, many of which are inactive due to lack of capacity/equipment. The importance of these facilities/stations for water measurement and early warning system were highlighted. Same as previous, request for extension.</li> <li>• <b>Community-level catchment structures:</b> Highlighted the importance of community-level construction of local water</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Community-level activities to increase access to water by restoring collapsed/poorly managed water infrastructure (using cash-for-work modalities).</li> <li>➤ Requested for using cash for work modality for period from 20 days to 40 days or more)</li> </ul>

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
	<p>catchment structures to be built to store more water and recharge underground areas. Request for extension and longtime support.</p>	
<p>Community Representatives in eastern Region (5-9 Nov 2023).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Support to watershed management facilities:</b> highlighted the need for support to upstream facilities, many of which are inactive due to lack of capacity/equipment. Same as previous, request for extension.</li> <li>● <b>Community-level catchment structures:</b> Highlighted the importance of community-level construction of local water catchment structures to be built to store more water and recharge underground areas. Request for extension and longtime support. Significant constraints accessing agricultural inputs, most particularly quality seeds and fertilizer. Local seed supplies reduced due to lower harvests and lack of cash.</li> <li>● <b>In many cases,</b> farmers reported that the only seeds they had planted were seeds provided by FAO.</li> <li>● Farmers were worried about the <b>continuing drought.</b></li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Community-level activities to increase access to water by restoring collapsed/poorly managed water infrastructure (using cash-for-work modalities).</li> <li>➤ Requested for using cash for work modality for period from 20 days to 40 days or more)</li> <li>➤ Strong need for agricultural input support, in particular <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High-quality / high-yielding wheat seeds irrigated land (for both higher productivity but also to replenish seed supplies).</li> <li>○ Need for fertilizer (DAP/UREA) to ensure higher productivity.</li> <li>○ Need to increase access to water (rehabilitation of small-scale irrigation infrastructures using cash-for-work (double objective)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Community Representatives in southeast Region 10-14 December 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● <b>Support to watershed management facilities:</b> highlighted the need for support to upstream facilities, many of which are inactive due to lack of</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Community-level activities to increase access to water by restoring collapsed/poorly managed water infrastructure (using cash-for-work modalities).</li> </ul>

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
	<p>capacity/equipment. Same as previous, request for extension.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ <b>Community-level catchment structures:</b> Highlighted the importance of community-level construction of local water catchment structures to be built to store more water and recharge underground areas. Request for extension and longtime support. Significant constraints <b>accessing agricultural inputs</b>, most particularly quality seeds and fertilizer. Local seed supplies reduced due to lower harvests and lack of cash.</li> <li>➤ In many cases, farmers reported that the only seeds they had planted were seeds provided by FAO. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farmers were worried about the <b>continuing drought</b>.</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p><b>Same concerns were replicated</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Requested for using cash for work modality for period from 20 days to 40 days or more)</li> <li>➤ Strong need for agricultural input support, in particular <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ High-quality / high-yielding wheat seeds irrigated land (for both higher productivity but also to replenish seed supplies).</li> <li>○ Need for fertilizer (DAP/UREA) to ensure higher productivity.</li> <li>○ Need to increase access to water (rehabilitation of small-scale irrigation infrastructures using cash-for-work (double objective)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p>Community Representatives West Region 10-14 December 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>In addition to above same concerns, added below points as well:</b></li> <li>• livestock has been mentioned as the major source of livelihood stated by women and men, animal shelter and feed for livestock has been mentioned as important need to sustain this basic source.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Provision of hygiene kit for safe handling of dairy products is another need to be focused.</li> <li>➤ -Animal feed packages need to be provided for livestock owners, mostly women engaged in the livestock production.</li> </ul>

Stakeholders	Responses/Concerns about the project	Recommendations/Suggestions
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Women are primarily responsible for livestock management, women become key player in food security.</li> </ul>	
<p>University professors 06 Dec 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Pest and disease affect the production.</li> <li>• Absence of agricultural extension worker to improve their agricultural practices.</li> <li>• Lack of pruning and training equipment and facilities</li> <li>• Poor fruit fruits harvesting practices in the field.</li> <li>• Lack of value chain system</li> <li>• Poor marketing system</li> <li>• Women are involved in Fruit processing at household level, but in poor condition</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ IPM method need to be deliver to the farmers.</li> <li>➤ Establishment Farmers Field schools for training</li> <li>➤ Need to provide fruit harvesting equipment to the farmers.</li> <li>➤ Need awareness on packing, grading and sorting of precooling facilities.</li> <li>➤ Need to provide facilities for village women proper processing of the fruits.</li> </ul>
<p>➤ Action Aid Afghanistan (INGO-Implementing partner) in Herat 29 Dec 2023</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lack of irrigation water because of drought</li> <li>• Lack of drinking water because of lowering of ground water table in the wells.</li> <li>• Drying up of the Karezes</li> <li>• Livestock Shelter because if the recent earthquake shock.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>➤ Irrigation schemes to be rehabilitated and schemes to be built with high efficiency (lining in the canal to minimize water loss)</li> <li>➤ High efficiency irrigation systems (HIES such as drip systems) to be introduced.</li> <li>➤ Watershed management through bioengineering (agroforestry) and structural measures (contour trenches-water harvesting, check dams for ground water recharge and reservoirs for water storage).</li> <li>➤ Drinking water supply for the community to be preserved (ponds, karezes and to be cleaned/constructed/repared)</li> <li>➤ Cost effective livestock shelter to be constructed.</li> <li>➤ Livestock water points such as Karezes and ponds to be constructed/repared.</li> </ul>