

Annex 9: Stakeholder Engagement Plan

1. Introduction

This Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) for the Africa Minigrids Program (AMP) in Ethiopia defines how the AMP will identify and engage key stakeholders, and integrate their inputs into project implementation and risk management. Implementation of this plan will provide stakeholders with meaningful access to dialogue and decision-making in the development and implementation of the project. By providing channels for all stakeholders, including the disadvantaged and vulnerable, effective stakeholder engagement helps to ensure understanding, acceptance, and ownership of the project, thereby strengthening its benefits and sustainability.

Stakeholder engagement is an end in itself, ensuring that no one is left behind and that disadvantaged and vulnerable project stakeholders have a voice in project development and implementation. It is also a means for improving project design, identifying and managing risks, and ensuring transparency, accountability and integrity. In this light, one important purpose of this plan is to provide a feedback and monitoring mechanism to ensure the project is achieving its intended results, and identifies potential unintended consequences.

The development and implementation of the SEP is part of the UNDP Social and Environmental Safeguards (SES) requirements. Hence, the presented SEP will be reviewed and updated during the course of the social and environmental assessment processes required for the development of the project's Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF). See Annexes 6 (Social and Environmental Screening Procedure) and 10 (Environmental and Social Management Framework) for a full characterization of the social and environmental risks of the project, as well as proposed actions to manage them.

2. Summary of project strategy and outputs

The objective of the Africa Minigrids Program (AMP) in Ethiopia is supporting access to clean energy by increasing the financial viability and promoting scaled-up commercial investment in renewable minigrids in Ethiopia, with a focus on cost-reduction levers and innovative business models.

AMP consists of four components: (i) policy and regulations, (ii) business model innovation and private sector engagement, (iii) scaled-up financing, and (iv) digital technology and data, knowledge management, and monitoring and evaluation. These components are designed to systematically target and alleviate the investment risks that raise the costs of minigrid development, especially but not exclusively for the private sector. Removal of the risks will help reduce the costs of both financing and hardware, while also helping to improve revenue streams. Ultimately, accelerated deployment of minigrids leads to greenhouse gas emissions reductions, as well as to the socioeconomic benefits of poverty reduction and increased opportunity for women.

AMP includes the following planned outputs across the components.

- Output 1.1. Support for national dialogue, associated capacity enhancement and arrangements for implementation of cooperative minigrid delivery model(s)
- Output 1.2. Establishment of regulations, technical and contract provisions, and consultation with developers and financiers on grid arrival arrangements

- Output 1.3. Execution of the De-risking Renewable Energy Investment (DREI) analysis for solar PV minigrids
- Output 1.4. Development of decommissioning strategy and guidelines on waste management for minigrid components.
- Output 1.5. Capacity-building for MoWE and its sectoral institutions via the MoWE Innovation Center (MIC).
- Output 2.1. Implementation of pilot minigrids under cooperative delivery models.
- Output 2.2. Technical assistance for productive use in association with AMP-supported minigrids.
- Output 2.3. Training, higher education programs, and internships established for minigrid design, installation, operations, maintenance, and business models.
- Output 3.1. Design support for financing and risk mitigation instruments, as well as development of operational guidance, provided for minigrid and productive use financing facility.
- Output 3.2. Domestic financial sector capacity-building on business and financing models for minigrids
- Output 4.1: A Digital Strategy is developed and implemented, including linkages to and following guidance from the AMP Regional Project
- Output 4.2: Minigrids digital platform implemented to run tenders and manage data from pilots, and to support minigrids scale-up and cost-reduction.
- Output 4.3: A Quality Assurance and Monitoring Framework for measuring, reporting and verification of the sustainable development impacts of all minigrids pilots supported, including GHG emission reductions, is adopted and operationalized based on standardized guidance from the regional project.
- Output 4.4: M&E and Reporting, including (i) Conducting inception workshop and preparing report, (ii) Ongoing M&E, (iii) Midterm Evaluation and (iv) Terminal Evaluation.
- Output 4.5: Engage with regional project, including, but not limited to, via (i) participating in Communities of Practice and (ii) capturing and sharing lessons learnt.

3. Stakeholder identification

As part of the project preparatory process, several groups of key stakeholders have been identified.

3.1 National government agencies

- **Ministry of Water and Energy (MoWE).** MoWE is the National Implementing Partner of the AMP. MoWE is the federal ministry responsible for development and regulation of water and energy services in Ethiopia. MoWE comprises several directorates, including three that are particularly relevant to the AMP.
- Directorate of Energy Policy
- Directorate of Electrification
- Directorate of Women, Children, and Youth
- **Ethiopian Electric Utility (EEU).** The EEU is the state-owned provider of on-grid electricity in Ethiopia, with accompanying responsibility for implementing state-owned minigrids.
- **Petroleum and Energy Authority (P&EA).** The P&EA is responsible for regulating the energy industry in Ethiopia, including minigrids.
- **Rural Electrification Fund (REF).** The REF is responsible for providing technical and financial support for rural electrification in Ethiopia, including deployment of minigrids.

- **Federal Cooperative Agency (FCA).** The FCA is responsible for oversight and support of the activities of cooperatives, including minigrid deployment and operation, subject to regulations of the P&EA.

3.2 Academic and educational

- **Addis Ababa Institute of Technology (AAiT) at Addis Ababa University.** AAiT is the leading institution for higher learning on engineering and power-sector management in the country.

3.3 Development partners supporting renewable minigrids in Ethiopia

Numerous international development agencies are already working on various aspects of renewable minigrid development in Ethiopia.

- World Bank (WB)
- *Access to Distributed Energy and Lighting in Ethiopia (ADELE)* project. ADELE is the largest and most ambitious project on off-grid electrification in Ethiopia. ADELE has a total budget of \$500 million, including an investment budget of \$270 million specifically for solar minigrids, plus \$25 million for technical assistance on off-grid electrification across both minigrids and solar homes.
- African Development Bank (AfDB)
- *Africa Mini-Grid Market Acceleration Programme (AMAP)* project. AMAP has four focal areas: i) Opening New Markets (designing bankable, national mini-grid acceleration programmes to attract public and private investment, including creation of digital platforms); ii) Catalytic Support (developing new financial de-risking instruments for mini-grid investments and providing technical assistance to unlock private investment); iii) Strengthening the Ecosystem (expanding knowledge sharing, innovation capacity, and technical skills across a broad range of industry actors), and; iv) Programme Management.
- GiZ
- *Energising Development Ethiopia (EnDev)* project. EnDev focuses on cooperative minigrid development, including pilots, policy development, and associated productive use.
- Rockefeller Foundation
- *Smart Power Africa* project. Smart Power Africa is a multi-country initiative to increase access to affordable clean electricity across Africa. This project supports research and pilot minigrids in Ethiopia.
- **Rocky Mountain Institute (RMI).** RMI has provided training to EEU staff on minigrids and more recently, has been MoWE's leading partner in analyzing opportunities and designing support for productive use. RMI is also launching new work on the development and piloting of investible business models for transitional minigrids.

3.4 Nongovernmental organization on women, energy, and energy access

- **Ethiopian Women in Energy (EWiEn).** EWiEn seeks to support women as leaders in the energy sector in Ethiopia, through training, mentorship, and networking.

3.5 Private sector

- ***Private minigrid developers and maintenance firms.*** Private domestic services for solar minigrid development in Ethiopia are essentially absent. All development of solar minigrids to date (12 under support of the World Bank and 25 under support of the African Development Bank) has been carried out by foreign contractors.
- ***Agricultural cooperatives.*** Such cooperatives operate throughout Ethiopia, enabling private-sector farmers and herders to organize, pool resources, and share knowledge, thereby strengthening efficiencies, raising outputs, reducing costs, and lifting livelihoods. They are a vital source of support¹⁷ across rural Ethiopia, with over 23 million members

3.5 Direct beneficiaries

The project preparatory team has identified numerous beneficiaries of planned AMP activity.

- Agricultural cooperatives (specific locations and entities to be determined during the Inception Period)
- Owners and employees of productive use enterprises (specific locations and entities to be determined during the Inception Period)
 - Women business owners
- Recipients of training
- Residential minigrid customers
- Social facilities receiving electricity from minigrids (schools and clinics), as well as those who work and receive services at these facilities
- Other groups of beneficiaries and affected persons
 - Local community groups
 - Women's self-help groups
 - Youth
 - Children
 - Disabled population
 - Land rights activists
 - Minority and vulnerable groups

4. Stakeholder consultation and engagement during project development

As part of the project development phase, and in addition to the desk review and data collection exercise, the PPG team of National and International Consultants identified key stakeholders and engaged with them in a series of in-person and online meetings. The purpose of these meetings was to share information about the AMP, to seek firsthand information on baseline conditions and needs, and to scope out potential project activities and partnerships. The discussions also aimed to identify the gaps that the AMP can work to fill, especially in the presence of several projects targeting energy access and renewable energy development financed by development partners besides UNDP and the GEF.

The AMP team held meetings and/or engaged in written correspondence with all of the parties listed above in sections 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3. Due to COVID-19 pandemic, the PPG Team Leader was not able to perform a field mission to meet with national stakeholders in-person. Most engagements were therefore

¹⁷ <https://allafrica.com/stories/202106300739.html>

done online. In select cases, where restrictions allowed, a hybrid approach was followed, with a meeting hosted both physically and online. The AMP also arranged for virtual meetings with multiple stakeholders in attendance at once, in order to discuss and validate proposed outputs and activities.

The AMP has not yet selected the specific localities for its planned pilot cooperative-led minigrids and associated productive use (Outputs 2.1 and 2.2). These localities will be selected from a list provided by MoWE at the inception of the project. At that point, the project will identify and connect with all local stakeholders, including both partners and beneficiaries.

5. Stakeholder Engagement Program (SEP)

5.1 Purpose and objectives

The overall objective of the stakeholder engagement program is to achieve a transparent decision-making process with greater input from stakeholders and their support of the decisions that are taken. The program seeks to define a technically and culturally appropriate approach to consultation and disclosure.

The goal of this SEP is to improve and facilitate decision making and create an atmosphere of understanding that actively involves project-affected people and other stakeholders in a timely manner, and that these groups are provided sufficient opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns that may influence project decisions. The SEP is intended as a useful tool to guide communications between the AMP project and stakeholders.

In design, development of business models, and operations, minigrids require continuous collaboration between operators and end-users. In the design of the pilots under the AMP in Ethiopia, it will be vitally important to understand not only the needs and priorities of mini-grid system operators, but also the needs and priorities of the communities in which the minigrids will be located, to obtain the necessary local support and ensure sustainability and longevity of the intervention.

Furthermore, the enhancement of the commercial viability of solar PV systems depends on the level of flow of information between stakeholders from the private sector and decision makers in the public sector. This flow will guarantee that the decisions made are well-informed and constitute the best use of resources to serve the best interest of the country and beneficiaries. The flow will also guarantee that investors, developers and mini-grid system operators are actively engaged in the continued development of regulations governing the energy sector before they become legally binding and are given the opportunity to utilize their technical expertise in the formulation of national plans and laws aiming to increase energy access rates and elevate the living conditions for populations in the rural areas.

The program therefore notes the methods and channels through which to disseminate project information as well as to ensure regular, accessible, transparent and appropriate consultation. The scope and frequency of communication will be tailored to the identified stakeholder list and the initial analysis of levels of interest for each stakeholder. Accordingly, stakeholders with a high level of interest will be actively engaged, while others may receive less frequent and more targeted updates.

5.2 Engagement methods and communication mediums

Notwithstanding the COVID-19 restrictions and social distancing recommendations, different types of engagement mediums are possible inside Ethiopia. The following list presents the main engagement mediums to be utilized by the project team during implementation to ensure continuous engagement and active participation of stakeholders.

1) In-person meetings:

- Consultation workshops: These workshops will have a pre-structured agenda, which will be designed to present a specific result/report and discuss with stakeholders the best way forward. These workshops will also be an opportunity to gain consensus from stakeholders on a specific action plan prior to proceeding with implementation. Therefore, stakeholder consultation meetings and workshops are included in the project design as part of the main activities to be carried out by the consultants in charge of each output.
- Interviews and focus groups: These will be conducted with different groups of indirect beneficiaries, with special attention to System Operators and NGOs, to overcome their generally low participation capacity and ensure that their input is integrated in the different stages of project implementation. The Project Manager will be responsible for ensuring that these interviews and focus groups have been conducted by the responsible consultants, as appropriate.
- Community based consultations and focus groups: These consultations will focus on the pilot locations to identify and discuss stakeholder concerns, needs and experience/impact within the community environment, but will also extend to neighboring villages and communities. The PMU, in support from the system operator or appointed service providers, will be responsible for conducting these consultations on a regular basis and reporting to the Project Steering Committee or Board.

2) Written communication:

- Emails: Email communication is widely used in Ethiopia to provide direct access to individuals and representatives of organizations. Emails will be used as the main tool for organizing meetings, i.e., sending invitations to participants, sending the meeting minutes after the meeting, etc.
- Letters: Being the formal method for communication and conveying messages between public parties, letters will be requested by the project team and provided by the relevant authority, as appropriate.
- Survey forms: Several activities under the project implementation strategy constitute undertaking a needs assessment or other types of analyses, with some involving undertaking a survey to collect information. The responsibility for the surveys is that of the consultant undertaking the analysis. However, the PMU will be responsible for supporting the project consultants with the sampling process and surveying procedure to ensure the results are as representative and inclusive as possible.
- Project brochures and manuals to present the results of specific studies and outcomes of certain activities.

3) Online meetings and phone calls: Virtual communication is sometimes preferred since it is quicker and easier compared with email and letters, and a viable alternative to in-person meetings. Online applications and telecommunication tools will be used throughout project implementation to facilitate the work and ensure the project team has easy access to stakeholders, and vice versa.

4) Capacity development and training. Both pilot projects will provide support for small business development to the pilot communities through training and capacity building/support programs with a particular focus on women-owned businesses. Small business development support will be offered in partnership with the MSME Unit and the Department of Cooperatives, both within the Ministry of Commerce, Industry and Trade (MCIT) to support the establishment, formalisation and growth of small businesses and cottage industries through training and mentoring, value chain

development, developing linkages to market and opening trade opportunities to regional and global networks.

- 5) Other engagement activities. Another element foreseen for the pilot is making available EE cooking appliances to households. The exact scope, focus and structure will be dependent on a status quo and needs assessment and consultation with the community.

Although the mode of communication may vary according to task and participants, all consultations and engagement activities will be undertaken with the goal of ensuring full participation of relevant stakeholders, whereby all participants will be provided sufficient notice to prepare well and provide input for the project. Moreover, the AMP in Ethiopia project will also use all possible opportunity, i.e. workshops, meetings, trainings and awareness events, to promote diversity and gender balance. Balanced representation of relevant stakeholders will be ensured by reaching out to both men and women and different groups through appropriate communication means and encouraging their participation, noting the most socially and culturally acceptable method of communication and language and consultations for each group of stakeholders.

5.3 Public Disclosure of Information (PDI)

In the interest of transparency, the following measures will be established to receive feedback and to ensure ongoing communications with stakeholders (outside of a formal consultation meeting):

- A project website will be created to make available all project related information including reports, publications, events, training opportunities, etc.
- The project website will provide a facility to receive feedback and to ensure ongoing communications with stakeholders (outside of a formal consultation meeting). Additionally, a contact point within the PMU will be provided for this purpose.
- The Grievance Redress Mechanism (Section 7 below), further describes channels and opportunities for feedback and concerns to be raised.

5.4 Diversity, inclusion and gender-balance

From the social and environmental safeguards perspective, this is ensured by including at least one representative from each stakeholder group, including those representing vulnerable or disadvantaged groups.

6. SEP Implementation: Resources, Responsibilities and Timeline^[1]_{SEP}

The size of the project does not allow for extensive stakeholder engagement measures or dedicated staff for this purpose. Stakeholder engagement will therefore form part of the broader interactions with project stakeholders. The frequency of communication will be guided by the specific level of stakeholder interest. Specific opportunities for engagement will coincide with anticipated outputs and the development phases for deliverables and milestones towards outputs. More deliberate consultation and engagement activities will be implemented for the two pilot projects and as part of the project monitoring and reporting activities.

At the national level, project-affected, marginalized and disadvantaged stakeholders have been identified, including persons with disabilities and other disadvantaged groups as per the list of stakeholder groups provided above in this document. This list will also be completed at the local level for the pilot sites. As

relevant, the following assessments will be conducted as part of the stakeholder engagement taking into account their involvement in each project component:

- Identify limitations for understanding project information and participating in consultation process (e.g. language differences, lack of transportation, accessibility of venues, disability)
- Develop measures to support and accommodate engagement (e.g. provide information in accessible formats, choose convenient locations for consultations, ensure venues are accessible, provide transportation to meetings, change time of meetings to accommodate needs, provide facilitation and explain complex issues and terminology, provide support workers for assisting participants with disabilities, provide simultaneous interpretation (language, signing))
- There is no budget specified for SEP activities, but has been included in the budgets of related outputs, notably the interfacing for training with the regional program, National Dialogue, Community of Practice, stakeholder consultation for pilot projects and extensive data collection for the monitoring of impacts.

The anticipated stakeholder interfaces, parties responsible to lead engagement and ensuring communication to specified stakeholders as well as the frequency of communication is provided below:

Stakeholder engagement plan

#	Stakeholder category (alphabetically listed)	Engagement approach ¹⁸	Type of Information (shared and collected)	Communication channels or methods	Frequency ¹⁹	Responsible party for engagement
1	Academic and higher education community	Involve	Policy, regulatory, technology /industry and project developments. Training needs and training offerings.	Emails, website, webinars, workshops, community of practice events, meetings, training events	Very frequent	PMU
2	Cooperatives seeking to develop minigrids	Collaborate / Partner	Policy, regulatory, technology /industry and project developments. Pilot project developments. Update on outputs and findings. Active participation in project design and industry developments.	Progress updates, emails, newsletters, website, webinars, workshops, community of practice events, meetings, training events.	Very Frequent	PMU
4.1	Development Partner (general)	Consult	Policy, regulatory, technology /industry and project developments. Project developments. Update on outputs and findings.	Progress updates, emails, newsletters, website, webinars, workshops, community of practice events, meetings, training events.	Less frequent	PMU, Implementing Partner
4.2	Development Partner (co-financier)	Involve	Policy, regulatory, technology /industry and project developments. Pilot project	Progress updates, emails, newsletters, website, webinars, workshops,	Frequent	PMU, Project Board, Implementing

¹⁸ Inform (provide stakeholders with balanced and objective information to assist them with understanding developments, progress, issues, opportunities and solutions). Consult (obtain feedback from stakeholders on design, findings, analyses, options and/or decisions). Involve (Work directly with stakeholders throughout the process to ensure concerns and/or views are consistently understood and considered. Collaborate (Collaborate with stakeholders as partners throughout the process, including in the analyses and development of solutions and in making decisions).

¹⁹ Where Very frequent is likely to be ongoing or at least once a month, Frequent is likely to be monthly to quarterly, Less frequent: once or twice a year and Occasional: on an ad hoc basis, but with all general information readily available for access.

#	Stakeholder category (alphabetically listed)	Engagement approach ¹⁸	Type of Information (shared and collected)	Communication channels or methods	Frequency ¹⁹	Responsible party for engagement
			<p>developments. Update on outputs and findings.</p> <p>Active participation in project design details and alignment / interface requirements, as relevant for areas of co-finance.</p>	<p>community of practice events, meetings, training events.</p> <p>If interested, may participate in Project Board / Steering Committee.</p>		Partner, National Dialogue
5	Energy sector suppliers and contractors	Involve	<p>Policy, regulatory, technology /industry and project developments. Project developments. Update on outputs and findings.</p> <p>Invite inputs on design and sector developments.</p>	<p>Interviews with stakeholder representatives, Surveys, polls, and questionnaires, Public meetings, workshops, and/or focus groups with specific groups. Training and knowledge sharing events. Community of Practice.</p>	Less frequent	PMU, identified project partners and AMP Community of Practice
6	Environmental advocates	Consult	<p>Policy, regulatory, technology /industry and project developments. Project developments.</p> <p>Invite questions, concerns and inputs on risks, opportunities and developments.</p>	<p>Interviews with stakeholder representatives, Surveys, polls, and questionnaires, Public meetings, workshops, and/or focus groups with specific groups. Training and knowledge sharing events.</p>	Frequent	PMU, identified project partners and AMP Community of Practice

#	Stakeholder category (alphabetically listed)	Engagement approach ¹⁸	Type of Information (shared and collected)	Communication channels or methods	Frequency ¹⁹	Responsible party for engagement
7	General public	Inform	General information on clean energy mini-grid sector developments. Detailed information related to pilot project scope of activities. Invite questions, concerns and inputs on risks, opportunities and developments.	Newspapers, radio, website. All project information available online and from the PMU.	Occasional	PMU
8.1	Government (directly involved)	Collaborate / Partner	General information on clean energy mini-grid sector developments. Detailed information related to pilot project scope of activities. Active engagement on industry / sector development, opportunities, roadmap / vision.	Part of Project Board / Steering Committee, progress updates, emails, newsletters, website, webinars, workshops, community of practice events, meetings, training events. Recipients of training and capacity building.	Very frequent	PMU, Project Board
8.2	Government (less directly involved)	Consult	Share general information on clean energy mini-grid sector developments. Consult regarding opportunities for collaboration and coordination.	Emails, website, webinars, newsletters. Invite to knowledge sharing events. Interviews / meetings with stakeholder representatives.	Less frequent	PMU, Implementing Partner

#	Stakeholder category (alphabetically listed)	Engagement approach ¹⁸	Type of Information (shared and collected)	Communication channels or methods	Frequency ¹⁹	Responsible party for engagement
			Invite questions, concerns and inputs on risks, opportunities and developments.			
9	Human rights protection / Law defenders	Keep informed	General information on clean energy mini-grid sector developments. Invite questions, concerns and inputs on risks, opportunities and developments.	Newspapers, radio, website. All project information available online and from the PMU.	Occasional	PMU
10	Impacted communities	Involve (potentially partner)	Detail pilot project information, design information and consultation on design elements, needs assessments, priorities, etc. (Specific focus on youth, women and other vulnerable or marginalized groups that are identified).	Interviews with stakeholder representatives, surveys, polls, and questionnaires, Public meetings, workshops, and/or focus groups with specific groups (youth, women, etc.) Compliance with government and UNDP stakeholder consultation / project disclosure with appropriate disclosure periods, as relevant.	Very frequent	PMU, Project Board, Implementing Partner
11	Land rights	Keep informed	General information on clean energy mini-grid sector developments.	Newspapers, radio, website.	Occasional	PMU

#	Stakeholder category (alphabetically listed)	Engagement approach ¹⁸	Type of Information (shared and collected)	Communication channels or methods	Frequency ¹⁹	Responsible party for engagement
			Invite questions and inputs on risks, opportunities and developments.	All project information available online and from the PMU.		
12	People with disabilities	Keep informed	General information on clean energy mini-grid sector developments. Invite questions and inputs on risks, opportunities and developments.	Newspapers, radio, website. All project information available online and from the PMU.	Occasional	PMU
13.1	Regulatory bodies (energy and minigrids) Includes the P&EA and FCA	Collaborate / Partner	General information on clean energy mini-grid sector developments. Detailed information related to pilot project scope of activities. Active engagement on all aspects of overall project, industry / sector development, opportunities, roadmap / vision.	Likely owner of PMU and therefore project information. Reporting to Project Board / Steering Committee, progress updates, emails, newsletters, website, webinars, workshops, community of practice events, meetings, training events.	Very frequent	PMU, Project Board, Implementing Partner, National Dialogue
13.2	Regulatory body (Environment, other)	Consult	General information on clean energy mini-grid sector developments, highlighting specific matters with regulatory scope or area of interest.	Emails, website, webinars, newsletters. Invite to knowledge sharing events.	Frequent	PMU, Project Board, Implementing Partner

#	Stakeholder category (alphabetically listed)	Engagement approach ¹⁸	Type of Information (shared and collected)	Communication channels or methods	Frequency ¹⁹	Responsible party for engagement
			Invite questions and inputs on risks, opportunities and developments.	Interviews / meetings with stakeholder representatives. Consult with regards specific regulatory aspects.		
14	Sustainable energy sector	Consult	Policy, regulatory, technology /industry and project developments. Project developments. Update on outputs and findings. Invite inputs on design and sector developments.	Interviews with stakeholder representatives, Surveys, polls, and questionnaires, Public meetings, workshops, and/or focus groups with specific groups. Training and knowledge sharing events. Community of Practice.	Less frequent	PMU, identified project partners and Community of Practice
15	Women	Consult	General information on clean energy mini-grid sector developments, highlighting specific relevance to women equity and empowerment. Invite questions, concerns and inputs on risks, opportunities and developments.	Specific gender engagement as captured in gender action plan (Annex 11). Pilot project beneficiaries as detailed for Impacted communities. Women in general: newspapers, radio, website and targeted communication to	Less frequent	PMU

#	Stakeholder category (alphabetically listed)	Engagement approach ¹⁸	Type of Information (shared and collected)	Communication channels or methods	Frequency ¹⁹	Responsible party for engagement
				national women's organizations. All project information available online and from the PMU.		
16	Worker unions	Keep informed	General information on clean energy mini-grid sector developments. Invite questions, concerns and inputs on risks, opportunities and developments.	Newspapers, radio, website. All project information available online and from the PMU.	Less frequent	PMU
17	Youth	Keep informed	Policy, regulatory, technology /industry and project developments. Training and/or career opportunities.	Newspapers, radio, website. Pilot project beneficiaries as detailed for Impacted communities. All project information available online and from the PMU.	Less frequent	PMU

In implementing the SEP, the following requirements will apply:

- All communication will be available in English and Amharic. English will be used to facilitate a common and broader project understanding outside of the country borders.
- At the discretion of the PMU, translations of printed material, written and spoken communication will be available in other local languages.
- The COVID-19 pandemic has had an impact on stakeholder engagement, limiting engagement to online channels and excluding communities with limited or no access to online facilities. The extent to which this will continue into the implementation phase is uncertain,

but should it persist, alternate opportunities to allow for information flow and ensure participation must be implemented. Examples may include delivery of information through the local radio, paper posts on key local community places, word to mouth through local leaders, among others.

7. Grievance Redress Mechanism

As part of the project's compliance with the UNDP SES requirements, the project shall ensure setting up a suitable Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). This includes a procedure for stakeholders and affected communities to express their grievances and communicate their concerns and recommendations to the project team, as well as a procedure for the project team to address these grievances by taking the necessary actions, i.e. providing clarifications, opening investigations, or making changes to the project's implementation plan as may be required.

In the area of ensuring open communication on grievances, the project intends to implement the following measures:

- 1) Two boxes will be installed at the pilot project sites. The first will be placed inside the pilot boundaries while the second will be located outside the project boundaries. These boxes will be checked on a regular basis by the system operator to check for new comments from stakeholders.
- 2) A dedicated email will be established or earmarked for stakeholders to use for questions, recommendations and grievances. The email address will be made available on all printed material, in the email signature of the PMU team and displayed on the sign carrying the name of the pilot projects.
- 3) The contact details for the project officers will be displayed at several central locations around the pilot locations, i.e. community centers at villages receiving electricity from the pilot project and nearby villages as appropriate.

The responsibility of responding to or addressing the grievances received will depend on the nature of the grievance. Nevertheless, the PMU will be responsible for following up until actions are taken to close a grievance, including communicating with relevant persons and/or authorities on behalf of the project.

While it is not anticipated in Ethiopia, it should also be clarified to all relevant parties at pilot sites that there will be zero tolerance for any reprisals or retaliatory actions against any stakeholders. Should it be necessary, preventative and response measures specific to the circumstances should be identified together with relevant stakeholders. Measures may include respect for confidentiality; adjustments to means and timing of communications, meetings, transportation; use of trusted intermediaries, interpreters, facilitators and other consultants; clear response protocols for notification, reporting, and support for protection strategies.

All stakeholders should also be informed of the availability of UNDP's Accountability Mechanism (Stakeholder Response Mechanism, SRM, and Social and Environmental Compliance Unit, SECU) as additional avenues of grievance redress.

8. Monitoring and Reporting

Output 4.4 calls for annual progress reporting to include monitoring of any gender, environmental and social risks and related management plans. The need for social (including gender and youth) and environmental impacts to be baselined and tracked is also included as a priority under the respective pilot projects. Engagement for monitoring and reporting will take the approach detailed under Section 5.2, as relevant for each stakeholder group and data integrity. Feedback from stakeholder engagements will be reported back to project-affected and broader stakeholder groups using a relevant channel or media which may include verbal feedback, tailored newsletters/bulletins or sharing of social and environmental assessment reports or monitoring reports.

As project information changes, the SEP should be reviewed and modified accordingly to ensure its effectiveness in securing meaningful and effective stakeholder participation. Hence, the SEP presented in this document will undergo further review and development by the project team throughout the project lifetime. Similarly, the scope and focus of the SEP will be modified to reflect the lessons learned from the implementation of SEP in Ethiopia, but also in other national projects participating in the AMP program. Equally important is the review and update of SEP procedures based on the feedback received from the Project Board and stakeholders.