

REPUBLIC OF TAJIKISTAN
MINISTRY OF AGRICULTURE

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN

**Tajikistan Strengthening Resilience of the
Agriculture Sector Project (SRASP P175952)**

September 2026

ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACP	Agriculture Commercialization Project
AED PMU	State Institution Agriculture Entrepreneurship Development Project Management Unit under the Ministry of Agriculture of the Republic of Tajikistan
AF	Additional Financing
ALC	Agri-Logistical Center
ASDP	Agriculture Sector Development Program
AWP&B	Annual Work Plan and Budget
CIF	Cost, Insurance and Freight
CLMP	Child Labor Monitoring Plan
CPI	Consumer Price Index
CRW ERF	Crisis Response Window Early Response Financing
CSA	Climate Smart Agriculture
DHS	Demographic and Health Survey
DP	Development Partner
ECA	Europe and Central Asia
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ESCP	Environmental and Social Commitment Plan
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESS	Environmental and Social Standard
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization
FSC	Food Security Committee
FSCPP	Food Security Crisis Preparedness Plan
GAM	Global Acute Malnutrition
GBAO	Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GNI	Gross National Income
CGDMP	Children Growth and Development Monitoring Program
GRID	Green, Resilient and Inclusive Development
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
GRS	Grievance Redress Service
IA	Implementing Agency
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
IP	Implementation Progress
IPC	Integrated Food Security Phase Classification
IRI	Intermediate Results Indicator

IYCF	Infant and Young Children Feeding
L2T	Listening to Tajikistan
LMP	Labor Management Procedures
SIP	Social Inclusion Plan
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MINT	Ministry of Industry and New Technologies
MOA	Ministry of Agriculture
MOHSP	Ministry of Health and Social Protection
MSNAP	Multi-Sectoral Nutrition Action Plan
MTDP	State Program for Medium-Term Development of the Republic of Tajikistan
NAIP	Nutrition Security and Sustainable Agricultural Development for the Republic of Tajikistan
PAD	Project Appraisal Document
PDO	Project Development Objective
PMU	Project Implementation Unit
POM	Project Operations Manual
PP	Procurement Plan
PPSD	Project Procurement Strategy for Development
PSC	Project Steering Committee
PTC	Project Technical Committee
REDP	Rural Economic Development Project
RPF	Resettlement Policy Framework
RPO	Regional Project Office
RUTF	Ready-to-Use Therapeutic Food
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SRASP	Strengthening Resilience of the Agriculture Sector Project
SUN	Scaling Up Nutrition
TA	Technical Assistance
TAJSTAT	Agency of Statistics under President of the Republic of Tajikistan
TORs	Terms of Reference
UN	United Nations
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
WB	World Bank
WBG	World Bank Group
WFP	World Food Programme
WRA	Women of Reproductive Age

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1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Parent project objective, design, and scope

The World Bank (WB) and the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan (GOT) are currently preparing the additional financing under the project “Improving the resilience of agriculture in Tajikistan” (ESAP) aimed at supporting the Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) in the implementation of the Medium Term Development Program of the Republic of Tajikistan (SDP) for 2021-2025 and the National Investment Plan for Food and Nutrition Security and Sustainable Development of Agriculture (NAIP) for 2021-2030 for the Republic of Tajikistan, approved in February 2021.

The parent project consists of four components and nine sub-components:

(a) Component 1: Strengthening seed, seedling, and planting material systems supports the development of viable seed, seedling, and planting material systems to ensure the availability of improved, locally adapted, market oriented, farmer-preferred, and climate resilient seeds, seedlings, and planting materials for priority crops, and in sufficient quantity and acceptable quality. The component has four sub-components: 1.1) Enabling environment; 1.2) Research and Development; 1.3) Multiplication of seeds, seedlings, and planting materials; and 1.4) Quality assurance. Under the first Additional Financing (AF1, December 2022) and the second Additional Financing (AF2), the component also supports emergency procurement and distribution of high-quality inputs (seeds, fertilizers, and small agricultural machinery) to vulnerable dehkan farms, as well as the rehabilitation of existing small-scale irrigation systems. Additionally, the component supports the piloting and scaling up of rice-fish intercropping practices across the country.

(b) Component 2: Support investments in Agri-Logistical Centers (ALCs) for horticulture value chains supports investments in five (5) ALCs to improve competitiveness of horticulture value chains and access to markets (e.g., domestic retail chains and export). The component has two sub-components: 2.1) Support the establishment and operation of ALCs; and 2.2) Capacity building for operation and management of ALCs and awareness raising. The five ALCs are located in Sughd, Khatlon, Dushanbe, Dangara district, and Khorug (GBAO). Private sector operators will be engaged in managing the ALCs, while the Government of Tajikistan maintains the ownership.

(c) Component 3: Strengthen public capacity for crises prevention and management supports strengthening the capacity of relevant public institutions on agricultural crises prevention and management, focusing on selected programs, which can significantly enhance the resiliency of agricultural sector. The component has four sub-components: 3.1) Real-time monitoring of agricultural production, land use, and agrometeorology; 3.2) Soil fertility management; 3.3) Crop protection and locust control; and 3.4) Nutrition improvement. Under AF1 and AF2, the component also supports: the establishment and operationalization of the National Pre-Mix Revolving Fund (NRF) for procurement and supply of micronutrients to wheat millers and salt producers; procurement and distribution of micronutrient and vitamin supplements for pregnant and lactating women and young children (6-59 months); and continued support to locust control activities.

(d) Component 4: Project management and coordination supports all aspects of project management including: i) management and coordination; ii) monitoring and evaluation (M&E); iii) fiduciary and safeguard compliance; iv) technical assistance (TA); and v) a grievance redress mechanism (GRM).

The parent project is open to beneficiaries across the country (Components 1 and 3), while the ALCs supported under Component 2 will be located in five regions: one each in Khatlon, Sughd, Dushanbe, Dangara district, and Khorug (GBAO), selected for their agro-ecological potential, horticultural production patterns, export opportunities, and proximity to major urban markets. The sub-sectoral focus of the ALCs is horticulture.

MOA is the lead implementing agency (IA) of the parent project with the overall responsibility for coordinating all aspects of the project, including contributions by the different relevant ministries and agencies participating in the project's implementation. MOA is supported by a project implementation unit (AED PMU), which follows the day-to-day implementation of the project. MOA is also supported by a Project Steering Committee (PSC), a Project Technical Committee (PTC) and technical assistance (TA).

The Project received its first Additional Financing (AF1) in December 2022 in the amount of US\$50 million through the Crisis Response Window – Early Response Financing (CRW ERF). The Project's closing date is scheduled for June 30, 2027, with a proposed extension to May 31, 2029, under the second Additional Financing (AF2).

1.2 Project Performance

The project continues to deliver robust outcomes, as highlighted by recent supervision missions and the Mid-Term Review conducted in October 2024. Under the first component, nearly 29,000 small-scale farmers were equipped with premium inputs, enabling the cultivation of over 10,000 hectares of vital crops such as wheat, maize, cotton, and vegetables. Consequently, these farmers have experienced yield improvements of 20% to 30%, with approximately 90% expressing satisfaction with the project's services in recent surveys. Institutional upgrades include revising the national seed legislation to align with global standards. Furthermore, the Food Safety Committee's central laboratory underwent a complete renovation at a cost of roughly US\$1.7 million, empowering it to perform all requisite quality assessments on agricultural imports and exports. To modernize the Committee's operations, the project supplied over 400 computers and IT infrastructure, alongside comprehensive staff training. Additionally, seven research facilities affiliated with the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA) and TAAS received renovations, office supplies, and farming machinery.

Progress on the second component is equally notable. Major Agro-Logistic Centers (ALCs) in the Sughd and Khatlon regions are currently being built, with full operational capacity targeted for January 2027. Groundwork has already begun in Dushanbe following the signing of its construction contract, while the facilities planned for Dangara and Khorug are slated for the 2027–2028 timeframe. In collaboration with the Government of Tajikistan, a strategy has been finalized to involve seasoned private-sector operators in managing these ALCs, ensuring a structured transfer of expertise and capacity building for local teams. The World Bank's Task Team is actively coordinating with the IFC's Public-Private Partnership (PPP) division to facilitate this arrangement.

The third component is also yielding significant benefits, particularly in the nutrition sector. Approximately 1.2 million children have received micronutrient supplements, and around 353,000 women have been provided with iron-folic acid tablets, a move expected to substantially mitigate national malnutrition rates. To support this, more than 200 healthcare professionals were trained in supplement distribution and beneficiary assistance. The NRF has been successfully established under the umbrella of the Ministry of Industries and New Technologies; it will handle the sourcing and allocation of micronutrients to local salt manufacturers and wheat millers, with operations slated to begin by October 2026. Meanwhile, the AMIS system is advancing steadily and is on track for a pilot launch by mid-2027.

Further initiatives under this component include a US\$2.2 million provision of certified vehicles, equipment, and chemicals to the Ministry of Agriculture to combat critical locust infestations. The project also funded extensive laboratory construction, renovations, and equipment deliveries for the Soil Institute and the Tajikistan Agrarian University. A major milestone was the creation of the country's inaugural Food Security Preparedness Plan, fulfilling a key mandate from the first Additional Finance agreement in 2022. This plan clearly delineates the duties of communities, donors, and the government in responding to unexpected food security crises.

Overall, the initiative is generating tangible, positive outcomes for its beneficiaries, underscored by high satisfaction ratings and the successful adoption of innovative agricultural methods. Notably, in 2025, a rice-fish co-culture system was piloted across 20 sites nationwide. This technique, widely used internationally, involves raising fish fingerlings within rice paddies until harvest. It creates a symbiotic relationship: fish consume rice field remnants,

while their waste acts as an organic fertilizer for the crops. As a result, participating farmers have seen rice yields climb by an average of 10% to 15%, complemented by new revenue streams from fish sales.

The Project management activities under the fourth component are performing well. The PMU is fully staffed, with all positions filled with skilled and experienced team members. Fiduciary activities of the Project are performed well, with Satisfactory (S) ratings for both Procurement and Financial Management. M&E activities of the Project are functional, with a national NGO hired for data collection and surveys. The Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) system is functioning. The Environmental and Social activities are performing well with a Moderately Satisfactory (MS) rating.

1.3 Rationale for additional financing

During the last two supervision missions conducted in December 2025 and May 2026, it was confirmed that the Project is approaching a significant financial shortfall. This gap primarily stems from the fact that all project activities were designed based on cost estimates prepared during the original Project design phase in 2020. On average, current tendering processes for various activities reflect a cost increase of approximately 25% to 30% above these baseline estimates, a variance further validated by market surveys conducted by the PMU. Furthermore, to guarantee the full execution of all planned initiatives—particularly those introduced via the first Additional Financing in 2022—it is necessary to extend the Project's current closure date of June 30, 2027, by an additional two years, to May 31, 2029. In April 2026, the Government of Tajikistan formally submitted a request to the World Bank for Additional Financing. The primary goal of this supplementary funding is to bridge the existing financial gap and ensure the completion of all Project activities. Specifically, these resources will be directed toward: (i) finalizing the outstanding tasks within the first component; (ii) covering all necessary construction works and equipment procurement for the remaining three Agro-Logistic Centers (ALCs) situated in Dushanbe, Dangara, and Khorug; (iii) sustaining the operational capacity of the NRF, guaranteeing the continuity of its programs and the ongoing provision of premium agricultural inputs to small-scale farmers; and (iv) absorbing Project management costs throughout the newly extended operational timeline.

1.4 Description of additional financing

There will be no new activities added to the Project. The requested Additional Financing will be utilized in addressing the financial deficit which the Project is facing. This financial gap is due to the fact that all Project activities including those added during the first Additional Financing in 2022 are based on cost estimates made in 2020 during the design of the original Project. This has resulted in a gap of around 25 – 30 percent between original estimates and actual cost of activities based on bids and offers submitted by suppliers and contractors and confirmed with the market surveys conducted by the PMU. It is agreed with the Government of Tajikistan to allocate an Additional Finance of US\$7.5 million to ensure continuity of implementation of the planned Project activities. The funding of US\$7.5 million will primarily be utilized for activities of the Second Component. While the remaining balance of overall required funds will be allocated through a further Additional Finance process during the following Fiscal Year.

An Additional Financing of US\$7.250 million is requested for funding the activities under the second component, as follows; US\$ 4.5 million will be allocated for the completion of all construction works of the ALC in Dangara. Additionally, an amount of US\$2 million will be utilized for the procurement of processing lines for the ALC in Dushanbe and US\$ 0.75 million will be allocated for the development of the operational model of PPP for the ALCs.

Given the fact that the Project closing date will be extended for two years, from June 30, 2027, to May 31, 2029, to allow the completion of all works, an Additional Financing will be needed to cover all costs associated with PMU operations including Project management activities, implementation and supervision, fiduciary, and social and environmental management, Monitoring and Evaluation. It is estimated that around US\$ 0.25 million will be needed for this reason.

Table 1. Summary of the OF and the Proposed AF by component (US\$ million)

Component	OF+AF 1	AF 2	Total
Component 1	53.4		53.4
Component 2	25.0	7.25	32.25
Component 3	25.6		25.6
Component 4	4.0	0.25	4.25
Subtotal	108.0		115.5

This process will also include a restructuring of the first Additional Finance of the Project. There is a need to carry several amendments including; a. Amending the definition of “Operating Costs” to include salaries of PRF Implementing Agency staff; b. reallocation across disbursement categories: (reallocation of SDR 500,000 from Category 3 to Category 1); c. extension of the closing date of First Additional Finance from June 30, 2027, to May 31, 2029; and d. addition of unilateral cancellation provisions, which are mandatory for all ongoing Projects’ restructuring.

1.5 Purpose of the SEP

Under the envisaged second additional financing (AF2) for the Tajikistan Strengthening Resilience of the Agriculture Sector Project, no new activities, types of operations, or components are foreseen that were not originally included in the approved main project and the 2022 first additional financing. All planned activities remain unchanged in terms of their content, scale, and geographical scope. Since the list and nature of the interventions are fully maintained without any expansion or adjustment, the circle of affected stakeholders (including direct beneficiaries, local communities, government agencies, and non-governmental organizations) remains identical to that identified during the preparation phase of the main project and its first additional financing. Consequently, the current Stakeholder Engagement Plan does not require revision with regard to the identification of participants or the communication mechanisms applied.

However, the following updates are reflected in this revised SEP to account for the AF2:

- (i) Updated project timeline reflecting the extension of the closing date from June 30, 2027, to May 31, 2029;
- (ii) Updated information on the five ALCs (including Dangara and Khorug), reflecting the expanded scope of construction activities under Component 2;
- (iii) Updated status of the National Pre-Mix Revolving Fund (NRF), which has been established and is expected to commence operations by October 2026;
- (iv) Updated information on the rice-fish intercropping pilot activity and its planned scaling up;
- (v) Updated information on continued locust control activities, driven by climate change impacts;
- (vi) Updated project performance data and achievements to date;
- (vii) Updated risk assessment reflecting the current Moderate overall risk rating.

1.6 Scope and Structure of the SEP

The scope of the SEP shall be as outlined per the requirements of the World Bank’s ESS10 (Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure). The stakeholder engagement will be planned as an integral part of the environmental and social assessment and project design and implementation.

This document includes 8 chapters. The first chapter serves as an Introduction. It provides a brief about the project and the context in which the SEP is being prepared. Chapter 2 lists the regulatory framework in Tajikistan which provides a legitimacy for SEP. A summary of the consultations held so far is presented in Chapter 3. All the three chapters serve as a backdrop. Stakeholder Identification, Mapping and Analysis is elaborated in the Chapter 4. Stakeholder Engagement Plan is presented in the Chapter 5. Chapter 6 includes the Resources and Responsibilities for Implementing Stakeholders Engagement Activities. Grievance mechanism (GM) follows in Chapter 7. Monitoring, documentation, and reporting are presented in Chapter 8.

2. ADMINISTRATIVE, POLICY AND REGULATORY FRAMEWORK

This chapter provides details on the social policies, laws, regulations as well as guidelines that are relevant to the activities proposed under the project. It also provides an assessment of the adequacy of the coverage on social aspects in the legislative and regulatory framework. Lastly, WB Environmental and Social Standard 10 on Information Disclosure and Stakeholder Engagement is described below.

2.1 Key National Citizen Engagement Legal Provisions

As the fundamental law of the State, the Constitution defines the structure of the government, basic rights, liberties and responsibilities of its citizens, as well as the powers of the legislative, executive and judicial branches. Article 5 mandates that: The life, the honor, the dignity, and other natural human rights are inviolable. Human rights and freedoms are recognized, observed, and protected by the state. Article 12 guarantees that: The economy of Tajikistan is based on different forms of ownership: freedom of economic and entrepreneurial activity, equality of rights, and legal protection of all forms of ownership, including private property.

Some key strategies, laws and regulations relevant to the Project are presented below.

Law on Dehkan Farms (2016) provides the legislative basis for the establishment and operation of private dehkan farms. It clarifies and fixes the rights and responsibilities of dehkan farm members as land users. The law improves the management of dehkan farms and defines the rights and duties of their members. It allows farmers to legally erect field camps on land as temporary buildings, which makes it possible to significantly improve productivity at the agricultural season. The law requires dehkan farms to take measures to improve soil fertility and improve the ecological status of lands, timely payments for water and electricity, and provide statistical information to government agencies. The law encompasses the legal provisions on equal access to information for all members of a farm and active participation in decision making process.

Law on Freedom of Information is underpinned by Article 25 of the Constitution, which states that governmental agencies, social associations and officials are required to provide each person with the possibility of receiving and becoming acquainted with documents that affect her or his rights and interests, except in cases anticipated by law.

Per the *Law on Public Associations*, a public association may be formed in one of the following organizational and legal forms: public organization, public movement, or a body of public initiative. Article 4 of this law establishes the right of citizens to found associations for the protection of common interests and the achievement of common goals. It outlines the voluntary nature of associations and defines citizens' rights to restrain from joining and withdrawing from an organization. August 2015 amendments to this legislation require NGOs to notify the Ministry of Justice about all funds received from international sources prior to using the funds.

The 2014 *Law on Public Meetings, Demonstrations and Rallies* (Article 10) bans persons with a record of administrative offenses (i.e. non-criminal infractions) under Articles 106, 460, 479 and 480 of the Code for Administrative Offences from organizing gatherings¹. Article 12 of the Law establishes that the gathering organizers must obtain permission from local administration fifteen days prior to organizing a mass gathering.

Law on Local Governments (2004) assigns a district or city chairman the authority to control over the natural resource management, construction and reconstruction of natural protection areas, to oversee the local structures in sanitary epidemiological surveillance, waste management, health and social protection of population within the administrative territory. No public gathering is implemented without official notification of local government (district khukumat).

Law of Republic of Tajikistan on Appeals of Physical and Legal Entities (2016) contains legal provisions on established information channels for citizens to file their complaints, requests and grievances. Article 14 of the Law sets the timeframes for handling grievances, which is 15 days from the date of receipt that do not require additional study and research, and 30 days for the appeals that need additional study. These legal provisions will be considered by the project-based Grievance mechanism.

The Labor Code prohibits forced labor (Article 8). The Labor Code also establishes the minimum age at which a child may be employed, as well as the conditions under which he may work (Articles 113, 67 and 174). The minimum age for admission to employment is 15 years, however, in some cases of vocational training, light work may be allowed for 14-year-olds (Article 174 of the Labor Code). In addition, there are some labor restrictions on what type of work can be done and what hours of work are allowed for workers under the age of 18. Examples of labor restrictions include workers between the ages of 14 and 15 cannot work more than 24 hours a week, while those under 18 cannot work more than 35 hours a week; during the school year, the maximum number of hours is half that, 12 and 17.5 hours respectively. These restrictions are in line with the ILO Minimum Age Convention.

In addition, the *Parental Responsibility for the Upbringing and Education of Children Act* makes parents responsible for ensuring that their children do not participate in hard and dangerous work and attend school. Established in 2009, the Child Labor Monitoring Office under the Ministry of Labor conducts methodological analysis and trains professionals involved in monitoring child labor and collecting statistics to introduce effective methods to reduce child labor and prevent its worst forms throughout the country.

The National Development Strategy of the Republic of Tajikistan for the period up to 2030 speaks of the fundamentals of the concept of sustainable human development. Based on this, the complete eradication of poverty, the replacement of unsustainable and the promotion of sustainable patterns of consumption and production, as well as the protection and rational use of natural resources for further economic and social development, are the main tasks and vital conditions for sustainable human development.

The Law of the Republic of Tajikistan on Providing the Population with Fortified Foods regulates public relations in the field of providing the population with fortified foods and defines the organizational and legal framework for the prevention of micronutrient deficiencies and related diseases.

List of International Treaties and Conventions related to Citizen Engagement ratified by Tajikistan:

- Rotterdam Convention on the Prior Informed Consent (PIC) Procedure (1998);
- Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage (2006);
- International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights;
- Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women;
- Convention on Minimum Age for Admission to Employment (1993);
- Convention on the Worst Forms of Child Labor (2005);
- Convention on the Abolition of Forced Labor (1999);
- Convention on Employment Policy (1993);
- Convention on Labor Inspection (2009);
- UN Convention on the Rights of the Child CRC (1993)
- Tripartite Consultation (International Labor Standards) Convention (2014); and
- Occupational Safety and Health Convention (2009).

The legal and regulatory framework at the national and local levels provides an adequate and appropriate enabling framework for implementing the key activities to be supported under the Project. Responsiveness to complainants' inquiries/questions, and public accountability are adequately covered by the legal framework at different levels. The legislation highlights the importance of state's commitment to serving and ensuring citizen protection, in general, and people to be affected by the project in particular. The laws on access to information, consumer rights; grievance redress; and ethics codes in place stipulate rules governing fair services; and the investments in strengthening the agricultural resilience systems to be implemented during the project implementation.

2.2 World Bank Environmental and Social Standard on Stakeholder Engagement

The World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF)'s Environmental and Social Standard (ESS) 10, "Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure", recognizes "the importance of open and transparent engagement between the Borrower and project stakeholders as an essential element of good international practice" (World Bank, 2017: 97). Specifically, the requirements set out by ESS10 are the following:

- "Borrowers will engage with stakeholders throughout the project life cycle, commencing such engagement as early as possible in the project development process and in a timeframe that enables meaningful consultations with stakeholders on project design. The nature, scope and frequency of stakeholder engagement will be proportionate to the nature and scale of the project and its potential risks and impacts.
- Borrowers will engage in meaningful consultations with all stakeholders. Borrowers will provide stakeholders with timely, relevant, understandable and accessible information, and consult with them in a culturally appropriate manner, which is free of manipulation, interference, coercion, discrimination and intimidation.
- The process of stakeholder engagement will involve the following, as set out in further detail in this ESS: (i) stakeholder identification and analysis; (ii) planning how the engagement with stakeholders will

take place; (iii) disclosure of information; (iv) consultation with stakeholders; (v) addressing and responding to grievances; and (vi) reporting to stakeholders.

- The Borrower will maintain and disclose as part of the environmental and social assessment, a documented record of stakeholder engagement, including a description of the stakeholders consulted, a summary of the feedback received and a brief explanation of how the feedback was considered, or the reasons why it was not.” (World Bank, 2017: 98).

A Stakeholder Engagement Plan proportionate to the nature and scale of the project and its potential risks and impacts needs to be developed by the Borrower. It has to be disclosed as early as possible, and before project appraisal, and the Borrower needs to seek the views of stakeholders on the SEP, including on the identification of stakeholders and the proposals for future engagement. If significant changes are made to the SEP, the Borrower has to disclose the updated SEP (World Bank, 2017: 99). According to ESS10, the Borrower should also propose and implement a grievance mechanism to receive and facilitate the resolution of concerns and grievances of project-affected parties related to the environmental and social performance of the project in a timely manner (World Bank, 2017: 100).

For more details on the WB Environmental and Social Standards, please follow the below links:

www.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/environmental-and-social-framework/brief/environmental-and-social-standards and <http://projects-beta.vsemirnyjbank.org/ru/projects-operations/environmental-and-social-framework/brief/environmental-and-social-standards>

3. PREVIOUS STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

3.1. Key stakeholder meetings and consultations

The MOA and the PMU held a number of meetings, consultations and discussion on the project design during January -March, 2021 to: (i) discuss the details of project activities with relevant state and non-state institutions; (ii) agree on the approach to project preparation; (iii) agree on fiduciary and safeguards requirements related to the project preparation; and (iv) address additional issues and guidance that were provided during the World Bank’s internal project concept note review meeting.

Details about the previous stakeholder meetings and consultations held are presented Table 1 below.

Table 1. Stakeholder Consultations

Place and Method	Date	Participants	Key points raised
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Dushanbe, virtual webex discussions	January 18, 2021	Ministry of Agriculture (MOA)-Mrs. Nigina Anvari, Deputy Minister of agriculture, Project design team (PDT) and WB Task Team	• Initial meeting and discussion on project preparation process, timelines and requirements from the GOT side • Preparation of the social and environmental risk management documents by the MOA with the WB technical support.
Dushanbe, virtual meeting through webex	January 19, 2021	WB Task Team, Ministry of Agriculture, all PDT members (relevant MoA departments, Tajik Academy Agricultural Sciences, Tajik Agrarian University by name Sh. Shohtemur, staff members of Agricultural Commercialization Project Implementation Unit)	• Detailed Presentation by the PDT on ideas for investment by component and/sub-component and discussion on the presentation
Dushanbe, Webex virtual discussions	January 20, 2021	PDT, WBG task team, representatives of Research Institutes, Tajik Agrarian University (TAU), Tajik Academy of Agricultural Sciences (TAAS) and Ministry of Agriculture (MoA)	• Presentation on Component 1: Seeds, Seedlings and Planting Materials and discussion • Presentation on Component 2: Agro-logistic Centers and discussion • Presentation on Component 3: Strengthening the Capacity of Selected Public Institutions for early warning, preparedness and response and discussion
Dushanbe, WebEx meeting	January 21, 2021	PDT, WBG, and Relevant Directorates within the MOA	• Presentation on fiduciary (procurement and financial) management requirements and discussion
Dushanbe, Presentation and consultation with key state stakeholders, Webex	January 22, 2021	PDT, WBG task team and Relevant Directorates within the MOA and Committee on Environmental Protection.	• Discussion with PDT of Component 3: Strengthening selected public institutions for crises prevention and management • Presentation on the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) requirements and discussions
Dushanbe, Webex Presentation and consultation with key state stakeholders	January 27, 2021	PDT, WBG Task Team and representatives of relevant directorates/departments MOA, Representatives of Seed Enterprises, Seed Associations, and relevant stakeholders	• Presentation on Component 1: Seeds, Seedlings and Planting Materials and discussion

Dushanbe, Email exchange, phone calls, meetings	February 11-March 10, 2021	WB, MoA, ACPPMU, TAU, TAAS, Association of Dehkan Farmers, Employers Association, Sarob Cooperative, and other interested parties	- Development of E&S risk management instruments: 1. Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF), including an assessment of current pest management practices; 2. Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF); 3. Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP); and 4. Labor Management Procedures (LMP).
Face to-face public consultations	April 15-21, 2021	Multi-stakeholder workshops in Dushanbe and Bokhtar	Public consultations of the draft ESF instruments
Face to-face a series of meetings and consultations, in Dushanbe	October, 2022	Ministry of Industry and New Technologies of the Republic of Tajikistan, UNICEF, WFP, USAID Healthy Mother Healthy Child Project, GIZ SUN and Center for Development of Entrepreneurship in Agriculture.	Discussion of the design and details of sub-components on additional financing
Face to-face public consultations	November, 2022	Multi-stakeholder workshops in Dushanbe and Bokhtar	Public consultations of the updated SEP
Dushanbe, face-to-face meetings and consultations	Dushanbe, face-to-face meetings and consultations	Dushanbe, face-to-face meetings and consultations	Dushanbe, face-to-face meetings and consultations

In April–May 2026, during the supervision missions, a series of consultations were held with key stakeholders to discuss the rationale and scope of the second Additional Financing (AF2). The consultations confirmed that no new types of activities or new beneficiary groups would be introduced. The main focus of discussions was on: (i) addressing the financial deficit caused by cost increases of 25–30% compared to 2020 estimates; (ii) finalizing construction of the remaining three ALCs; (iii) ensuring sustainability of the NRF operations; (iv) continued support to locust control activities in response to climate change impacts; and (v) scaling up the rice-fish intercropping initiative. No new environmental or social risks were identified beyond those already addressed in the original ESMF and SEP.

Several issues were raised during the consultations. First, several sub-projects will have potential negative environmental impacts, mainly because of activities related to small-scale agro-industrial enterprises; small-scale repairs, maintenance and upgrades of various premises or storage facilities. The project takes steps to mitigate these impacts through efficient subproject designs and best practices for implementation.

Secondly, there is a risk of involuntary alienation of land. The project provides for construction work, some new, and others repair and restoration work. New construction will invariably require "plots of land". The government will provide the land; however, due diligence must be carried out on all aspects to ensure that physical and/or economic displacement does not result. The risks associated with this will need to be avoided or mitigated, or if involuntary land acquisition is unavoidable, it will need to be followed up as described in the RPF.

Thirdly, the project drew lessons from previous contacts with relevant stakeholders, and in this regard, not only direct beneficiaries, but also indirect beneficiaries such as dehkan farmers and owners of small households were included in the stakeholder mapping. In addition to direct impacts such as job creation through selected sub-projects for vulnerable groups, including the poor and women, this project also directly targets secondary beneficiaries and suppliers to increase the multiplier effect of supporting the value chain. The expansion of large-scale horticulture and greenhouse farming facilitated by the upcoming project could negate the involvement of private households, greenhouses and orchard owners in rural areas, especially those whose main source of income is agriculture

Fourth, special attention should be paid to women, who make up most temporary and seasonal agricultural workers. Women are often employed in positions with lower qualifications. Working on a temporary or occasional basis without a formal contractual relationship entails less job security and less social protection. Wage discrimination can also arise, for example, when using generally accepted norms for remuneration of men and women that are not related to actual labor productivity. In response, the project should develop a gender action plan that summarizes project activities planned to address identified gender gaps.

Fifth, since production in the horticultural sector is much more labor intensive, especially during harvest periods, there is a moderate risk of child labor in project supported areas. To mitigate this risk, the project will work with the ILO and the Ministry of Labor to strengthen the capacity of local governments and regional PMU offices to monitor child labor in target regions.

Sixth, there is a low capacity for active participation among project beneficiaries, as large farms are better off. Technologies to be developed should be friendlier for diverse range of beneficiaries/farmers. Special attention will be paid to channel information through technologies that are accessible also to women farmers.

Overall, 6 virtual meetings and 15 individual phone interviews were held. The participants were medium to large horticulture farmers, large agribusiness entrepreneurs, greenhouse firm representatives, cold storage enterprise managers, mahalla leaders and general population (the latter includes small-holder farmers – of dehkan and household plots, as well as employees of larger farms and agri-business enterprises). The vulnerable groups were represented by the Association of Dehkan Farmers and Sarob Cooperative. Summary of findings from the public consultations and interviews held is described in Section 4.2 below.

Three multi-stakeholder consultations were held on the draft E&S documents prepared for the project at the target regions (Dushanbe and Khatlon) before the Project Appraisal. The participants included professionals from state and non-state organizations and institutions. The main objective of the meetings was to familiarize the participants with the scope of the upcoming project and summarize the potential impacts and risks and mitigation measures planned by the project. Minutes of the consultations held are enclosed in Annex 1.

Meetings and consultations with key stakeholders on Additional Funding

To discuss the details of sub-components on additional financing, the MOA/PMU supported by WB working group held a series of meetings and consultations during October 2022. The focus of meetings was AF project design and approaches on creation of a revolving fund for premix and potassium iodate. Discussions were held with the Ministry of Industry and New Technologies of the Republic of Tajikistan, UNICEF, WFP, USAID Healthy Mother Healthy Child Project, GIZ SUN and Center for Development of Entrepreneurship in Agriculture.

In general, the risk assessment for the components of additional financing remains unchanged, additional focus shall be placed to availability of information and nutrients in the target sites to be covered by the project. Some beneficiaries may remain unaware of the activities of the project due to living in remote areas of the republic. A social inclusion plan shall be widely implemented to increase access to project benefits and investments for a wide range of project beneficiaries.

3.2 Lessons Learned in Engaging Communities / Stakeholders from Previous Projects

Community mobilization and involvement play important roles in ensuring relevance and ownership of interventions. The project draws on the stakeholder engagement experience under several World Bank (WB) and other donor-supported projects¹ to identify effective approaches to citizen engagement.

The State Enterprise “Project Implementation Unit for Agricultural Commercialization Project” (ACP PMU) established under the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan currently implements the World Bank funded Agricultural Commercialization Project (ACP), aimed at increasing the commercialization of agriculture by strengthening the ability of the new generation of small-scale, private farmers to engage in commercialization activities within the agribusiness sector and to gain access to markets. The PMU conducts mid-term semiannual assessments to measure socio-economic impacts of the Project and makes necessary adjustments to it. To ensure the proper implementation of the Grievance mechanism (GM) and adherence to the WB Environmental and Social Safeguards Operational Policies the PMU hired a local NGO and installed 80 special grievance boxes in all target areas for receiving stakeholders’ complaints. Periodic assessments helped to improve the GM mechanism that in the first stage of the Project implementation didn’t sufficiently cover regional credit banks, dehkan farms receiving sub-projects through participating financial institutions (PFIs).

The ACP PMU recommends considering the following during project implementation:

- Apply midterm assessments to measure the project progress and make timely adjustments, if needed
- Widely implement, along with existing methods (complaint boxes, PMU website, letters), electronic methods such as e-mail and SMS, as the most reliable anonymous mechanism for submitting complaints and information delivery;
- Widely inform not only direct beneficiaries, but all stakeholders about a GM and the project opportunities from the beginning of the project
- Involve representatives of formal (khukumats, jamoats, land management institutions, etc.) and informal (mahalla committees, associations, NGOs, etc.) structures in the grievance redress commissions at the regional / national levels

¹ World Bank Agricultural Commercialization Project (ACP), 2015-2021

- Conduct special seminars for women and girls in rural areas;
- Ensure a smooth transition upon completion of the ACP to implementation of the SRASP in order to save time, material resources and human resources;
- Extend the project implementation period up to 7 years, to ensure sustainability of the SRASP results.

4. STAKEHOLDER MAPPING, SEGMENTATION AND ANALYSIS

The project will have mostly positive benefits as the interventions will address bottlenecks in the seed/seedling value chain encompassing the public and private sectors and help improve enabling (policy, institutions and regulatory) environment for the seed/seedling sector. The positive social impacts are as follows: a) increased access to better seeds and seedlings will improve productivity, and as such will increase income-generation; b) increased export of horticulture products due to establishments of agri-logistics centers, which will create employment opportunities in rural areas; and c) enhanced early warning and crop forecasting systems will strengthen the institutional capacities for better agrobusiness planning and practices.

The proposed AF will primarily focus on addressing the short-term emergency needs but will also finance some medium-term investments to enhance food and nutrition security and build resilience. The funds will co-finance project activities planned under the various sub-components of the parent project as well as finance new project activities planned under a new sub-component. As such the grant funds will be used to: i) review the food security law and institutional arrangements for food and nutrition security, ii) develop a food security crisis preparedness plan (FSCPP) within six months of project effectiveness;² iii) support emergency procurement and distribution of improved seeds and fertilizers to the farmers and vulnerable group of society; iv) support the establishment and operationalization of additional ALCs; v) strengthen public capacity for crises prevention and management by a) strengthening livestock early warning systems, and b) improving price information systems, including scaling up of digital technologies and information platforms; vi) complement existing efforts to roll out the IPC methodology; vii) establish a “premix revolving fund” to support the government in procuring and distributing quality micronutrient premixes and potassium iodate for food fortification and capacity building of the agency that will host the national premix revolving fund facility; viii) support the government in the procurement and distribution of micronutrient and vitamin supplements for pregnant and lactating women and young children (6-59 months), and/or ready-to-use therapeutic foods (RUTFs) for children with a risk of severe acute malnutrition, including media and communication campaign on the importance of healthy and diverse diets and of micronutrients intake; consequences of micronutrient deficiencies; good infant and young children feeding (IYCF) practices; and other critical nutrition messages; ix) support the government in the implementation of priority nutrition-sensitive agriculture interventions and enhancing knowledge and capacity of the MOA in nutrition-agriculture programming; x) support the government in addressing acute bottlenecks in food distribution and production systems; xi) develop an M&E framework to provide timely and reliable information to support informed decision-making in managing food security; xii) procure and distribute small agricultural machinery to women farmers to simplify women's manual labor; and xiii) provide training on seed multiplication, seedlings and planting material and the use of small innovative equipment to vulnerable farmers. The proposed measures are currently not financed by the government, and the proposed emergency response will be complementary to other stakeholders' efforts.

The project's primary beneficiaries are farmers, both smallholders and larger farms, agri-businesses, exporters, and service providers operating in horticulture value chains. Primary beneficiaries will also be the staff of public institutions, from agricultural researchers and extension officers to the staff working in various MoA departments and subordinate substructures and in local governments.

ESS 10 recognizes two broad categories of stakeholders: Project Affected Parties and Other Interested Parties. **Project-affected parties (PAPs)** include those likely to be affected by the project because of actual impacts or potential risks to their physical environment, health, security, cultural practices, well-being, or livelihoods. These stakeholders may include individuals or groups, including local communities. They are the individuals or

² The preparation of a FSCPP is a requirement under the CRW financing.

households most likely to observe/feel changes from environmental and social impacts of the project. The term “**Other interested parties**” (OIPs) refers to individuals, groups, or organizations with an interest in the project, which may be because of the project location, its characteristics, its impacts, or matters related to public interest. For example, these parties may include regulators, government officials, the private sector, the scientific community, academics, unions, women’s organizations, other civil society organizations, and cultural groups.

4.1 Stakeholder Mapping

One of the key challenges will lie in mapping out comprehensively the stakeholder profile and the ‘system’ thereof. This would imply identifying various sub-groups of beneficiaries/actors/functionaries; soliciting their expectations (from the project) and ascertaining the issues and concerns. Results emanating from these enquiries will have to be adjudicated against the existing ‘system’ – policies, programs, legislation, institutions and service deliveries. The stakeholders hence have been classified into three groups, including PAPs, such as MoA subordinate structures, associations and farmers); and other interested parties such as ministries, local governments, IFIs, CSOs, and media and vulnerable groups, including women headed households, women farmers, youth and people with physical disabilities. Table 2 below describes the mapping of the Project stakeholders.

Table 2. Project Stakeholders

PROJECT AFFECTED PARTIES			
Ministry of Agriculture Substructures			
State Enterprise for Testing of Crop Varieties and Variety Protection\	State Unitary Enterprise "Center for Advanced Studies in the Field of Agriculture"	State Crop Protection Center	State Commission for Agricultural Crops Variety Testing
Institutions of Academy of Agricultural Sciences of Tajikistan			
Institute of Horticulture, Viticulture and Vegetable Growing	Ziroatkori Crop Production Institute	Republican National Center for Genetic Resources	Center for Innovation and Mechanization of Agriculture
Tajik Agrarian University (TAU)			
Faculty of Horticulture and Agricultural Biotechnology			
State Committee for Land Management and Geodesy			
Land Cadaster and Management of Land Resources Department			
Dehkan farms and agribusinesses			
Seed producers and nurseries	Cooperative seed farms	Commercial farmers	Smallholder/dehkan farmers
Rice-fish intercropping farmers	Dehkan farms participating in rice-fish intercropping pilot (20 locations)	Smallholder farmers benefiting from rice-fish co-culture practices	

Enterprises, exporters and service providers			
Extension service centers	Wholesale Distribution Centres	Export organizations	Agro-industrial enterprises, fortified products producers
Wheat millers and salt producers (beneficiaries of the NRF)	National Pre-Mix Revolving Fund (NRF) under the Ministry of Industries and New Technologies	Private sector operators of ALCs	
Project affected people			
Individuals and groups, including local communities in target sites, likely to be affected by project impacts	Community members to be affected by land acquisition	Contracted workers	Farmers' cooperatives, and farming groups formed by ACP.
OTHER INTERESTED PARTIES			
Enabling Ministries and Agencies			
Ministry of Finance	Ministry of Agriculture	Ministry of Labor	Majlisi Namoyandagon Majlisi Oli (Parliament)
Ministry of Industries and New Technologies (host agency of the NRF)			
Food Safety Committee	Committee for Environmental Protection	State Investments Committee and Immovable Property Management	Committee on Women, and Family Affairs
TajikStandard	Agency for the Procurement of Goods, Works and Services	Agency for Meteorology	Provincial and local governments, and self-governing bodies
International Financing Institutions and International NGOs			
Food and Agriculture Agency of the United Nations (FAO)	IFC	ADB	Other IFIs, International Organizations/Consulting Firms
JICA	USAID Feed the Future Project	International Labor Organization/IPEC	
National NGOs			
National Association of Dehkan Farms (NADF)	Sarob Cooperative	Agro-service Consulting firms	Other consulting firms

Water Users Associations	Seed Association of Tajikistan	Employers Association	
Media			
Print and broadcast – newspapers, TV channels, radio programs	Electronic Media – web sites, news agencies		Social media – Facebook, Instagram etc.
DISADVANTAGED AND VULNERABLE GROUPS			
Women farmers, Youth, female headed households;	Vulnerable dehkan farms in remote areas (including GBAO/Khorug and Dangara district);	Disabled people, who may be physically challenged or handicapped in other ways; Breastfeeding women and parents of infants of 6 up to 59 months;	Children at risk of severe acute malnutrition (SAM).

4.2 Stakeholder Analysis.

Consultation meetings were held with representatives of different stakeholder groups. Project information was shared to evince their expectations and the issues/concerns thereof. These consultations helped in understanding not only the current functioning of the system but also in ascertaining the social issues likely to be addressed by the project. The results so obtained were consolidated and the initial set of impacts likely to occur as a result of the project interventions drawn. Consultations were held that covered a variety of stakeholders in order to identify gaps, risks, and potential actions. The Project beneficiaries and stakeholders will have different expectations from, and issues related to the Project.

Table 3. Expectations, Issues, and Concerns

Project Affected Parties (PAPs)					
1. Group/ Subgroup	2. Expectations from the project	3. Current Status	4. Concerns and issues	5. Significance of Risks	6. Enabling Conditions required
State Enterprise for Testing of Crop Varieties and Variety Protection	Currently there are seven state variety testing stations in the main agro-climatic zones of Tajikistan. Stations located in the districts of Kanibadam, Muminobod, Tursunzade and Spitamen. are expected to be modernized by the project.	Implements testing and protection of crop varieties in accordance with the national legislation Registration for sale does not include protection of the variety under the provisions of plant variety protection. Registration of varieties is only done at the national level. While all varieties sold in Tajikistan are required to be registered, in the past many have not been, including those which were imported. Samples of imported seeds and seedlings are tested, and certificates issued: 1. seed quality certificate, 2. plant variety identification certificate 3. Grafting certificate Methods of testing: 1. Laboratory based 2. Test plots 3. Field testing There are three seed testing laboratories. The main seed laboratory located in Dushanbe which was	Insufficient funding for infrastructure development and maintenance and human resource management has resulted in the continued deterioration of facilities and the ability of the enterprise to retain capable staff	Moderate	Development of a robust variety and quality certification scheme supported by internationally accepted standards using Laboratory and other testing facilities with the capacity and capability to operate at an international level. A certification scheme guaranteeing origin and quality that could be tracked throughout the stakeholder and consumer chain.

1. Group/ Subgroup	2. Expectations from the project	3. Current Status	4. Concerns and Issues	Signifi- cance of Risks	6. Enabling Conditions required
Republican National Center for Genetic Resources	Being in very poor condition, expects major project investments in construction and equipment of laboratories/ green houses	Responsible for maintenance of plant genetic resources both seed and plants; Produces printed educational materials on plants. Total number of employees is 37, including 20 researchers. Located in Hissor district	As a stakeholder in the support and development of the seed and seedling sectors, research institutes are poorly equipped. There are no laboratories nor greenhouse facilities to facilitate basic technical support in farming technologies, greenhouse cultivation, produce storage, plant pathology, soil chemistry, entomology, plant tissue culture, nor molecular biology. Knowledge base is poor and restricts development and innovation.	Substantial	Research and development on a sustainable level that is supported not just in terms of infrastructure, but more importantly in the institutional capacity development and capability building of stakeholders. Collaborative research programs for local researchers with
State Crop Protection Center	Project investments in infrastructure modernization, institutional capacity building	Enacts the crop variety protection rights	Slow action on implementation of existing policies and legislation on seed and planting material.	Moderate	Harmonization of legislation extending the right to crop producers to legally protect their intellectual property
State Commission for Agricultural Crops Variety Testing	Improvement and harmonization of legislation with regional and international rules for seed certification, variety testing, plant quarantine and variety protection	Evaluation trials generally take at least two years and are reviewed at various crop stages by the State Commission for Agricultural Crops Variety Testing. The trials are evaluated based on the criteria designated by the Commission and may, apart from the basic criteria, include productivity, quality, uniformity, stability and disease resistance. Crops include both open pollinated and hybrids, although in the case of the hybrids only the	The national seed systems continued to face major challenges due to the inadequacy of policy guidelines, weak infrastructure for seed production and certification, lack of technical know-how and experience in seed marketing and seed enterprise management	Substantial	The specific issues need to be addressed: (i) formulation of national seed policies and legislations to ensure efficient cooperation and co-ordination of stakeholders involved in the seed industry; (ii) improvement and harmonization of legislation with regional and international rules for seed certification, variety testing, plant quarantine and variety protection; (iii) human and

Academy of Agricultural Sciences of Tajikistan	• Implementation of national programs on seeds industry development. • Establishment of complete seeds value chain in the country. • Support capacity building of research institutes and laboratories and 90 local seeds farms\producers throughout the country, including provision of new equipment and machinery, and irrigation water • Seeds production “in vitro” and “in vivo” • Support Center for genetic resources under the Academy to collect and create a bank of unique local seeds for producing \ selection of	Lack of budgetary resources to implement national programs on seeds production. There are 90 local seeds production enterprises, left after the collapse of Soviet Union that operate as a state network under MoA overseeing. However, their material and human capacity is low, and they cannot effectively operate and produce high quality elite seeds. Irrigation water is a big problem on the ground as well.	• Lack of professionals in the agriculture structure due to low motivation of working in the sector; • Lack of analytical capacity and insufficient knowledge of modern technologies. • Lack of laboratories, office equipment and technologies; • No analysis of soil fertility • Lack of water for irrigation	High	Establishment of the project implementation group (PIG) under the MoA Conduct analysis of soil fertility An integrated approach to the implementation of project components Prevent local authorities from interfering in the activities of seed farms Development of a system of continuous training, mentoring and improving employee knowledge and skills
1. Group/ Subgroup	2. Expectations from the project	3. Current Status	4. Concerns and issues	Significance of Risks	6. Enabling Conditions required

Tajik Agrarian University (TAU)	Improved education system in agricultural sphere. Availability of modern educational tools and opportunities; A gradual transition from purchasing elite seeds abroad to growing local elite varieties. Creation of independent and effective seeds value chain in the country.	Tajik Agrarian University (TAU) named after Sh. Shohstemur, is the focus of university level education on agricultural production in Tajikistan. Established in 1931, it currently has around 6,000 students engaged in Bachelors, Masters and PhD programs; plus 2,500 distance-learning students. The university has 9 departments. ACP PMU organized 3 study tours on new curricula development to Belgium for the Tajik Agrarian University staff within the WB funded ACP.	• Climate change • Political stability in the region (Afghanistan) • Increase in prices for imported elite seeds and equipment • Inability to obtain equipment and seeds from abroad due to quarantine • Lack of cadres	High	Capacity building of all stakeholders in the system, starting with university professors, research institutes, laboratories, service providers, and farmers Develop infrastructure in support of R&D including laboratories for plant pathology, tissue culture, molecular breeding, soil science, plant physiology, support for training programs, staff retention, sustainability.
Seed producers and nurseries	Access to high quality material for commercial production Access to knowhows	Seed produced for sale is either done by individuals and farmers or are produced at facilities registered as businesses for the production of seed. There are 90 such facilities currently in operation, located in Khatlon (42), Sughd (28), the Districts of Republican Subordination (17), and GBAO (3). Of these 90 facilities, 46 are engaged solely in cotton seed production, 13 in wheat and cotton, 16 in potato seed, nine in various cereals, three in vegetables, two in lucerne and one in both cotton and vegetables.	Most seed production facilities and nurseries are poorly equipped necessitating substantial investments in storage facilities, seed cleaning and processing equipment, farm machinery and human resource development. There are no restrictions on seed production, the vast majority being done by private seed producers. While all seed sold must be through registered organizations, this is not the norm considering the prevalence of trading of farmer saved seed, the quality of which is very low. Only 60% of the seed producers produce acceptable quality seeds. This is largely due to their substandard location (climate, soil), management, and access to inputs such as fertilizers, mechanization, insecticides, herbicides, etc. The level of knowledge in the cultivation of crops, other than cereals and cotton, is limited and seed production management and expertise are also poor.	High	Main elements of support should include: (i) construction and/or rehabilitation of storage facilities, office and laboratory buildings, greenhouses, and rehabilitation of existing irrigation facilities; (ii) procurement of office furniture, field and laboratory equipment, vehicles and farm machinery; (iii) consultancy services in support of capacity and capability assessment; (iv) capacity building of technicians, consulting support services; and (v) purchase of super elite and elite seed, seedlings and planting material of high value

1. Group/ Subgroup	2. Expectations from the project	3. Current Status	4. Concerns and issues	Significance of Risks	6. Enabling Conditions required
Dehkan farms and small agribusinesses	Expansion of large horticulture and greenhouse farming facilitated by the upcoming project may squeeze out the participation of the private household greenhouse and orchard owners in rural areas, especially those whose main source of income is farming.	Private household greenhouse owners Private smallholder orchard owners Because of the low quality of locally produced seed, farmers have a preference for seed of imported varieties, however, access to imports is limited due to the cost	Lack of appropriate infrastructure including energy supply (natural gas) for horticulture practices e.g. greenhouses remains as one of the biggest constraints for smallholder/dehkan farmers. In addition, they can only sell their products in the local market, as they don't have external market information, and produce low quantity and relatively poor quality of goods. In order to export the fruits and vegetables, farmers are required to provide certificates which confirm the originality of the plants and seeds. However, smallholder/dehkan farmers cannot buy these certificates since they are too costly for them, and thus will not be able to export their products. They also encounter very high formalities and difficult procedures in preparing official documents for bank loan applications since they don't have sufficient collateral and creditworthiness.	Substantial	The project focus on public services, such as extension services and support to farmer cooperatives, can help smallholder farmers improve quality of production and via cooperation, access finance. Transparent information on project activities and benefits with outreach targeted at a broad circle of potential beneficiaries, including by using different social media channels, and face-to-face support for agro-experts Promote establishment of cooperatives to comprise small dehkan farms to afford costly certificates.
Rural women groups, women farmers	To have access to the project benefits, investments, income generating activities and trainings	Women with no skills (school education only). Women engaged in seasonal agriculture. Women with secondary vocational education. Single mothers/Female	Women comprise most of the casual and temporary workers in agriculture. Women are often employed in lower-skill positions; they also face additional obstacles to acquiring permanent jobs due to childcare and family obligations. Working on temporary or casual basis with no formal contractual relationships, entails they have less job security and are less socially protected. Wage discrimination may also occur, for example, by using commonly	Medium to high	In addition to mitigation measures included in the project LMP and ESMF, the project will raise awareness of labor standards, equity and non-discrimination requirements, SEA/SH risks and mitigation measures. These will also be included in project information

		headed households.	accepted norms for wages for men and women that are not related to actual productivity. Women are more vulnerable to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) at the workplace that can also affect their job security, productivity, health, and well-being.		materials, consultations and information campaigns
Enterprises, exporters and service providers, fortified products producers	Access to ALC services in all five locations (Sughd, Khatlon, Dushanbe, Dangara, Khorug); access to quality testing and certification services; access to cold storage and post-harvest processing facilities; access to micronutrient premixes through the NRF at affordable prices.	Large intensive horticulture farmers Large agribusiness entrepreneurs Entrepreneurs engaged in greenhouse farming Large cold-storage enterprises	Technology inputs and support, especially for the cultivation of vegetables in greenhouses, produce storage, rely solely on the private sector through individual enterprises, imported agriculture supplies and local distributors and retailers.	Substantial	A nationwide system of demonstration farms in support of technology and information transfer to stakeholders including seed and planting material producers, extension officers and farmers, furthering the profitability of the sectors.
Breastfeeding women and households with infants of 6 up to 59 months.	Breastfeeding women and children at risk will have access to project benefits. Improvement in national nutrition results is expected.	More than 8% of children in Tajikistan are underweight and 6% are starved. Only 40% of children aged 6-23 months receive optimal food variety and frequency of meals.	Stunting, malnutrition, lack of vitamins and minerals are the main problems affecting the life and health of children in Tajikistan.	Medium to high.	Establishing an enabling governance environment to ensure coordinated and coherent multisectoral action on nutrition; defining overall nutrition goals and multisectoral actions to achieve them; improved focus on nutrition; focus on women and their empowerment.
Population of the Republic of Tajikistan	It is expected to provide the population with flour and salt enriched with iodine.	Stunting rates in Tajikistan are the highest in the Central Asia region, and rates of micronutrient deficiencies, including anemia, vitamin A,	Stunting, malnutrition, lack of vitamins and minerals are the main problems affecting the life and health of children in Tajikistan.	Medium to high.	Establishment of a centralized supply of premixes for food fortification by establishing a “revolving fund” for

	Integration of agricultural extension services with nutritional information, such as promoting the production and consumption of local foods rich in folic acid	folic acid deficiency, and iodine deficiency, remain very high and are serious public health problems			premises (specifically micronutrients and potassium iodate/iodine) and providing “seed funds for premises”
Dehkan farms participating in rice-fish intercropping (20 pilot locations)	Continued technical support and inputs for scaling up rice-fish intercropping; training on fish fingerling management; access to markets for fish sales	During 2025, rice-fish intercropping was piloted in 20 locations across the country. Participating farmers witnessed increase in rice productivity by around 10–15 percent, while generating additional income from the sale of fish.	Limited experience with fish farming among traditional rice farmers; need for continued technical assistance; access to quality fish fingerlings; seasonal water management challenges	Low to Moderate	Continued technical support from PMU/MOA; provision of quality fish fingerlings; training on integrated rice-fish management; market linkages for fish products; scaling up to additional locations with AF2 support

Other Interested Parties					
1. Group/Subgroup	2. Expectations from the project	3. Current Status	4. Concerns and issues	Significance of Risks	6. Enabling Conditions required
Ministry of Agriculture Central Apparatus and its Departments	Timely and effective implementation of all Components of the Strengthening Resilience of the Agriculture Sector in Tajikistan Project, 2022-2027 Improve policy and legal environment for development of vibrant and resilient seed, seedling and planting	The MoA develops comprehensive sectoral and regional programs aimed at development of agriculture sector, food security, increase employment and rural incomes, maintain a stable level of prices for food products in the domestic market.	- Timely and effective targeted disbursement of funds - Lack of qualified personnel at all levels of the project implementation - Selection of qualified service providers Current agricultural challenges related to the project specifics are: - Limited access to high quality seeds; - Low capacity of local seeds producers, research institutes;	High	Establishment of the project implementation group (PIG) under the MoA Capacity building of all involved in the project implementation structures at the national and local levels, including the project implementation unit, employees of research institutes, laboratories, seeds

	material systems. Develop internal primary seed production. Enhance capacity of existing seeds producers, research institutes and laboratories, support them by modern equipment and machinery/techniques. Construction of new laboratories, rehabilitation of research infrastructure, irrigation facilities and greenhouses. Construction of three or more ALCs		• Lack of storage facilities for agriculture products; • Outdated equipment and technologies in existing laboratories and research institutes; • Limited access to/lack of quality fertilizers; Lack of laboratories specialized in the production of quality seeds, in identification of seed diseases and treatment and/or prevention of these diseases.		producers, farmers Ensure selection of qualified service providers Ongoing monitoring and technical support from the WB
State Enterprise “Project Implementation Unit for Agriculture Commercialization Project” (ACP PMU)	Capacity building and support of local state and private seed producers. Production of local high-quality seeds that meet market requirements. Construction and effective operation of three agro-logistical centers (ALCs) one each in Khatlon, Sughd, and Dushanbe regions tailored to the regional market opportunities and needs to establish an efficient distribution system network in Tajikistan Capacity building of MoA	Implementing agency for WB-funded ACP, 2015-June 2021. Up to date: trained 102 local trainers on selected products value chain; established 545 farming groups (13 591 beneficiaries, including 6 524 women (48%); developed business models on agricultural products production and post-harvest activities-processing, storage, packaging (with international partner support NIRAS Sweden AB); signed 342 commercial partnership contracts; trained 1238 women and girls in	• Quality seeds are needed to ensure food security. Whether imported seeds will be adapted to the conditions of the country is under the question. • Preparatory period of a new project, including preparation of all requested documents may take up to 2 years. The project period may not be enough for effective implementation of all the tasks. • Current PMU staff have no experience with WB’s new ESF requirements. To comply with them E&S consultants should be also recruited at the regional PMU units.	High	Ensure a smooth transition upon completion of the ACP to implementation of the new project in order to save time, material and human resources; Extend the project implementation period up to 7 years, to ensure sustainability of the SRASP results. Increase number of specialists, up to 6 at the regional units of the PMU, including technical specialists, E&S consultants; Establish effective cooperation between all stakeholders on the national

	structures in the regions	production and storage of agricultural products; implemented 112 grants (47% women);			and local levels, between private farms/enterprises and MoA and scientific entities
Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Republic of Tajikistan	Maintaining multi-sectoral mechanisms for coordinating nutrition activities at the national and subnational levels (oblast, city and district), including the appointment of representatives (nutrition coordinators)	The Ministry of Health is responsible for the timely development of a plan for the distribution of vitamins and trace elements, and distribution through primary health care institutions	Distribution of micronutrients and vitamin supplements for pregnant and lactating women and children (6-59 months). Distribution of micronutrients and vitamin supplements will be distributed through primary health care facilities of the MOHSP. The micronutrient distribution activities will be accompanied by a media campaign. Information will be provided on the importance of a healthy and varied diet and micronutrient intake; the consequences of micronutrient deficiencies; infant and young child feeding practices (IYCF); and other important messages.	Moderate	Development of a plan for the distribution of vitamins and trace elements. Development of informative booklets and awareness campaigns
Ministry of Industry and New Technologies, Economic Development and Trade	Creation of a revolving fund of centralized supplies of potassium iodate for existing salt producers. This includes: - approval of the revolving fund; - creation of a financial plan and a revolving fund mechanism	The National Pre-Mix Revolving Fund (NRF) has been established under the Ministry of Industries and New Technologies. The fund is tasked with the procurement and distribution of micronutrients (premixes) to wheat millers and salt manufacturers in Tajikistan. Operations are expected to commence by October 2026. The NRF will procure micronutrients from various international sources with support from the Project. The fund's operational model	Creation of a “revolving fund” for premixes and potassium iodate for the purpose of centralized supply of premix and potassium iodate to Tajikistan for wheat flour fortification and salt iodization, which will be purchased from flour mills and edible salt producers.	Moderate to significant	The environment for project work: a) includes the laying of information protocols that form a set of values for future project beneficiaries. b) providing access to the necessary equipment for the sale and creating the prerequisites for the formation of a revolving fund for premixes. c) involvement of sectoral experts to develop the structure of the revolving fund.

		ensures long-term sustainability through a modest markup on the selling price to cover administrative and operational expenses.			
Committee for Environmental Protection	While temporary and local, environmental risks may include soil loss related to planting activities; temporary, construction related, air or water pollution, or mishandling of pesticides. Such risks are expected to be reversible, short-term, and easily mitigable.	The CEP mandate is to coordinate policies and investments on sustainable natural resource management, climate change mitigation and adaptation, environmental monitoring & awareness. It issues environmental permits and conducts environmental expertise for any civil works subprojects.	Potential for pesticide use in different sub-projects, but that use is expected to be well defined and easily mitigable with proper pest management plans. Works related risks are likely to occur during the construction phase (occupational health and safety hazards, generation of solid waste, air pollution and noise, disruption of traffic, etc.) and are easily managed and mitigated. Increased exposure of farmers and their families to dangerous agrochemicals could also be considered as a significant risk.	Moderate to substantial	Development and implementation of ESMF, site specific ESMPs for small rehabilitation works, ESIA's for new constructions and a Pest Management Plan, covering the whole project.
Ministry of Labor, Employment and Migration	Labor risks are considered limited because all project workers, other than civil servants assigned for project implementation at the PMU are government by the mutually agreed labor contracts.	The Labor Inspection under the MoLEM has primary responsibility for overseeing labor conditions, occupational health and safety.	Non-regular labor audits and inspections of state organizations are conducted; Use of child labor, forced or conscripted labor is prohibited in the project No measures to prevent Sexual Exploitation, Abuse/ Harassment (SEA/H) at work are included in labor contracts according to the national legislation.	Moderate	The MoA will develop and implement Labor Management Procedures (including measures on occupational health and safety and Code of Conduct for all project staff, workers and consultants) for the project.
Tajik Standard	The project will improve seed quality standards and enhance their compliance to the international standards Capacity of relevant stakeholders is increased to comply with national seed	Key function is to ensure that, products manufactured locally in the country and those imported into the country are standardized. Tajik Standard assesses products with a view to ascertain their conformity to	Registration of varieties is only done at the national level. While all varieties sold in Tajikistan are required to be registered, in the past many have not been, including those which were imported. Tajik standard has regional offices to facilitate	Moderate	Improvement and harmonization of national legislation and practices with regional and international rules for seed certification, variety testing, plant quarantine and variety protection добавить процесс

	quality standards and certification	standard and specification.	certification and standardization processes at the regional level.		сертификации микронутриентов и премиксов, а так же производимой фортифитированной муки
State Procurement Agency (SPA)	- Enhance the institutional capacity of the MoA in e-procurement of goods, services, and works to be procured under the project - Improving the mechanisms for the exchange of information between state bodies and organizations.	Controls over the implementation of state procurement of goods, services and works by the state organizations Builds the capacity of state procurement staff Conducts international tenders and monitors the compliance to the national legislation	Low penetration of technologies and lack of digitization in rural areas; Low investment attractiveness of the sector; Insufficient number of procurement staff countrywide; SPA maintains a separate registration database for national service and good providers	Substantial	Preparation, disclosure and implementation of the Project Procurement Strategy for Development Use of large-scale data-matching systems to detect inaccurate reporting between the state agencies
Regional and local executive bodies	Would like to know much more project details along with their expected roles and responsibilities in project implementation. Interested in construction of agro-logistical centers and laboratories in their territories	Responsible for socio-economic development of territories and development of business entities. District khukumats are also key actors in provision of local services, such as electricity, water, maintenance of road network, issuance of relevant permits and land allocation issues.	- Do not know details of the project investments and the requirements thereof. - Lack of capacity in terms of personnel.	Moderate	Engage them during project activities design and implementation, solicit their support in public outreach and stakeholder engagement Enroll their staff in capacity building activities
National CSOs, agrobusiness associations, women business associations,	Cooperate in terms of timely raising awareness and capacity building of farmers and seed producers on seed production innovations;	There are wide range of service CSOs, associations and consulting firms functioning in agricultural sector. They have established good partnerships with the MoA under the ACP. Their	- Limited donor and state funding; - Beneficiary surveys results are not publicized and not used to enhance services;	Moderate	Partnership agreements with CSOs/firms to provide outreach and capacity building services on (a) development and implementation of a public education campaign and

agro-consulting companies	• Promote extension services and render support to players along the value chain; • Facilitate feedback mechanisms to strengthen relationships with project beneficiaries and project implementation unit. • Voice the challenges faced by vulnerable farmers, with special attention to the needs of women and disabled	institutional capacity is sufficient to facilitate the project activities in rural areas.	• All gatherings and activities should be agreed prior implementation with local governments; • Constant monitoring of CSO activities and funding received from donor organizations by the justice authorities; • Poor engagement of NGOs in public consultations on the agricultural reforming agenda; • Limited third-party monitoring (TPM) practices to assess the performance and verify the goods and services offered by the Government under the donor funded projects.		training and educational programs for farmers; (b) creating a system to provide timely, high-quality advisory services to farmers; (c) improving and scaling up operations of the ALCs. Engage CSOs in TPM activities.
Media	Cooperate in terms of timely raising awareness of ongoing reforms and project accomplishments; Promote farmers willingness to use the certified new seeds and seedlings and modernized methodologies to improve productivity and raise food security.	Wide range of national and local media outputs are available, especially popular in rural areas where the internet access is limited.	• Beneficiary Survey results have not been disclosed and disseminated; • Limited partnerships with national mass media outlets, as the MoA has its own state-owned national newspaper; • High censorship on behalf of the state authorities; • Blocked public access to online resources of some media institutions.	Moderate	Partnership agreements with state establishments to provide outreach and capacity building services on development and implementation of a public education campaign using multiple communication channels including new media (social media, mobile) and mass media; updating and enhancing MoA websites

5. Disadvantaged and Vulnerable Groups

As per ESS10, it is particularly important to understand project impact and whether it create equitable opportunities accessible to the vulnerable and disadvantaged groups or disproportionately fall on them. These groups often do not have a voice to express their concerns or understand the impact of a project.

Women dominate in the agriculture sector, due to men labor migration, but their participation tends to be mostly informal, seasonal, low-wage, or unpaid. Other disadvantaged groups include disabled people, who may be physically challenged or handicapped in other ways. They would not be able to benefit from the project without assistance.

Human, financial, and social capital constraints as well as traditions and norms hinder women employment and leadership opportunities in the agriculture sector. Although there are many different types of associations and groups in the agriculture sector, ranging from self-support groups to formal dehkan groups, very few women participate in them. This is an unfortunate participation rate because these (informal and formal) groups deliver extension, training, and even credit. This is reflected also in women's use of new technologies and access to productive resources and information, which are lower than men. Female-headed households are also less likely to own their assets (instead they share equipment, or rent), and they use less inputs in their land. Constraints on women's access to and control over resources, such as technologies and inputs, limit the success and sustainability of development. Deep seated perceptions and social norms about male and female roles in the household and agriculture cast women as lacking skills and knowledge either as farmers or farm managers. Lastly, even though men are absent from their households and farms, this does not always translate into women's increase in decision making. The composition of extended rural households, other male relatives, migrant males still taking decisions for the farm, do not allow for meaningful assumption of a decision-making role for many women.³

Child labor is used in many sectors and activities. Considering that the majority of population of Tajikistan lives in rural areas and is involved in the agriculture sector, most of the working children reside in rural areas. In 2004 the proportion of children involved in cotton-picking campaigns in different districts varied from 20.4 percent to 71.9 percent from the overall number of schoolchildren. The Government of Tajikistan has increased its efforts to prohibit the use of child labor in the cotton harvest. The turning point in this process came in April 2009, when President Rahmon gave a speech to the Tajik parliament, the Majlisi Oli, on the topic, and categorically stated that 'local governments in provinces, cities, and districts are mandated to categorically refrain from involving students and children in field work, especially in the cotton harvest.' Following efforts made by the Government of Tajikistan and pressure exerted by foreign governments and international bodies, the past few years appear to have seen a drop in the overall use of child labor in the cotton harvest.

Cotton Monitoring and Research Campaign implemented by the International Organization for Migration during 2010-2013 provided immediate and targeted support to the Government of Tajikistan's efforts to remove cases of labor violations from the harvest. During the 2013 campaign no cases were identified in which children were skipping school to participate in the cotton harvest. Some children identified in the field picking cotton on Sundays, while others did so a few hours a day after their school classes.⁴

Over the past decade, ILO's third-party monitoring (TPM) has demonstrated Tajikistan's major progress in eradicating child labor and forced labor in the country. The Child Labor Monitoring System (CLMS) in Tajikistan has been developed in phases and piloted during 2008-2018, and it has become one of the main factors in decreasing the number of working children and eliminating the worst forms of child labor. Analysis of the activities of the child labor monitoring committees or commissions within local governments have demonstrated that it is more efficient to monitor child labor at the level of administrative districts.

³ USAID. 2014. *AgTCATajikistan: Agricultural Technology Commercialization Assessment*. USAID Enabling Agricultural Trade (EAT) project. June 2014.

3 https://publications.iom.int/system/files/pdf/tajikistan_cotton_2013annualassessment_final.pdf

6. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

6.1 Purpose and timing of stakeholder engagement program

The project interventions are countrywide; therefore, the project team needs to be strategic in designing the SEP. The project stakeholder engagement activities need to be streamed horizontally and vertically. The horizontal stream implies an engagement with stakeholders at the national level. Activities on the horizontal level are assumed to improve awareness and coordination of efforts in the agriculture sector of the country. Whereas vertical stream implies the application of cascading mode which will allow the project to establish the communication with project-affected parties. As part of SEP the project will finance activities to improve the system of beneficiaries' outreach and education: development and delivery of training courses and modules in different formats, which among other things, will promote and embed formal and regular consultation with farmers, civil society, and other stakeholders. The outreach and education activities will provide specific stakeholder groups with relevant information and opportunities to voice their views on topics that matter to them. With the Project's closing date extended to May 31, 2029, the stakeholder engagement activities will continue throughout the extended implementation period. Special attention will be given to stakeholder engagement during the construction phase of the remaining three ALCs (Dushanbe, Dangara, and Khorug), as well as during the operationalization of the NRF and the scaling up of the rice-fish intercropping initiative.

6.2 Proposed strategy for information disclosure

The outreach and education approaches will be expanded by development and delivery of training courses and modules for (a) personnel involved in the development of policy and legal provisions as well as strategies and development programs; (b) research and academic institutes, including short-term training for researchers and technical assistants, workshops and knowledge sharing visits; (c) technicians of existing seed production and multiplication facilities, consulting support services and other associated personnel through participation in individually targeted training (both short and long-term), workshops, and conferences; (d) capacity building of potential management staff for operation and management of agro- logistical centers (ALCs) through specialized trainings; technical assessments, workshops, and study tours.

(e) strengthening the capacity of relevant public institutions on soil fertility management and locust control.

Website coverage

The SEP and other ESF instruments have been disclosed at the MoA website on April 8, 2021. Currently MoA website (<http://www.moa.tj>) is being used to disclose project related information in Tajik and Russian. The project will include enhancing the MoA website. The MoA will create a webpage on the Project on its existing website. All future project-related monitoring reports listed in the above sections will be disclosed on this webpage. Project updates will also be posted on the homepage of MoA website. The updated SEP and site-specific ESF instruments will be disclosed at the MOA website. The updated SEP reflecting the AF2 and the extended Project timeline (to May 31, 2029) has been disclosed at the MOA website on September 17 2026. Information about the construction progress of the ALCs in Dushanbe, Dangara, and Khorug will be regularly posted on the dedicated project webpage. Information about the NRF operations and micronutrient supply to wheat millers and salt producers will also be disclosed.

Mass/social media communication

PMU Social Development Specialist is responsible for maintaining close communication with media. The PMU representative will be responsible for posting relevant information on the dedicated MoA webpage, social media channels and on information boards throughout the project's lifecycle. PMU will also inform citizens about the project progress through radio & TV programs.

Communication materials

Written information will be disclosed to the public via a variety of communication materials including articles in newspapers, brochures, flyers, posters, etc. A public relations kit will be designed specifically and distributed both in print and online form. MoA will also update its website regularly with key project updates and reports on the project's performance in Tajik, Russian and English. The website will also provide information about the grievance mechanism for the project. Additional communication materials will be developed to support: (i) awareness campaigns on the rice-fish intercropping initiative and its benefits for smallholder farmers; (ii) information dissemination on the NRF operations and access to micronutrient premixes for wheat millers and salt producers; (iii) information on the construction progress and expected operational dates of the ALCs in Dangara, Khorug, and Dushanbe; and (iv) awareness on continued locust control activities and climate change adaptation measures.

Information Desks

Information Desks in target regions and districts will provide information on stakeholder engagement activities, project interventions, contact details of the focal point, etc. The focal point, in turn, will set up these information desks, either in their offices or other easily accessible places where they can meet and share information about the project with PAPs and other stakeholders. Brochures and fliers on various project related social and environmental issues will be made available at these information desks. Information Desks will be established or reinforced in Dangara district and Khorug (GBAO) in connection with the construction of the new ALCs. These Information Desks will provide information on construction timelines, expected services, employment opportunities, and the grievance mechanism.

Documents prepared for the project will be also physically available in the local language at the information desks in the target regions and districts.

5.3 Proposed strategy for consultations

Beneficiary Perceptions Surveys (mid-term and end of the project)

The Project has been designed to support mechanisms for citizen engagement. It will finance periodic assessments to measure the progress and make necessary adjustments to the project, including mid-term, and end of project surveys and studies to be carried out by independent specialists that will be recruited under the proposed Project. Semi-annual joint implementation support missions with representatives from WB and GoT will ensure compliance with legal covenants and implementation progress. A mid-term review will be undertaken three years after project effectiveness to review progress and, if necessary, adjust project design.

Focus Group Discussions

Focus group discussions will be primarily conducted with the women engaged in agriculture on the ground, to gather their perspective on their specific needs and issues that women encounter as they navigate the work environment. In a well-facilitated FGD, a discussion between participants is possible that enables to record voices expressing the risks, barriers and needs from their perspective. This forum will provide a more dynamic environment for women to express their viewpoints on the relevant issues. The results of the FGD will form part of a gender gap analysis to promote equal opportunities and help increase female participation in all levels. Consultations related to ALC construction in Dangara and Khorug:

As construction activities for the ALCs in Dangara and Khorug are planned for the 2027–2028 timeframe, the PMU will conduct targeted consultations with local communities, potential beneficiaries (dehkan farms, agribusinesses, cooperatives), and local government representatives in these areas. These consultations will: (i) inform communities about the scope and timeline of construction; (ii) identify potential environmental and social impacts; (iii) discuss employment and procurement opportunities for local residents; (iv) ensure that the ALC design considers the specific needs of women and vulnerable groups; and (v) explain the grievance mechanism. Site-specific ESF instruments (ESIAs/ESMPs) will be prepared and disclosed prior to the commencement of construction.

Consultations related to the NRF operationalization:

As the NRF commences operations by October 2026, the PMU in collaboration with the Ministry of Industries and New Technologies will conduct consultations with wheat millers and salt producers to: (i) inform them about the availability and pricing of micronutrient premixes; (ii) discuss supply logistics and timelines; (iii) gather feedback on quality and quantity requirements; and (iv) ensure transparency in the fund's operations.

Grievance Mechanism (GM)

In compliance with the World Bank's ESS10, a project-specific grievance mechanism will be set up to handle complaints and issues, and this will be integrated into the GM country system that are available to citizens. Dedicated communication materials (specifically, a GM brochure or pamphlet) will be developed to help residents become familiar with the grievance redress channels and procedures. Locked suggestion/complaint boxes will be posted in regional PMU offices and selected national service provider (local NGO) will maintain a grievance register in order to capture and track grievances from submission to resolution and communication with complainants.

Also, details about the Project Grievance Mechanism will be posted on the MoA website. An online feedback mechanism will also function as a grievance mechanism, allowing data-users to provide comments or lodge complaints. Contact details of the PMU representative will also be made available on the MoA website.

5.4 Proposed strategy to incorporate the view of vulnerable groups

The SRASP will focus on closing two gender gaps (low use of new technologies and of agricultural inputs) and on contributing to reducing gender stereotypes in the agriculture sector. The project will address gender disparities in the agriculture that hamper female productivity and entrepreneurship: (i) under Component 1, by promoting gender-inclusive development of technology (e.g. consideration of both male and female physiques; mechanization of women's traditional tasks in agriculture, such as weeding); (ii) under Component 2, by taking into consideration how accessible agro-logistics centers are for women entrepreneurs. Prospective contractors will be responsible for suggesting in their bidding documents ways to make ALCs female-friendly (e.g. by providing for childcare options, etc.); and under Component 3 by paying attention to channel information through technologies that are accessible also to women farmers and agri-entrepreneurs. The project will contribute to reducing gender biases in agriculture by incorporating in capacity building messages that do not confine women to defined gender roles and social expectations. Within three months of the project effectiveness date, the Project will develop the Gender Action Plan, which summarizes the project actions planned to fill in the gender gaps identified.

Based on the experience of the Agricultural Commercialization Project (ACP), the new project will ensure inclusion of disadvantaged and vulnerable groups throughout the project activities. Within the ACP a training series on "Production and storage of food (agricultural products) and its diversity" were implemented for women, labor migrants, housewives, women or people with disabilities. In total, 1238.

Under the AF2, the Project will continue to apply the gender-inclusive approach established under the parent project and AF1. Specifically:

(i) For the ALCs in Dangara and Khorug: Prospective contractors will be responsible for suggesting in their bidding documents ways to make ALCs female-friendly (e.g., by providing for childcare options, ensuring safe working conditions, and creating equal employment opportunities). The PMU will verify compliance with these requirements during construction supervision.

(ii) For the rice-fish intercropping scaling up: The Project will ensure that women farmers, who constitute the majority of agricultural laborers, have equal access to training, inputs (fish fingerlings), and benefits from the initiative. Specific training sessions will be organized for women in target communities.

(iii) For nutrition interventions: The distribution of micronutrients through the primary health care network will specifically target breastfeeding women and children in remote areas, including GBAO, with support from community health workers and mahalla committees.

(iv) For locust control activities: The Project will ensure that information about pest control measures, including safe handling of chemicals, is disseminated to all farming communities, with particular attention to women who may be involved in field work.

women and girls were covered by the training activities. Overall, the ACP's indicator was no less than 30% of the project beneficiaries should be women and 15% young people (age 18-35). Similar approach will be applied by the follow-on project.

The new project will undertake stakeholder engagement activities to ensure that these groups are not disproportionately affected and have equal opportunity in partaking in project benefits. Such activities will include awareness and information campaigns including targeting women and mahalla-level meetings which community members of all backgrounds can join, distributing information materials through multiple channels such as media, social media, and mahalla leaders, emphasizing the rules and principles of equity and non-discrimination for example in relation to employment opportunities in all training and consultation activities. Where ethnic and linguistic minorities are present, the project will ensure that information materials and consultations are accessible in the simple language common to the local groups. Where gender balanced consultations cannot be ensured, the project will undertake separate consultations with women in order to record and consider their feedback, questions, and concerns. Community liaison officers will identify, map, and ensure tailored outreach to women, disabled, socially or spatially isolated communities to ensure that they are aware and able to participate in project-related activities. This may include, for instance, tailored information meetings for small farmers, female farmers on benefitting from project-financed services (such as extension and advisory services), support to farmer cooperatives to link to export value chains, mahalla-level meetings on project benefits for farmers as well as the broader community, among others. Such meetings and consultations will highlight project commitments with regard to good environmental, social, labor/OHS, and stakeholder engagement practices, as well as explain the project grievance mechanism to raise awareness on the above among vulnerable groups and their communities.

A listing of disadvantaged groups and/or individuals may be by the following associations and unions:

- a. Dehkhan farmers with low skills/experience and women farmers may be represented by the National Association of Dekhan Farms (NADF)
- b. Disabled farmers may be represented by the Association of Disabled People of Tajikistan.

Ultimately the objective of engaging with the different categories of stakeholders above is to 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 project will also support measures to ensure no forced labor and child labor are used within the project activities. The mitigation measures will include engagement of district level children rights departments in raising awareness of local dehkhan farms on legal restrictions on the use of child labor; and capacity building of regional project offices (RPOs) in monitoring of child and forced labor at the project sites. For this purpose, PMU will collaborate with specialists from the International Labor Organization (ILO) and labor inspectors from the Ministry of Labor, Migration and Employment (MoLME) to: (i) provide regular trainings to local governments and RPO staff on labor practices and use of monitoring tools; (ii) monitor and report on any cases identified; and (iii) implement a public awareness campaign on labor rights, practices, and grievance mechanisms. The PMU will build an internal communications channel with MoLME's State Supervision Service to report on cases of forced and child labor submitted through the Project's GM and facilitate the investigation process. The PMU will also continue to engage with the Employers' Association Republic of Tajikistan and National Association of Dehkhan Farms of Tajikistan to raise awareness of farmers and agricultural employers on legal restrictions on the use of child labor and forced labor.

5.5 Timeline of SEP for the Parent Project and its AF

Keeping the above in mind, following is the tentative work plan and timeline:

Table 4. Proposed tentative strategy for stakeholder engagement activities during implementation (including AF2 period, 2027–2029)

Activity	Purpose	Stakeholders	Responsible	Timeline/ Frequency
Design Stage				
Project Steering Committee (PSC) Meetings	(i) establishing policy guidelines and providing overall oversight and strategic guidance; (ii) review of project's progress towards the PDO, (iii) review and approve the Annual Work Plans and Budgets (AWP&Bs) submitted by the PMU, (iv) review and approve annual implementation performance report prepared by the PMU and overseeing the implementation of corrective actions, and (v) ensure inter-ministerial coordination, harmonization and alignment among donors.	Representatives of relevant ministries, agencies and MOA substructures, farmer associations	MoA	First half of Year 1
Project Technical Committee (PTC) meetings	The PSC will be assisted by a project technical committee (PTC) to be established. The PTC will be responsible for providing technical advice to the PMU on the quality of implementation reports and special studies, guidelines, documentation of best practices, and M&E reports under the project's responsibilities providing recommendations and advising on improvement.	The PTC will be chaired by the Deputy MoA and represented by technical experts from various entities involved in project implementation.	MoA/PMU	Quarterly, on needed basis

Interdepartmental Coordinating Council on the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor (ICC)	Performance on implementation of the National Program for the Elimination of the Worst Forms of Child Labor and the results of statistical surveys, evaluation	The ICC includes representatives of the MoLEM, MoES, MoH, MoJ, MoIA, MoF, MoA,	Ministry of Labor, Employment and Migration	First half of Year 1
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Activity	Purpose	Stakeholders	Responsible	Timeline/ Frequency
	and monitoring are considered during its sessions.	National Children's Rights Commission, Children's Rights Ombudsman, Statistics Agency, Federation of Independent Trade Unions, Employers' Association, Women Committee, Youth Committee, international organizations, interdepartmental		
Consultative meetings with relevant stakeholders at the regional and local levels: share and consult with the relevant stakeholders on matters related to the planned project activities, provide them with regular briefs, and solicit their views on future envisioned actions.	The objective is to strengthen effective public consultations, incorporate the board's views into the project design, and thereby ensuring a proper implementation of the project Components.	Dehkan farms, seeds producers, agribusiness representatives, respective NGOs and associations	PMU/selected national service provider	Quarterly, on needed basis
Beneficiary Perceptions Surveys	To facilitate independent feedback from a wide range of stakeholders on the project interventions progress and effectiveness.	All stakeholders (disaggregated by gender to better tailor interventions)	PMU/MoA	Mid-term and end of the project
Development of public awareness campaigns	To address the social exclusion risk.	All stakeholders from private sector.	PMU	Continuously throughout project implementation
Focus group discussions, including separate ones with rural women/female farmers	To learn about women's and disabled people's issues and needs.	Women farmers, agriculture workers.	PMU/recruited NGO	During the first year
Community awareness and information campaigns	To raise community awareness on the potential E&S impacts and risks and mitigation measures to comply with ESS10	Community members in target districts	Local governments, mahalla leaders, PMU Regional office	During the first year of the project implementation.
Public consultations, social screening, and social census, if needed	To identify the resettlement impacts and mitigate them based on the RPF in compliance with ESS5	Project affected community members	PMU Regional office	As soon as the technical designs for sub-projects are finalized

Activity	Purpose	Stakeholders	Responsible	Timeline/ Frequency
Training on monitoring of child and forced labor at the project sites	To build the capacity of regional project offices (RPOs) and local governments in monitoring of child and forced labor at the project sites	RPO staff and representatives of the target local governments	PMU in collaboration with ILO staff and Child Labor Monitoring Unit under the State Agency on Labor and Employment	During the first year of the project implementation.
Consultative meetings with relevant stakeholders at the regional and local levels: exchange of information and consultations with relevant stakeholders on issues related to planned activities project, providing a regular briefing, and determining their views on future proposed actions.	The goal is to enhance effective consultation with the public, consider the opinion of the board of directors in the development of the project and thereby ensure the proper implementation of the project components.	Vulnerable groups of the population in need of nutrition adjustment, due to the lack of vitamins and trace elements in the diet, including lactating women and infants.	Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population, MOA, PMU	During the implementation of the subproject
Community outreach campaigns to raise awareness through dissemination of educational materials and information resources for nutrition education.	To inform the population about the action and timing of the subproject, about the benefits of good nutrition and timely consumption of microelements in the diet.	All stakeholders of the subproject.	Ministry of Health and Social Protection of the Population, MOA, PMU	During the implementation of the subproject
Construction Stage				
Community awareness campaigns	To keep informed about the upcoming and ongoing civil works	All stakeholders at national and local level	MoA/PMU/NGO	Based on annual plan timelines
Information campaign on legal restrictions on the use of child labor	Raising awareness on legal restrictions on the use of child labor	Local contractors, dehqan farms	PMU/RPO/Local Governments/Associations	Before the launch of any civil works, upon completion of the capacity building trainings for local governments

Monitoring of the use of child labor and LMP implementation at the project sites	To comply with ESS2	Local contractors	PMU/RPO/Local Governments/Associations	During civil works
Monitoring of ESMP implementation	To comply with ESS1	Contracted vendors and		
Beneficiary Perception Survey	To facilitate independent feedback from a wide range of stakeholders on the project interventions progress and effectiveness.	All stakeholders (disaggregated by gender to better tailor interventions)	PMU/MoA	Mid-term of the project
Operations Stage				
Stakeholder awareness, education, and consultations campaigns	To keep informed about the project achievements; to improve knowledge and skills in respective agriculture sphere	All stakeholders at national and local level	MoA/PMU/NGO	Based on annual plan timelines
Beneficiary Perception Survey	To facilitate independent feedback from a wide range of stakeholders on the project interventions progress and effectiveness.	All stakeholders (disaggregated by gender to better tailor interventions)	PMU/MoA	End of the project
Implementation of public awareness campaigns	To address the social exclusion risk, labor rights & practices, and grievance mechanism.	All stakeholders from private sector.	PMU/RPOs, local governments, associations	Continuously throughout project implementation
Consultations on ALC construction in Dangara and Khorug	Consultations on ALC construction in Dangara and Khorug	Consultations on ALC construction in Dangara and Khorug	Consultations on ALC construction in Dangara and Khorug	Consultations on ALC construction in Dangara and Khorug
To inform local communities about construction scope, timeline, and potential impacts; to identify mitigation measures	To inform local communities about construction scope, timeline, and potential impacts; to identify mitigation measures	To inform local communities about construction scope, timeline, and potential impacts; to identify mitigation measures	To inform local communities about construction scope, timeline, and potential impacts; to identify mitigation measures	To inform local communities about construction scope, timeline, and potential impacts; to identify mitigation measures

Local communities, dehkan farms, local governments, potential workers in Dangara and Khorug	Local communities, dehkan farms, local governments, potential workers in Dangara and Khorug	Local communities, dehkan farms, local governments, potential workers in Dangara and Khorug	Local communities, dehkan farms, local governments, potential workers in Dangara and Khorug	Local communities, dehkan farms, local governments, potential workers in Dangara and Khorug
PMU/RPO/Local Governments	PMU/RPO/Local Governments	PMU/RPO/Local Governments	PMU/RPO/Local Governments	PMU/RPO/Local Governments
2027–2028 (prior to and during construction)	2027–2028 (prior to and during construction)	2027–2028 (prior to and during construction)	2027–2028 (prior to and during construction)	2027–2028 (prior to and during construction)
Consultations on NRF operationalization	Consultations on NRF operationalization	Consultations on NRF operationalization	Consultations on NRF operationalization	Consultations on NRF operationalization

7.7. RESOURCES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTING STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

7.1 Resources

The MoA carries out its activities directly or through its territorial bodies (at province level in Sughd, Dushanbe and Khatlon) in cooperation with other central and local public authorities, enterprises, institutions, organizations regardless of their forms of ownership and organizational and legal form.

The PMU established under the MoA will be responsible for the SEP implementation and update, if needed. The PMU has a Social Development Specialist with a clear role, responsibilities, and authority for the implementation and monitoring of stakeholder engagement activities and compliance with the ESS10. Based on the needs of the SEP, the stakeholder engagement budget (to be funded from Component 4) will cover the following activities: additional staffing at regional level, travel, development of communication strategy, beneficiary survey, recruitment of an NGO, media coverage expenditures; printed outreach materials; workshops/sessions/events, training, GM, etc.

With the Project's closing date **extended to May 31, 2029**, the stakeholder engagement budget (funded from Component 4) will cover additional costs associated with: (i) stakeholder engagement during the construction of ALCs in Dangara, Khorug, and Dushanbe; (ii) consultations related to NRF operationalization; (iii) awareness campaigns for rice-fish intercropping scaling up; (iv) continued GM operations; and (v) additional staffing needs at regional level, particularly in GBAO (Khorug) and Dangara district, during the construction phase.

7.2 Implementation Arrangements

The implementation of the SRASP will rely on existing GoT structures and the MOA will be the lead implementing agency (IA). The implementation of SRASP will build on institutional arrangements and implementation mechanisms already established for the ACP and those substructures that will be established as new. It will be implemented in 3 regions/oblasts of Tajikistan, including at national, regional and local/district levels involving relevant government institutions but also the private sector as and when it is deemed necessary.

The MOA

The MoA has an overall responsibility for coordinating all aspects of the project, including contributions by the different relevant ministries and agencies participating in the project's implementation. The main responsibilities of the MoA will include project oversight, coordination, planning, technical support, financial management, procurement support and monitoring and evaluation. The MoA will be accountable for authorizing and verifying all project transactions and will work closely with the World Bank's Task Team during project implementation. To fulfill its responsibilities, the MoA will use the institutional mechanisms established for the implementation of ACP, including the Project Steering Committee (PSC) and a Project Implementation Unit under the MoA (MoA-PMU) established.

Project Steering Committee (PSC)

The project's oversight and strategic direction is performed by the PSC. This is important since project implementation involves a number of institutions, including those that were not part of the ACP. The PSC ensures coordination and effective and enhanced project implementation. In this regard, the project will use the Project Steering Committee (PSC) established for the ACP with additional members, as deemed necessary, by drawing from institutions involved in project implementation.

The PSC, chaired by the Minister of Agriculture, will provide strategic guidance for Project implementation, ensure coordination as well as help identify key issues that need to be brought to the attention of the Government and facilitate their resolution. It shall have the following broad responsibilities: (i) establishing policy guidelines and providing overall oversight and strategic guidance; (ii) review of project's progress towards the PDO,

(iii) review and approve the Annual Work Plans and Budgets (AWP&Bs) submitted by the PMU, (iv) review and approve annual implementation performance report prepared by the PMU and overseeing the implementation of corrective actions, and (v) ensure inter-ministerial coordination, harmonization and alignment among donors. The PSC will meet bi-annually focusing on review and approval of annual work plans and budget and monitoring of project performance on the basis of annual and bi-annual reports. The membership, terms of reference, duties and responsibilities, frequency of meetings as well as modalities of the PSC will be determined in the Project Operations Manual (POM).

Project Management Unit (PMU)

The MOA and PSC is being supported by a MOA PMU is responsible for the parent project management and coordination, including following the day-to-day project implementation, leveraging existing staff. The PMU has been strengthened to address the expanded project scope. Additional staff could be hired as required to successfully implement/coordinate the project. Two Regional Project Offices (RPOs), in addition to the PMU in Dushanbe, were established i.e. one RPO in the north (Sughd) another one in the south (Khatlon). The PMU and RPOs ensure: (i) the overall management and coordination of the project; (ii) the annual planning and the preparation of consolidated AWP&Bs and progress reports; (iii) the follow-up and reporting on project implementation, including the M&E and learning, the supervision and monitoring of the activities and the evaluation of project impacts, (iv) the fiduciary management and reporting (financial management and procurement), (v) the liaison and coordination with other stakeholders; (v) E&S risk management compliance, including social and environment and (vi) the overall knowledge management, and the strategic staff capacity-building and mobilization. The composition of PMU staff, including specialization, responsibility, salary scale and benefits and incentives e.g. annual and sick leave etc. will be detailed in the POM.

With the extension of the Project to May 31, 2029, the PMU will continue to be fully staffed with all necessary positions, including Social Development Specialists, Environmental Specialists, and M&E staff. The PMU will maintain its Regional Project Offices in Sughd, Khatlon, and GBAO, and will ensure adequate coverage of stakeholder engagement activities in Dangara district and Khorug during the ALC construction phase.

Project Technical Committee (PTC)

The PSC is being assisted by a project technical committee (PTC) established by drawing technical experts from various entities involved in project implementation. The PTC, chaired by the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, would be responsible for providing technical advice to the PMU on the quality of implementation reports and special studies, guidelines, documentation of best practices, and M&E reports. More specifically, the PTC will be responsible for: (i) reviewing, providing recommendations and advise on improving the AWP&Bs submitted by the PMU, (ii) providing technical advisory services on implementation modalities, (iii) providing institutional capacity building to the PMU and to relevant implementation entities, (v) reviewing and analyzing all documents prepared under the project's responsibilities providing recommendations and advising on improvement. The PTC meets quarterly focusing on reviewing the technical aspect of annual plans and monitoring reports. The membership, terms of reference, duties and responsibilities and frequency of meetings of the PTC are detailed in the POM.

Planning and Implementation

The project follows an annual work plan and budget (AWP&B) preparation, review and approval and implementation process. The preparation of the AWP&B is consultative involving all implementation agencies while the primary responsibility of preparing investment proposals to be financed by the project and their implementation is that of the responsible institution. The MOA has the responsibility of leading the preparation and implementation of strategic investments e.g. feasibility studies etc. in close collaboration with relevant institutions. Annual plans for activities related to coordination and management of the project (e.g. M&E, fiduciary, etc.) are being prepared and implemented by the PMU. The AWP&B, after going through technical review by the PTC, will be reviewed and approved by the PSC in one of the bi-annual PSC meetings. The AWP&B preparation process with eligible project activities and indications of the type of investment and, when appropriate expected contribution of both project and beneficiaries are provided in the POM.

7.3 Management functions and responsibilities

The PMU along with the selected National Service Provider (NSP), a CSO or Firm, will take responsibility for and lead all aspects of the stakeholder engagement. In order to implement the various activities envisaged in the SEP, the PMU will need to closely coordinate with MoA's internal departments/ units such as Department for Organizing Document Flow, Office Work and Department of International Relations, Science and Implementation of Scientific Achievements, Department of Agricultural Policy and Food Security Monitoring. The SRASP uses the existing Project Steering Committee (PSC) and Project Technical Committee (PTC) established for the ACP. The PTC, chaired by the Deputy Minister of Agriculture, is responsible for providing technical advice to the PMU on the quality of implementation reports and special studies, guidelines, documentation of best practices, and M&E reports. The PMU helps the MoA undertake tasks including stakeholder engagement.

The PMU facilitates stakeholder/citizen engagement through the creation of an advisory board. This board may comprise dehqan farms, seeds producers, agribusiness representatives, respective NGOs and business associations and will meet on a quarterly or a semi-annual basis. The MoA, through the PMU, consults with the board on matters related to the project components, brief them on latest actions, and solicit their views on the project progress. The purpose is to strengthen public consultations and secure the buy-in of stakeholders to ensure smooth and proper implementation of reforms. The roles and responsibilities of main actors are summarized in the Table 5 below.

Table 5. Responsibilities of key actors/stakeholders in SEP Implementation

Actor/Stakeholder	Responsibilities
PMU	• Planning and implementation of the SEP activities; • Leading stakeholder engagement activities; • Management and resolution of grievances; • Monitoring of and reporting on ESF performance to the World Bank. • Consulting upon, disclosure and implementation of site specific ESF instruments (ESIAs/ESMPs, RAPs, if needed). • Coordinating stakeholder engagement during ALC construction in Dangara, Khorug, and Dushanbe; • Overseeing consultations related to NRF operationalization; • Supporting awareness campaigns for rice-fish intercropping scaling up; • Ensuring continued GM operations throughout the extended Project timeline (to May 31, 2029).
PMU Regional Offices (Sughd, Khatlon)	• In collaboration with Regional Agricultural Departments Planning and implementation of the SEP activities at the regional level; • Establish and facilitate the work of the Regional Grievance Redress Group; • Submit quarterly reports on complaints received to the National GM Focal Point; • Transmit and resolve complaints caused by the project interventions in close collaboration with and as directed by PMU;
Agricultural departments (district level) in DRS	• Monitor Project compliance with national legislation; • Participate in implementation of assigned activities in the SEP; • Provide report on all complaints to the Regional GM Focal Point; • Establish and facilitate the work of the Local Grievance Redress Group; • Make available the disclosed SEP and GM procedures.
MoA/Minister assistant, Department for Organizing Document Flow and Office Work	• Registering the appeals; • Share a summary report on all project specific complaints to the PMU GM Focal Point.
Project stakeholders	• Lodge their grievances using the Grievance Mechanism defined in the SEP; • Help the Project to define mitigation measures.

Ministry of Industries and New Technologies (NRF host agency)	1. Coordinating with wheat millers and salt producers on micronutrient supply; 2. Participating in stakeholder consultations related to NRF operations; 3. Providing feedback on the quality and adequacy of premix supplies; 4. Reporting on NRF operations to the PMU and WB.
Local governments of Dangara district and Khorug (GBAO)	1. Facilitating community consultations during ALC construction; 2. Supporting land allocation and permitting processes; 3. Participating in the Local Grievance Management Group; 4. Ensuring community awareness about construction activities and mitigation measures.

8. GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

8.1 Overview of Grievance Mechanism

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

- Provides affected people with avenues for making a complaint or resolving any dispute that may arise during the course of the implementation of projects;
- Ensures that appropriate and mutually acceptable redress actions are identified and implemented to the satisfaction of complainants; and
- Avoids the need to resort to judicial proceedings.

The PMU will set up a project specific GM to address all citizen complaints and requests related to the project. Day-to-day implementation of the GM and reporting to the World Bank will be the responsibility of the PMU. The Social Development Specialists/Consultants will be the key nodal officers for GM in the PMU's central and regional offices. The project specific GM is based on the Laws of the Republic of Tajikistan "Appeals of Physical and Legal Entities" (2016) and "On Civil Service", as well as the Instructions of the Government of the Republic of Tajikistan "On the Procedures of Records Management on the Appeals of Citizens".

Though the Tajik Law on Appeals of Physical and Legal Entities does not require processing the anonymous complaints, the Project would encourage receiving complaints by a variety of channels, including *anonymous complaints*, at different levels as per ESS10. The GM also must handle with confidentiality and sensitivity complaints about SEA/SH. The system and requirements (including staffing) for the grievance redress chain of

action – from registration, sorting and processing, and acknowledgement and follow-up, to verification and action, and finally feedback – are incorporated in the GM, based on the existing practices described in the Instructions "Records Management Procedures for Citizens Appeals". To ensure management oversight of grievance handling, the PMU M&E is responsible for monitoring the overall process, including verification that agreed resolutions are implemented.

The GM will continue to function throughout the extended Project period (until May 31, 2029). With the commencement of construction activities for the ALCs in Dangara, Khorug, and Dushanbe, the PMU will ensure that the GM is adequately communicated to affected communities in these areas. Information about the GM will be included in construction-related consultations and will be displayed at construction sites. The GM will also handle any complaints related to the NRF operations, including issues with micronutrient supply quality or pricing.

8.2 GM Structure

The project adapts the existing GM system within the country, which encourages bottom-up structure for GM processing. At the same time, the project affected parties can also file their complaints with the central apparatus of the MoA directly through the Minister Assistant, and/or Department for Organizing Document Flow and Office Work. The timeline for the grievance processing is 30 days upon registration.

The project has adapted the existing GM practices and is establishing GM Management Groups at the following three levels:

Local level: *Local Grievance Management Group (LGMG)* is being established in each district administration (khukumat) to be facilitated by the agricultural departments. The group will be chaired by Deputy Head of Khukumat and comprising representatives of the department of agriculture (DoA); environmental protection; land administration committee; jamoats; and other civil society organizations. The DoA representative will function as the Secretary of the LGMG and serve as local Grievance Focal Point (GFP) to be responsible for maintaining feedback logs. If the issue cannot be resolved at the local level, then it will be escalated to the regional level. Mahalla committee members, community leaders and other civil society organizations will be fully coopted in reaching out to the local communities and individuals and provide intermediation support, in general, and airing grievances, in particular. For the ALC construction sites in Dangara and Khorug, the Local Grievance Management Group will be reinforced with additional representatives from the construction contractor and the PMU Regional Office to ensure timely resolution of any construction-related complaints.

Regional level: *Regional Grievance Management Group (RGMG)* will be established in each target region. The RGMG will be chaired by Regional Project Officer and will consist of representatives of the department of agriculture; environmental protection; land administration committee; regional farmer associations and other civil society organizations. The PMU Social Development Consultant at the province level will function as the Secretary of the RGMG and serve as regional Grievance Focal Point (GFP) to file the grievances and appeals. If the issue cannot be resolved at the regional level *within 15-30 days* depending on additional investigations needed, then it will be escalated to the national level.

National level: If there is a situation in which there is no response from the local or regional level GMCs, or if the response is not satisfactory then complainants and feedback providers have the option to contact the PMU directly to follow up on the issue. *National Grievance Management Group (NGMG)* will be chaired by the PMU Director, comprising representatives of MoA, CEP, Land Management Committee, and national NGOs. The PMU's Social Development Specialist will function as the Secretary of the NGMG and serve as national Grievance Focal Point (GFP) to file the grievances and appeals. S/he will be responsible for summarizing the number and types of all the complaints and issues received by the districts and two regions.

The timeline for complaint resolution at the national level will be *15 days* upon receipt of the complaint that does not require additional study and research, and *30 days for the appeals* that need additional study. The complainant will be informed of the outcome immediately and at the latest within *5 days* of the decision.

Appeal Mechanism. If the complaint is still not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, then s/he can submit his/her complaint to the appropriate court of law.

The project will also establish a separate GM for project workers. Essentially, it will be at two levels – local (at contractor level) and national (in Dushanbe at central PMU office). Please refer to the Labor Management Procedures, which described the GM structure for project workers in detail.

8.3 Grievance Resolution Process

Information about the GM will be publicized as part of the Public/community communication (e.g. through websites, social media). Brochures and leaflets will be displayed in regional offices, target district agricultural departments, targeted jamoats, if appropriate, and local governments information boards, etc. Information about the GM will also be posted online on the MoA website. The overall process for the GM will be comprised of six steps, as described below.

Step 1: Uptake. Project stakeholders will be able to provide feedback and report complaints through several channels: contacting PMU by mail, telephone, email, social media and messaging.

Step 2: Sorting and processing. Complaints and feedbacks will be compiled by the Social Specialists at PMU at central or regional offices and recorded in a register. These are assigned to the respective individuals / agencies to address. They are expected to discuss/ deliberate with the complainant and arrive at a resolution, within 15 working days of receipt.

Step 3: Acknowledgement and follow-up. Within five (5) working days of the date a complaint is submitted, the responsible person/ agency will communicate with the complainant and provide information on the likely course of action and the anticipated timeframe for resolution of the complaint. If complaints are not resolved within 15 days, the responsible person will provide an update about the status of the complaint/question to the complainant and again provide an estimate of how long it will take to resolve the issue.

Step 4: Verification, investigation and action. This step involves gathering information about the grievance to determine the facts surrounding the issue and verifying the complaint's validity, and then developing a proposed resolution, which could include changes of decisions concerning eligibility for mitigation, assistance, changes in the program itself, other actions, or no actions. Depending on the nature of the complaint, the process can include site visits, document reviews, a meeting with the complainant (if known and willing to engage), and meetings with others (both those associated with the project and outside) who may have knowledge or can otherwise help resolve the issue. It is expected that many or most grievances would be resolved at this stage. All activities taken during this and the other steps will be fully documented, and any resolution logged in the register.

Step 5: Monitoring and evaluation. Monitoring refers to the process of tracking grievances and assessing the progress that has been toward resolution. The PMU will be responsible for consolidating, monitoring, and reporting on complaints, enquiries and other feedback that have been received, resolved, or pending. This will be accomplished by maintaining the grievance register and records of all steps taken to resolve grievances or otherwise respond to feedback and questions.

Step 6: Providing Feedback. This step involves informing those to submit complaints, feedback, and questions about how issues were resolved, or providing answers to questions. Whenever possible, complainants should be informed of the proposed resolution in person (communicating by telephone or other means).

If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, she/he will be informed of further options, which would include pursuing remedies through the World Bank, as described below, or through avenues afforded by the Republic of Tajikistan legal system. On a quarterly basis, the PMU will report to MoA on grievances resolved since the previous report and on grievances that remain unresolved, with an explanation as to steps to be taken to resolve grievances that have not been resolved within 30 days. Data on grievances and/or original grievance logs will be made available to World Bank missions on request, and summaries of grievances and resolutions will be included in semiannual reports to the World Bank.

Grievance Logs will include at least the following information:

- Individual reference number
- Name of the person submitting the complaint, question, or other feedback, address and/or contact information (unless the complaint has been submitted anonymously)
- Details of the complaint, feedback, or question/her location and details of his / her complaint.
- Date of the complaint.
- Name of person assigned to deal with the complaint (acknowledge to the complainant, investigate, propose resolutions, etc.)
- Details of proposed resolution, including person(s) who will be responsible for authorizing and implementing any corrective actions that are part of the proposed resolution
- Date when proposed resolution was communicated to the complainant (unless anonymous)
- Date when the complainant acknowledged, in writing if possible, being informed of the proposed resolution
- Details of whether the complainant was satisfied with the resolution, and whether the complaint can be closed out
- Date when the resolution is implemented (if any).

The MoA has GM focal points at the central, province and district levels (agricultural departments) that allow the project to address effectively all grievances raised at grass root level, which will have countrywide scattered pattern including those in remote areas. PAPs will have an option of submitting grievance to the PMU directly.

8.4 Monitoring and Reporting on Grievances

The PMU is responsible for:

- Analyzing the qualitative data on the number, substance and status of complaints and uploading them into the project databases established by PMU;
- Monitoring outstanding issues and proposing measures to resolve them;
- Preparing quarterly reports on GM to be shared with the WB.

Semiannual reports to be submitted to the WB include section related to GM which provides updated information on the following:

- Status of GM implementation (procedures, training, public awareness campaigns, budgeting etc.);
- Qualitative data on number of received grievances (applications, suggestions, complaints, requests, positive feedback), highlighting number of resolved grievances;
- Quantitative data on the type of grievances and responses, issues provided and grievances that remain unresolved;
- Level of satisfaction by the measures (response) taken;
- Any correction measures taken.

8.5 World Bank Grievance Redress System

Communities and individuals who believe that they are adversely affected by a World Bank (WB) supported project may submit complaints to existing project-level grievance mechanisms or the WB's Grievance Redress Service (GRS). The GRS ensures that complaints received are promptly reviewed in order to address project-related concerns. Project affected communities and individuals may submit their complaint to the WB's independent Inspection Panel which determines whether harm occurred, or could occur, as a result of WB non-compliance with its policies and procedures. Complaints may be submitted at any time after concerns have been brought directly to the World Bank's attention, and Bank Management has been given an opportunity to respond. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank's corporate Grievance Redress Service (GRS), please visit <http://www.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/products-and-services/grievance-redress-service>. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank Inspection Panel, please visit www.inspectionpanel.org. A complaint may be submitted in English, Tajik or Russian, although additional processing time will be needed for complaints that are not in English. A complaint can be submitted to the Bank GRS through the following email: grievances@worldbank.org

Communities and individuals who believe that they are adversely affected by a project supported by the World Bank may also submit complaints directly to the Bank through the Bank's Country Office through the following channels.

By phone: +992 48 701-5810

By mail: 48 Ayni Street, Business Center "Sozidanie", 3rd floor, Dushanbe, Tajikistan
By email: tajikistan@worldbank.org

The complaint must clearly state the adverse impact(s) allegedly caused or likely to be caused by the Bank-supported project. This should be supported by available documentation and correspondence to the extent possible. The complainant may also indicate the desired outcome of the complaint. Finally, the complaint should identify the complainant(s) or assigned representative/s and provide contact details. Complaints submitted via the GRS are promptly reviewed to allow quick attention to project-related concerns.

9. MONITORING AND REPORTING OF THE SEP

The PMU supports monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities to track, document, and communicate the progress and results of the project, including monitoring of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan. M&E Specialist supported by the PMU Social Development Specialist is responsible for overall compilation of SEP implementation progress reports and results and summarizing them in semiannual reports to be submitted to the WB.

Feedback and grievances received through the GM focal points are also included in the semiannual reporting. The M&E Specialist supported by the PMU Social Development Specialist collates and analyzes these outcome assessments and perception-based results and includes them in semiannual reports to be submitted to the WB.

With the Project's closing date extended to May 31, 2029, the monitoring and reporting of the SEP will continue throughout the extended period. Semiannual reports will include specific sections on: (i) stakeholder engagement during ALC construction in Dangara, Khorug, and Dushanbe; (ii) consultations and feedback related to NRF operations; (iii) beneficiary feedback on the rice-fish intercropping initiative; (iv) community engagement related to locust control activities; and (v) the status and effectiveness of the GM across all project areas.

A Beneficiary Perception Survey will be conducted at the end of the extended Project period (2029) to assess the overall impact of the Project, including the AF2 interventions, on beneficiary satisfaction and project outcomes.