



MUVUMBA MULTIPURPOSE WATER RESOURCES DEVELOPMENT PROGRAM (MMWRDP)

Stakeholder's Engagement Plan (SEP) for Irrigation Project



FINAL REPORT

October, 2025

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DECLARATION

This is to declare that this Stakeholder's Engagement Plan (SEP) has been prepared by expert duly registered and licensed by the Rwanda Association of Professional Environmental Practitioners (RAPEP), as listed below. The report has been developed in full compliance with the laws and regulations governing Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) in the Republic of Rwanda, including Ministerial Orders and REMA guidelines, as well as the applicable requirements of the African Development Bank (AfDB) Integrated Safeguards System (ISS, 2023).

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The TCE-IBC JV is a joint venture involving **Indonesia Battery Corporation (IBC)** and **TCE** (a private company registered with the Rwanda Development Board (RDB) and is a certified EA firm of expertise under the Rwanda Association of Environmental Professional Practitioners. IBC has its headquarters in IBC Services House, KN5Rd-KK83 St. PO. BOX:5825 Kigali. Over a period of 20 years, the company has been specializing in conducting Environmental Studies, Social Studies including Resettlement Action Plans (RAPs), Feasibility and Engineering Designs Studies, Involuntary Resettlement, Climate Change Risk Assessment, Socio-economic Assessment, Baseline Surveys, Waste Management, Water and Sanitation, and Advisory Services in sectors ranging from agriculture, energy development, infrastructure and housing development, transport, and water supply.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Agriculture remains the backbone of Rwanda's economy, contributing around 30% to the national GDP and providing livelihoods for most of the population. Beyond its economic importance, agriculture plays a central role in ensuring national food security. However, the sector continues to face major challenges, including heavy dependence on rain-fed farming, limited irrigation infrastructure, and increasing vulnerability to prolonged droughts, especially in the Eastern Province. These constraints limit productivity and expose farming households to food insecurity and income instability.

In response to these challenges, the Government of Rwanda (GoR), through the, has proposed the Irrigation Project under the broader Muvumba Multipurpose Water Resources Development Program (MMWRDP). The project is designed to reduce reliance on rain-fed agriculture, improve water availability for both crop production and livestock, and enhance resilience against the impacts of climate variability. It represents a critical step in achieving national priorities for agricultural transformation, climate adaptation, and sustainable rural development. The project is to be implemented by Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) in collaboration with Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB). Given that RAB is responsible for irrigation development and management in the country, RWB will lead in the technical implementation of the irrigation project.

The project covers five sectors in Nyagatare District, namely Rwempasha, Rukomo, Tabagwe, Nyagatare, and Karama, targeting approximately 3,073 hectares for irrigation development. It will establish modern irrigation systems, including both gravity-fed and pressurized schemes, supported by robust water conveyance channels and access roads. Furthermore, it will provide 75 livestock watering troughs to address the pressing water needs of pastoral communities. Together, these interventions aim to strengthen the region's agricultural base while ensuring equitable water distribution across farming and livestock-keeping households.

By enhancing agricultural productivity and providing reliable water access, the project is expected to generate significant socio-economic benefits. These include improved household food security, higher farm incomes, and reduced vulnerability to droughts. Additionally, the project will stimulate local employment opportunities, promote sustainable land and water management practices, and contribute to broader national objectives such as poverty reduction, rural development, and climate resilience. Ultimately, the Irrigation Project will serve as a model for integrated water resources management and sustainable agricultural development in Rwanda's dryland regions.

Legal and Policy Frameworks Relevancy

This Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is anchored in Rwanda's legal and institutional frameworks that uphold transparency, public participation, and access to information. The Constitution of Rwanda (2003, revised in 2023) guarantees citizens the right to participate in governance and to access public information, establishing a foundation for inclusive decision-making. This principle is reinforced by Law No. 04/2013 on Access to Information, which obliges public institutions to proactively disclose relevant information, thereby enabling stakeholders to remain informed and actively engaged in development processes.

Environmental governance in Rwanda is further strengthened by Law No. 48/2018 on Environment, which mandates public consultation in environmental decision-making to ensure that community voices are considered in projects affecting their surroundings. Complementing this, Ministerial Order No. 001/2019 on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) procedures explicitly requires stakeholder engagement and disclosure as part of project planning and approval. Additionally, the National Decentralization Policy (2000, revised 2012) reinforces citizen participation by promoting local ownership of development initiatives and enhancing accountability in decision-making at the community level.

At the international level, the African Development Bank's Integrated Safeguards System (ISS) provides a comprehensive framework for meaningful stakeholder engagement. In particular, Operational Safeguard 1 (OS1) on Environmental and Social Assessment requires inclusive consultation and information disclosure to ensure that project risks and opportunities are well understood by affected and interested parties. Furthermore, Operational Safeguard 10 (OS10) on Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure obliges project developers to facilitate continuous, transparent, and inclusive engagement throughout the project cycle, while ensuring timely access to relevant project information for all stakeholders. Together, these national and international frameworks provide a robust foundation for the SEP. They ensure that stakeholder engagement is not only a legal requirement but also a strategic tool to enhance project ownership, strengthen trust, minimize risks, and promote sustainable development outcomes.

Key Environmental, Economic and Social Issues for Engagement

The Irrigation Project under the Muvumba Multipurpose Water Resources Development Program (MMWRDP) presents a range of environmental and social (E&S) issues that require careful engagement with stakeholders to ensure sustainable outcomes. Key environmental risks include changes in river flow regimes, groundwater recharge, and potential localized flooding, alongside risks of soil erosion, sedimentation, pollution from construction waste, and habitat disturbance, and biodiversity loss. Social risks include land acquisition impacts that may lead to displacement, income loss, or reduced food security if compensation and livelihood restoration measures are not timely and adequate. Community health and safety issues are also critical especially as the works will be ongoing within a rural community as well as some construction works partly within Nsheke Primary School compound whose assets will partly be affected. The influx of construction workers could also generate pressure on local resources, housing, and services, while increasing the risk of gender-based violence (GBV), sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), and social tensions. Economic concerns include potential livelihood disruption, inflation from worker influx, unequal access to irrigation benefits, and long-term sustainability of operation and maintenance costs, which may affect affordability and community ownership. These issues require proactive communication and participatory decision-making to mitigate risks and enhance benefits.

Stakeholder Identification, Mapping and Analysis

Stakeholders for the Irrigation Project were identified through a participatory mapping process that distinguished between primary and secondary actors. Primary stakeholders include Project Affected Persons (PAPs) and Institutions such as Nsheke Primary school, the broader community surrounding the project, Water User Associations (WUAs), livestock keepers, smallholder farmers, and vulnerable groups such as women-headed households and persons

with disabilities—those directly impacted by or actively involved in project activities. Secondary stakeholders comprise local government entities, civil society organizations, technical agencies, and regulatory and implementation bodies such as the Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB), Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB), the Ministry of Environment, and the Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources. Additional secondary actors include non-governmental organizations (NGOs), media outlets, and academic institutions, whose roles span advocacy, information dissemination, and technical support.

To guide engagement strategies, stakeholders were analyzed using Power/Interest Grids and engagement matrices, which classified them into four quadrants. High power–high interest stakeholders, such as RWB, RAB, district authorities, and WUAs, were prioritized for strategic consultation and active involvement in decision-making. High power–low interest actors, including national regulatory bodies and certain ministries, were engaged through targeted updates and policy coordination. Low power–high interest groups, notably vulnerable populations and grassroots civil society, were targeted for empowerment and inclusive participation. Meanwhile, low power–low interest stakeholders, such as peripheral community members and general media, were engaged through public awareness and information-sharing efforts. This quadrant-based analysis ensures that engagement approaches are tailored to each stakeholder’s influence, interest, and vulnerability, promoting inclusive, transparent, and responsive project implementation in alignment with AfDB Operational Safeguards and national frameworks. Table 4-2 provides the assessment of the identified stakeholders for the Project, categorized by their level of interest in or influence over the project

Stakeholder Consultations and Engagement Programme

During the feasibility studies and preparation of draft ESIA and RAP, stakeholder’s consultation was conducted between 21st and 30th September 2022 with farmers, livestock keepers, district authorities and different cell and village authorities to make the project participatory and transparent. Participatory analysis shows that 984 (46% women and 54% men) participants from five sectors of project intervention area. At this stage, the project covered five sectors of Nyagatare including Rwempasha, Rukomo, Karama, Tabagwe, and Nyagatare, including representatives from government institutions, sector offices, local communities, and PAPs.

The project design was later updated to fit phase one of implementation covering only five sectors namely Rwempasha, Rukomo, Karama, Tabagwe and Nyagatare. New stakeholder’s engagement was required. These consultations were carried out between June 12 and July 05 2025 and involving Nyagatare District authorities, civil society and local communities. The participatory analysis in the recent consultation shows that 319 males, 216 females participated making a total of 535 participants. The feedback collected has been instrumental in shaping the engagement strategy and identifying mitigation measures.

RWB and the project consultants provided assurances regarding fair compensation, the formation of Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs), and the implementation of measures to address adverse environmental and social impacts. As the project progresses, RWB remains committed to fostering inclusive and continuous stakeholder engagement to ensure that community voices guide implementation and long-term sustainability.

Stakeholder consultation and engagement for the project will be implemented through inclusive and participatory processes that utilize a diverse range of methods. These include technical meetings, public meetings, workshops, and knowledge-sharing forums, as well as focus group discussions, household visits, community radio broadcasts, and the use of local community champions or leaders to facilitate outreach. Additionally, surveys, suggestion boxes, and digital platforms such as SMS messaging or social media may be employed to gather input and provide timely information. This multi-faceted approach is designed to accommodate different stakeholder preferences, literacy levels, and accessibilities, promoting transparency and fostering collaborative decision-making throughout the project lifecycle. Section 5.4 details the proposed methods such as groups of stakeholders during the preconstruction, construction and operations phases of the project.

Grievance Redress Mechanism

A multi-tiered GRM has been established, anchored by Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs) at community and district levels. The mechanism includes clear procedures for grievance submission, logging, tracking, resolution, and escalation. Both physical and digital channels are provided to ensure accessibility, and grievance data will be monitored and reported regularly. This mechanism differentiates an:

- External Project Grievance Redress Mechanism which provides for a project mechanism for external parties such as the community and also provides them the last report of legal redress (e.g. on compensation and land matters) as well as the AfDB Grievances Redress Mechanism including the the Independent Review/Recourse Mechanism.
- An internal Project Grievance Redress Mechanism: In addition to the community-level grievance structures, the Irrigation project will establish a dedicated Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) for workers employed directly by the contractor during project implementation. This internal mechanism is specifically designed to address grievances related to labor conditions, occupational health and safety, discrimination, wage disputes, harassment, contract violations, or any form of unfair treatment in the workplace.

Institutional Arrangement for Implementation of SEP

The implementation of the irrigation project will follow the implementation arrangements for Muvumba Multipurpose Water Resources Development Program (MMWRDP), however with some changes. The Government of Rwanda (GoR) through Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN) remains the borrower and the project will be implemented through the RWB in collaboration with RAB.

Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) is the Lead implementing agency responsible for overall coordination, technical supervision, and integration of environmental and social safeguards. RWB will oversee SEP execution, safeguard related reporting, and ensure alignment with AfDB Operational Safeguards. RWB will host the Project Implementation Team (PIT) within the Single Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) of RWB. The PIT will be responsible for implementation of the project which will include an Environmental Safeguards Officer and a Social Safeguards Expert, and Monitoring and Evaluation Expert – separate from the PIU of the dam project.

Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB): Given that Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB) is responsible for irrigation development and management in the country, RWB will lead in the technical implementation of the irrigation project and will be part of the PIU.

The PIU hosted by RWB will lead SEP implementation in collaboration with RAB, district authorities, and community-based structures. Dedicated safeguards personnel will oversee stakeholder engagement, grievance management, and reporting. Capacity-building initiatives will be rolled out to strengthen institutional readiness and ensure compliance with safeguard requirements.

Monitoring and Reporting

Monitoring of SEP implementation will be conducted through monthly reports to AfDB, annual Environmental and Social audits, mid-term reviews, and a final project completion audit. Key performance indicators (KPIs) will track engagement frequency, grievance resolution rates, stakeholder inclusion, and communication effectiveness. Bi-annual AfDB implementation support missions will complement internal and external monitoring efforts.

Conclusion and Budget

The SEP provides a robust framework for participatory project delivery, risk mitigation, and stakeholder empowerment. It reflects Rwanda's commitment to inclusive development and AfDB's safeguard standards. The total budget allocated for SEP implementation is 173,680,000 Rwandan Francs (FRw), covering engagement activities, grievance management, capacity building, monitoring, and reporting.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATION AND ACRONYMS

AfDB	: African Development Bank
BRD	: Rwanda Development Bank
CDAT	: Commercialization and De-risking Agriculture Transformation
EIA	: Environmental Impact Assessment
ESIA	: Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
ESMP	: Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESOS	: Environmental and Social Operational Safeguards
GMO	: Gender Monitoring Office
GoR	: Government of Rwanda
GRC	: Grievance Redress Committee
GRM	: Grievance Redress Mechanism
IWRMP	: Integrated Water Resources Master Plan
MIGEPROF	: Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion
MINAGRI	: Ministry of Agriculture
MINECOFIN	: Ministry of Economic and Finance
MINEMA	: Ministry of Emergency Management
MoE	: Ministry of Environment
MMRDP	: Muvumba Multipurpose Water Resources Development Program
NCDs	: Nationally Determined Contributions
NLA	: National Land Authority
NST2	: Second National Strategy for Transformation
PDO	: Project Development Objectives
PAPs	: Project Affected Peoples/Persons
PIU	: Project Implementation Unit
RWB	: Rwanda Water Resources Board
RAB	: Rwanda Agricultural and Animal Resources Development Board
RAP	: Resettlement Action Plan
RAPEP	: Rwanda Association of Professional Environmental Practitioners
RDB	: Rwanda Development Board
REMA	: Rwanda Environment Management Authority
REG	: Rwanda Energy Group
SEP	: Stakeholder's Engagement Plan
SPIU	: Single Project Implementation Unit
ToRs	: Terms of Reference
UN	: United Nations
WASAC	: Water and Sanitation Corporation

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Project background and Description

Rwanda's economy remains largely dependent on agriculture, contributing approximately 30% to the national Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The sector plays a critical role in rural livelihoods and national food security. However, it faces significant challenges, including reliance on rain-fed farming systems, limited access to irrigation infrastructure, and recurring droughts particularly in the Eastern Province.

To address these issues and promote sustainable agricultural development, the Government of Rwanda (GoR) has placed strong emphasis on expanding irrigation and improving water resource management. These priorities are outlined in the National Strategy for Transformation (NST2), which guides the country's broader development agenda, including increasing productivity and building climate resilience within the agricultural sector.

In line with these national priorities, the Muvumba Multipurpose Water Resources Development Program financed by the African Development Bank (AfDB) was launched with a multipurpose dam construction currently at 34.36% as of August 2025. As part of the larger program, additional financing for an Irrigation project has been proposed. This is to be jointly implemented by the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) and Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB) and aims to improve agricultural resilience in Nyagatare District by transitioning from rain-fed to irrigated farming. The project also seeks to enhance water availability for livestock. It targets an irrigable area of approximately 3,073 hectares out of a total 9,640 hectares, aiming to boost productivity, enhance food security, and strengthen the livelihoods of communities affected by water scarcity.¹

The first phase project intervention area (of 3,073 hectares) spans both sides of the Muvumba River and covers the sectors of Rwempasha, Rukomo, Tabagwe, Nyagatare and Karama in Nyagatare District as shown in Figure 1-1. Key infrastructure developments include the construction of a gravity-fed irrigation system supplied by the Muvumba Multipurpose Dam, the introduction of pressurized irrigation systems in designated zones, and the installation of 75 livestock watering troughs.² Additionally, the project will establish access roads and water conveyance infrastructure to support agricultural operations and improve connectivity across the command area.

Through these coordinated interventions, the project is expected to make a meaningful contribution to national development by increasing agricultural output, reducing vulnerability to climate shocks, and supporting inclusive rural development. The improved infrastructure and reliable water supply will enable more efficient and sustainable farming practices, fostering economic growth and resilience in one of Rwanda's most drought-prone regions.

¹ Government of Rwanda is seeking financing for other Phases which target 6,567hectares.

² 225 Troughs cover the whole command area of over 10000ha. The unit of 40ha has been designed for one trough and to cover all livestock under this area,

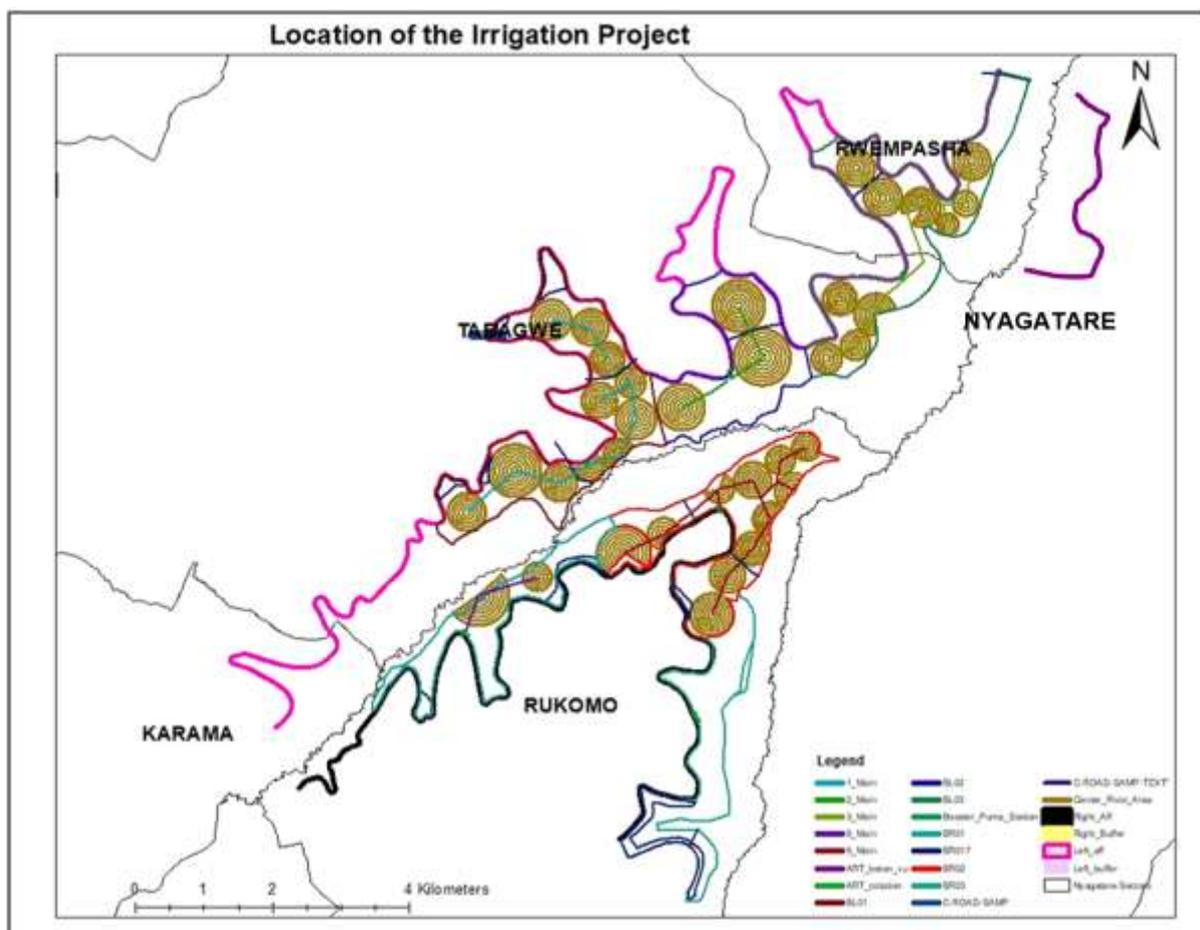


Figure 1-1: The location of the project command area

1.1.1. Project Justification

The Irrigation project, implemented under the Muvumba Multipurpose Water Resources Development Program (MMWRDP), is designed to address persistent water scarcity, low agricultural productivity, and vulnerability to drought in Nyagatare District. The project area faces erratic rainfall, extended dry periods, and heavy reliance on rainfed farming, which together reduce crop yields, limit livestock production, and threaten household food security.

The updated Irrigation Master Plan (MINAGRI, 2020) identifies the Nyagatare at Muvumba area as a high-priority irrigation development zone due to its large irrigable land potential and repeated exposure to climate-related water shortages. The project targets 3,073 hectares of command area, focusing on converting rainfed agriculture into irrigated farming to ensure reliable water access for crops and livestock. It will address existing production constraints, prevent land degradation, and reduce income fluctuations caused by seasonal water stress.

By providing modern irrigation infrastructure and livestock watering facilities, the project will stabilize agricultural production and enable farmers to diversify their cropping systems. The intervention will enhance resilience to climate variability, increase yields, and contribute to improved food availability and rural livelihoods, making it a timely and necessary investment for Muvumba catchment.

1.1.2. Project Objectives

The project aims to increase the productivity and commercialization of agriculture products through the implementation of water-harvesting in the valley dams and execute hillside irrigation. In addition, the project aims to supply livestock water and increase livestock products to raise income of farmers and livestock keepers.

1.1.3. Project Description

The Irrigation project, located in Nyagatare District downstream of the Muvumba Multipurpose Dam, will develop 3,073 ha of irrigated farmland and construct 75 livestock troughs for farmers across five sectors of Karama, Nyagatare, Tabagwe, Rwempasha, and Rukomo as shown in Fig.1-2. The scheme, drawing water from the Muvumba Multipurpose Dam under construction at the upstream of the irrigation scheme. This project will support both crop production and livestock watering in valley bottoms with gentle slopes and elevations between 1,329 m and 1,390 m.

The Irrigation Project consists of irrigation infrastructure development, including 69.7 km of concrete-lined canals (right 26.6km and left canal of 43.1km), pedestrian bridges, booster pump stations, sprinkler and center pivot systems, and paddy irrigation extension works on 810ha as indicated in Table 1-1. It also includes institutional capacity building for Water Users Associations and farmer cooperatives, as well as project management and coordination under the Rwanda Water Resources Board's SPIU.

Implementation will follow pre-construction, construction, and operational phases, integrating environmental safeguards such as erosion control, waste management, and protection of water quality. The project is expected to enhance agricultural productivity, improve food security, and strengthen local capacity for sustainable irrigation management in the Nyagatare district.

Table 1-1:Project main characteristics

Main features	Description
Command area	3,073 ha
Water demand per l/s/Ha	0.76
Total water demand (m ³ /sec)	7.26
Primary canals (left to Umuyanja river)	43.1 km long with a width of 22 m and each side of the main canal will have 5m buffer zone for canal protection
Primary canals (right to Rukomo)	26.6 km long with width of 16 m with additional 5 m each side
Construction of Left CANAL (L_1)	Concrete lined Canal from the dam to the siphon 1 with 43.1 km with bottom width of 4.79, depth 1.54 and side slope of 1:1.5; Q=13.87m ³ /sec
Construction of Pedestrian walkway CL_1	Steel crossing structures proposed at every 250m to allow the farmers to cross the canal (estimated 167 bridges)

Development of Paddy Field on the Left and right Side	The 810 ha (352 ha on the left side) and 458ha on the right side. Works include secondary canal, tertiary canal, land levelling and feeder roads, metallic sluice gates, control structures and other hydraulic structures (chutes, etc.)
Construction and installation of the Booster Pump Station for bloc 1 on the left side (Block-BL1 BPS)	3 Booster pumping stations for 1179ha
Block-BL01 Sprinklers + Centre Pivots	Infield for 1179ha (575.57 ha for center pivots and 603.33 ha for sprinklers)
Construction of post-harvest infrastructures	10 post-harvest infrastructures will be constructed
Construction of water troughs	75 water troughs will be constructed
Project Implementation period	5 years

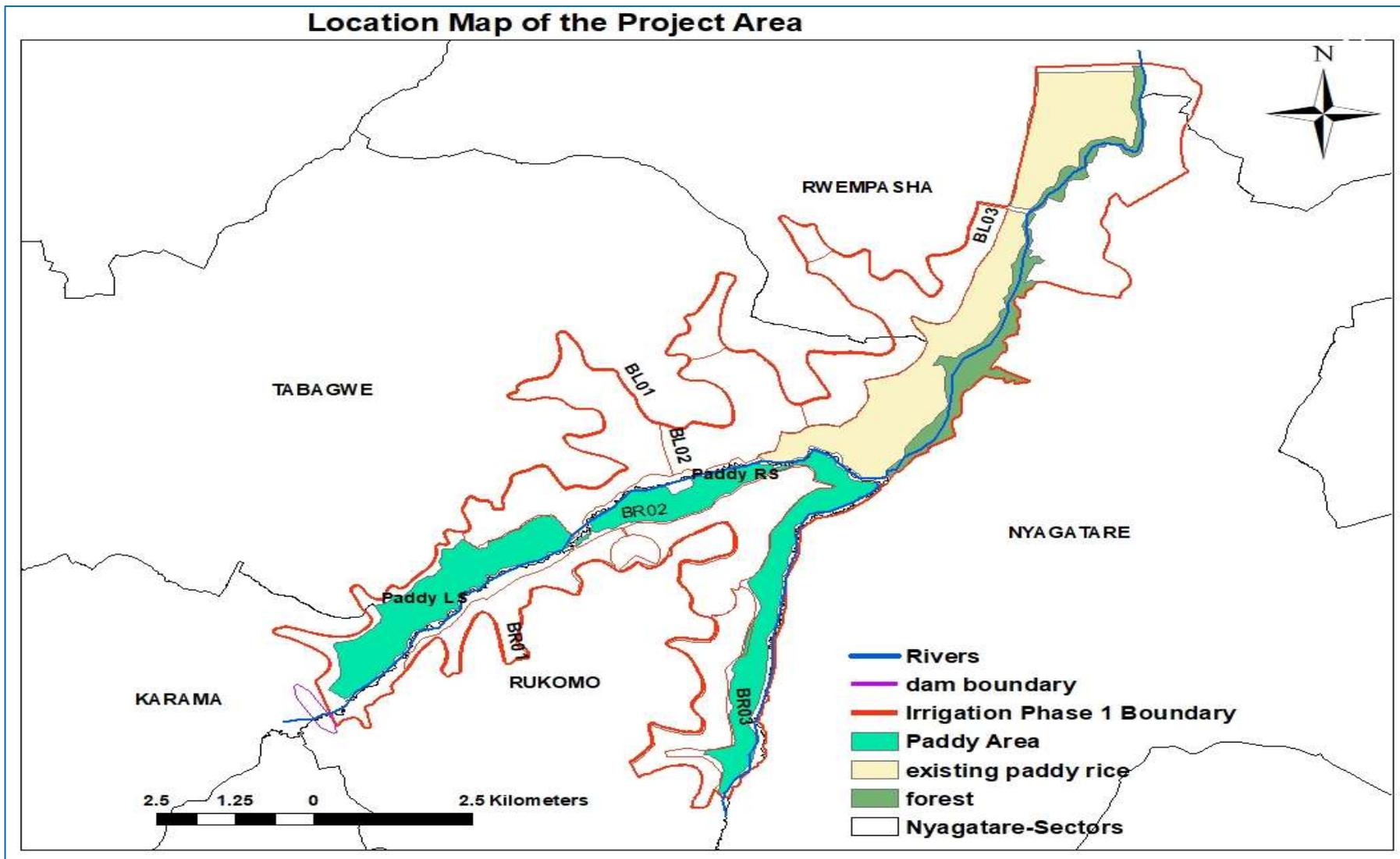


Figure 1-2: Project Command Area

The project aspect will entail three components, namely:

- (i) Component 1: Irrigation infrastructure development
- (ii) Component 2: Institutional support and capacity building
- (iii) Component 3: Project management

Component 1 (Irrigation infrastructure development) aims at developing four (4) irrigation zones as summarized in Table 1-2 below:

Table 1-2: Command area sizes in various zones

Zone	Zones and Description	Area (ha)
1	Zone 1 located on the left side of the paddy area	352
2	Zone 2 located on the left side (hillside irrigation from Muvumba Multipurpose dam to siphon one) with Blocks BL01, BL02 and BL03	1,179
3	Zone 3 on the right side from Muvumba Multipurpose dam to Rukomo with Blocks BR01, BR02 and BR03	837
4	Zone 4 on the right side of the paddy area	458
5	Right B (BR04)	247
Total		3,073

Specific activities to be implemented under Component 1 of the Irrigation Project include:

- (i) Construction of a 26.6 km concrete lined canal on the right side from Muvumba Multipurpose Dam to Rukomo. This is known as the Right-Side Canal.
- (ii) Construction of a 43.1 km concrete lined canal on the left side from Muvumba Multipurpose Dam to Siphon One. This is known as the Left-Side Canal.
- (iii) Construction of pedestrian walkway bridges on the canals
- (iv) Development of 810 ha paddy field irrigation zone
- (v) Construction and installation of six booster pumping stations
- (vi) Development of infield irrigation with Sprinkler irrigations systems and Centre Pivot irrigation systems on 2,016 ha.
- (vii) Construction of 75 water troughs
- (viii) Construction of 10 post-harvest infrastructures
- (ix) Construction of one siphon of 2km
- (x) Construction of six booster pumps on the main canals: Three on the right and other three along the left canal.

The project will consist of a command area of irrigation scheme covering about 3,073 hectares, with different infrastructures such as concrete lined left and right canals, cross drainage structures, siphon, walkway bridges on the canal, booster pump stations, sprinklers and center pivots.

Component 2 (Institutional support and capacity building) will aim at: (i) establishing and capacity building for Water Users Associations (WUAs) and Farmers groups (cooperatives); and (ii) operationalization of the WUAs including the provision of two-year operating costs of the WUAs.

Component 3 (Project management) will aim at: (i) setting up, staffing and operationalizing the Project Implementation Team (PIT) within the SPIU of Rwanda Water Resources Board, and (ii) providing resources required to undertake a baseline study on agriculture production; (iii) project Mid-Term Review (MTR); Project Completion Report (PCR); (iv) Annual, mid-term and final financial and environmental and social audits; and (v) project contribution to shared SPIU operating costs for the sustainability of the SPIU because it is in charge of coordinating the implementation of all the projects. The Tables 1-3 below present component outputs.

Table 1-3: Project Components and Outputs

No.	Component	Component Outputs
1	Irrigation infrastructure development	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Design review and construction of irrigation infrastructure ▪ Supervision of construction of irrigation infrastructure ▪ ESMP and RAP implementation (valuation, compensation and expropriation)
2	Institutional support and capacity building	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Establishment of Water Users Associations (WUAs): Executive Committees, Audit Committees, Conflict resolution Committees) ▪ Establishment of farmer groups ▪ Capacity building and training of WUAs, farmer groups ▪ Capacity building and knowledge sharing for core-staff as well as interns recruited on the project ▪ Operationalization of WUAs: two-year salaries, IT equipment, operational costs, purchase of three motor bikes plus two-year fuel costs ▪ Establishment of farmer cooperatives and support to their operations ▪ Training of Cell, Sector, District and RAB staff on Integrated Water Resources Management

3	Project management	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ▪ Setting up and staffing the Project Implementation Team (PIT). <i>Actual staff to be hired are to be confirmed to the Bank following review by RAB/RWB</i> ▪ Purchase of three vehicles plus running, insurance and maintenance costs ▪ IT and office equipment ▪ Project audit reports (financial, procurement, environmental and social safeguards) ▪ SPIU contribution for shared operating costs (eg. shared staff's, other SPIU operating expenses).
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Project outcomes will include sustainable and climate resilient crop production and increased productivity on 3,073 ha of irrigated agricultural land in Nyagatare District, leading to improved food security and nutrition; improved and sustainable farmer incomes; and improved skills of WUAs members, cooperatives and youth-led organizations in the operation, management and maintenance of irrigation scheme.

1.1.4. Project implementation Arrangements

The implementation of the irrigation project will follow the implementation arrangements for Muvumba Multipurpose Water Resources Development Program (MMWRDP), however with some changes. The Government of Rwanda (GoR) through Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN) remains the borrower and the project will be implemented through the RWB in collaboration with RAB. The following institutions and community structures will play key roles:

- **Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB):** Lead implementing agency responsible for overall coordination, technical supervision, and integration of environmental and social safeguards. RWB will oversee SEP execution, safeguard related reporting, and ensure alignment with AfDB Operational Safeguards. RWB will host the Project Implementation Team (PIT) within the Single Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) of RWB. The PIT will be responsible for implementation of the project which will include: (i) Project Manager/Irrigation Engineer, (ii) Civil/Irrigation Engineer, (iii) Electromechanical Engineer, (iv) Agronomist, (v) Social/Community Mobilization Expert, (vi) Procurement Expert; (vii) Project Accountant, (viii) Environmental Safeguards Officer; (ix) Social Safeguards Expert, and (x) Monitoring and Evaluation Expert.
- **Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB):** Given that Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB) is responsible for irrigation development and management in the country, RWB will lead in the technical implementation of the irrigation project. Thus, the experts from RAB will form part of the Project Implementation Team (PIT) within the Single Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) of RWB. RAB Provides technical support in irrigation system design, livestock water use optimization, and agricultural extension services. RAB will also contribute to capacity building of farmers and provide phytosanitary services, and as well as support in establishing and training of Water Users Associations (WUAs).

- **Nyagatare District:** Facilitates local-level implementation, including stakeholder mobilization, land use coordination, and grievance redress. District officials and sectors, especially Nyagatare, Rukomo, Karama, Tabagwe, and Rwempasha will support monitoring and ensure community feedback is integrated into project delivery.
- **Local Communities:** Includes landowners within the irrigation scheme, smallholder farmers, and other beneficiaries. Their participation is central to project ownership, operation, and sustainability. Community members will be engaged through consultations, training, and feedback mechanisms.
- **Water Users Associations (WUAs):** Community-based organizations responsible for the operation and maintenance of irrigation infrastructure. WUAs will also serve as key actors in water allocation, conflict resolution, and participatory monitoring.
- **Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs):** Established at scheme and district levels to receive, assess, and resolve complaints related to project activities. GRCs will operate in accordance with the project's Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) and report regularly to RWB.

Together, they will ensure that all environmental and social safeguards are integrated into the project's execution, as well as overseeing compliance with both national regulations and international standards, such as the African Development Bank's Operational Safeguards. They will also be responsible for monitoring progress and ensuring that mitigation measures outlined in the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) are effectively applied. RWB, together with the supervising engineer and contractors, will assign dedicated Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists to manage the project's impacts and report regularly to key oversight institutions.

The success of this project depends heavily on the active involvement and collaboration of all stakeholders throughout the project life cycle. Their participation is essential for identifying concerns, improving transparency, and building community ownership and acceptance of the project. To this end, a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been developed to guide inclusive and meaningful consultations, ensure timely information sharing, and establish grievance redress mechanisms. This participatory approach is intended to enhance project outcomes by incorporating stakeholder feedback into planning, decision-making, and monitoring processes.

1.2. Stakeholder Engagement Plan Purpose

Stakeholder engagement is recognized as an ongoing and adaptive process comprising several interrelated components: stakeholder identification and analysis, information dissemination, public consultation, participatory engagement, grievance management, and continuous feedback reporting to affected people. Each of these components is essential to building transparency and accountability, as well as ensuring that stakeholder perspectives are integrated into project planning and execution.

The engagement process extends beyond mere information sharing and is intended to establish collaborative relationships with those affected by or involved in the project.

Stakeholder perceptions, priorities, and concerns can significantly influence project design, implementation, and outcomes. As such, understanding and addressing stakeholder expectations is a key determinant of project success, and contributes to shaping the overall definition of project effectiveness and long-term sustainability.

To maintain credibility and legitimacy, all stakeholder interactions must be carried out in a fair, inclusive, and respectful manner. Engagement activities must be devoid of manipulation, coercion, or intimidation, and must be grounded in the provision of timely, relevant, and accessible information. Communication tools and approaches should be tailored to the cultural and linguistic needs of each group. Opportunities for stakeholder input such as consultations, focus group discussions, surveys, or interviews must be meaningful and designed to allow genuine concerns and suggestions to inform decision-making. Effective stakeholder engagement helps build what is commonly referred to as a "social license to operate" the broad acceptance of the project by communities and stakeholders. This license is earned through mutual trust, transparency, and ongoing dialogue. In the case of the Irrigation component, this stakeholder engagement framework will contribute not only to risk mitigation and conflict resolution, but also to the overall credibility, effectiveness, and sustainability of project outcomes. It thereby improves its decision-making and performance by:

- **Managing costs:** Effective engagement can help project avoid costs, in terms of money and reputation risks;
- **Managing risk:** Engagement helps project developer and communities to identify, prevent, and mitigate environmental and social impacts that can threaten project viability.
- **Enhancing reputation:** By publicly recognising rights and committing to environmental protection, social mitigation etc., project developer and financial institutions involved in financing the project can boost their credibility and minimise risks;
- **Avoiding conflict:** Understanding current and potential issues such as land rights and proposed project activities, and avoiding disputes;
- **Improving corporate policy:** Obtaining perceptions about a project, which can act as a catalyst for changes and improvements in project corporate practices and policies.
- **Identifying, monitoring and reporting on impacts:** Understanding a project's impact on stakeholders, evaluating and reporting back on mechanisms to address these impacts; and
- **Managing stakeholder expectations:** Consultation also provides the opportunity for the project proponent to become aware of and manage stakeholder attitudes and expectations.

The SEP therefore provides a structured and culturally appropriate framework for engaging stakeholders through systematic consultation and disclosure. The objective of the SEP is to support evidence-based decision-making and foster inclusive participation by ensuring that project-affected people and other interested parties are engaged early and consistently throughout the project lifecycle. The SEP also functions as a critical communication tool that strengthens the interface between the implementing agencies and their stakeholders.

1.3. Stakeholder Engagement Plan Objectives

The Key Objectives of the SEP can be summarised as follows:

- Understand the stakeholder engagement requirements of Rwandan legislation as well as of the requirements of the Integrated Safeguards System (ISS) of the African Development Bank (AfDB);
- Define procedures for the project stakeholder engagement such that it meets the relevant environmental and Social Operational Safeguards (E&S OSs) of the African Development Bank (AfDB);
- Provide guidance for stakeholder engagement such that it meets the standards of International Best Practice;
- Identify key stakeholders that are affected, and/or able to influence the project and its activities;
- Identify and define the most effective methods, timing and structures through which to share project information, and to ensure regular, accessible, transparent and appropriate consultation.
- Develops a stakeholder's engagement process that provides stakeholders with an opportunity to influence project planning and design; the initial stakeholders' consultation.
- Establish formal grievance/resolution mechanisms.
- Define roles and responsibilities for the implementation of the SEP;
- Define reporting and monitoring measures to ensure the effectiveness of the SEP and periodical reviews of the SEP based on findings.
- To provide PAPs and other stakeholders with accessible and inclusive means to raise issues and grievances and allow GoR to respond to and manage such grievances.
- To guide the project to actively build and maintain productive working relationships, based on principles of transparency, accountability, accuracy, trust, respect and mutual interests with affected communities and other stakeholders.
- To build a trusting relationship with the affected communities and other interested stakeholders based on a transparent and timely supply of information and open dialogue.
- Ensure effective engagement with local communities and other key stakeholders throughout all phases of the project.
- To Define reporting and monitoring measures to ensure the effectiveness of the SEP and periodical reviews of the SEP based on findings.

1.4. SEP Guiding Principles

The SEP is guided by principles that ensure meaningful, transparent, and inclusive interaction between the Government of Rwanda, implementing agencies (RAB and RWB), and stakeholders. These include:

- 1. Inclusiveness:** This SEP will engage all relevant stakeholders, including vulnerable and marginalized groups, ensuring their voices are heard and considered in decision-making.
- 2. Transparency:** This SEP provides clear, timely, and accessible information about the project, its risks, benefits, and safeguard measures. Avoid misinformation or selective disclosure.

3. Integrity: Stakeholders should maintain honesty, ethical conduct, and accountability in all stakeholder interactions. Uphold commitments and avoid manipulation or coercion.

4. Respect for Human Rights: SEP ensures that engagement respects the dignity, rights, and cultural values of all stakeholders, in line with National, AfDB's safeguard policies and international standards.

5. Responsiveness: This SEP is tailored to adapt engagement strategies based on stakeholder feedback, evolving project risks, and changing community dynamics. Ensure grievances are addressed promptly and fairly.

6. Empowerment: This SEP will empower and build stakeholder capacity to understand, participate in, and influence project decisions. This includes training, awareness-raising, and support for community-based structures like WUAs and GRCs.

7. Accountability: Current SEP establishes mechanisms for monitoring, reporting, and redress. Ensure that project implementers are answerable to stakeholders and that engagement outcomes are documented and acted upon.

These objectives and principles help to ensure that stakeholder engagement is effective, meaningful, and contributes positively to the project's success.

2. LEGAL AND POLICY FRAMEWORK FOR STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

2.1 National Policies and Legal Framework

The implementation of the project is guided by a comprehensive national policy and legal framework designed to promote sustainable development, environmental protection, and social well-being. Rwanda's environmental policies emphasize the conservation and sustainable management of natural resources, including water, land, and biodiversity, while ensuring that development projects comply with environmental standards and do not adversely affect ecosystems or community livelihoods. Relevant laws also establish procedures for environmental impact assessments, land acquisition, resettlement, and community participation, providing the foundation for transparent and accountable project implementation. Table 2-1 summarizes legal and policies relevant to the development of this SEP.

Table 2-1: Summary of Legal and Policy Requirements and Relevancy to SEP

Legal/Policy Instrument	Stakeholder Engagement Requirement	Relevance to SEP Preparation
Rwanda Constitution (2003, revised 2023)	Guarantees citizen participation in governance and decision-making processes (Art. 11, 48)	Provides foundational legal basis for inclusive stakeholder engagement and participatory planning
Law No. 48/2018 on Environment	Requires public participation in environmental decision-making and access to environmental information	Mandates stakeholder consultation during ESIA and environmental planning, aligning with OS10 of the AfDB
Ministerial Order N°001/2019 of 15/04/2019 establishing the list of projects that must undergo an environmental impact assessment and the requirements for environmental impact assessment	Requires stakeholder consultation during ESIA process and mandates disclosure of findings	Directly supports SEP activities such as public meetings, feedback collection, and grievance mechanisms
Law N°43/2013 of 16/06/2013 governing land in Rwanda	Recognizes rights of landowners and requires consultation before land acquisition or use	Ensures engagement with affected landowners and communities in irrigation schemes
Law N°62/2018 of 25/08/2018 governing local government	Empowers districts to engage citizens in development planning and service delivery	Supports district-level stakeholder forums and coordination mechanisms in SEP
National Decentralization Policy (2000, revised 2012)	Promotes citizen participation in planning, budgeting, and monitoring of local projects	Reinforces the role of local communities, Water Users Association (WUAs), and Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs) in SEP implementation
National Environment and Climate Change Policy (2020)	Advocates for inclusive and participatory environmental governance	Aligns with OS10 principles of transparency, inclusiveness, and

		responsiveness in SEP design
Law No. 32/2015 of 11/06/2015 Relating to Expropriation in the Public Interest	Provides for consultation and fair compensation of persons expropriated; requires informing affected people of project justification, timeline, and compensation process	expropriated; requires informing affected people of project justification, timeline, and compensation process Ensures meaningful engagement with PAPs, transparency in compensation, and integration of grievance redress in SEP

Stakeholder engagement for the Irrigation Project is guided not only by good practice standards but also by Rwanda’s robust legal and policy framework. These policies and strategies set out the principles of inclusive participation, transparency, environmental stewardship, social protection, and equitable benefit-sharing that underpin the project’s consultation and communication processes.

Recognizing that national policies require active involvement of affected communities, vulnerable groups, and other key actors in development planning, the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) aligns engagement activities with relevant provisions from the most directly applicable policies. This ensures that all engagement, whether on environmental management, land acquisition, gender equality, public health, or local employment, fulfills both regulatory obligations and national development objectives.

2.2 AfDB Policies

2.2.1 Integrated Safeguards System

The African Development Bank (AfDB) updated its Integrated Safeguards System (ISS) in 2023 to enhance environmental and social sustainability across its funded projects. The system introduces 10 Operational Safeguards (OS) that provide detailed requirements for identifying, assessing, and managing environmental and social risks throughout a project’s lifecycle. These safeguards align with international best practices and emphasize stakeholder engagement, protection of vulnerable groups, and sustainable resource management.

The irrigation project has been classified as a Category 1 high-risk project, indicating potential significant environmental and social impacts. The project must rigorously apply the ISS provisions to avoid, mitigate, or compensate adverse effects on communities and ecosystems. Among the safeguards, particular attention is given to environmental and social risk management (OS1), labor conditions (OS2), pollution prevention (OS3), community health and safety (OS4), land acquisition and resettlement (OS5), biodiversity conservation (OS6), vulnerable groups (OS7), cultural heritage (OS8), and comprehensive stakeholder engagement (OS10).

This framework guides project design and implementation to promote sustainability, equity, and accountability, while building the capacities of project stakeholders to effectively manage environmental and social risks. Table 2-2 describes the relevance of it's the OSs and their relevancy to SEP requirements.

Table 2-2: Summary of AfDB ISS Operational Safeguards Relevance to SEP

Operational Safeguard (OS)	Core Requirements	Relevance to SEP Preparation
OS1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts	Requires stakeholder identification, risk screening, and integration of ESIA findings into project design	SEP must reflect stakeholder mapping, risk disclosure, and consultation protocols aligned with ESIA outcomes
OS2: Labour and Working Conditions	Mandates fair treatment, occupational health and safety, and grievance mechanisms for workers	Project must engage labor stakeholders, ensure GRM access for workers, and disclose labor standards
OS3: Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management	Requires consultation on pollution risks, pesticide use, and waste management	SEP must include engagement on Integrated Pest Management (IPM), pollution control, and community awareness of environmental risks
OS4: Community Health, Safety and Security	Requires assessment of health and safety risks and emergency preparedness	Project must disclose health risks, involve local health actors, and ensure inclusive safety consultations
OS5: Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Access to Land and Land Use, and Involuntary Resettlement	Requires consultation with affected persons, compensation, and livelihood restoration	Project must engage landowners and farmers, document concerns, and ensure GRM for resettlement issues. PAPs to be involved in resettlement planning
OS6: Habitat and Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources	Requires biodiversity assessment and mitigation of ecosystem impacts	Project must entail ecosystem-sensitive stakeholder engagement and integrate local ecological knowledge
OS7: Vulnerable Groups	Requires differentiated engagement strategies for marginalized populations	Project must tailor consultation methods and ensure equitable participation of vulnerable stakeholders
OS8: Cultural Heritage	Requires consultation on cultural assets and mitigation of cultural impacts	Project must identify cultural stakeholders and ensure culturally sensitive engagement
OS10: Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure	Mandates development of SEP, inclusive engagement, and continuous disclosure	Forms the backbone of SEP—defines structure, principles, consultation protocols, disclosure plans, and GRM setup

2.2.2. Gender Policy

The African Development Bank (AfDB) Gender Policy underscores the importance of promoting gender equality and women's empowerment as essential components for sustainable development and inclusive economic growth. The Policy mandates that gender considerations be integrated into all stages of Bank-supported projects, from planning to implementation and monitoring. This ensures that both women and men have equitable access to opportunities, resources, and benefits derived from development interventions.

This Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) acknowledges the requirements of engagement processes that are designed to be inclusive and gender-sensitive. This involves proactively identifying and addressing barriers that may prevent women and marginalized gender groups from participating fully in consultations and decision-making.

The SEP and the project overall in the preparation of safeguards documents employed tailored communication and participation approaches that consider cultural and social dynamics, enabling effective and meaningful involvement of all stakeholders regardless of gender.

Furthermore, the Policy emphasizes the collection and use of gender-disaggregated data to monitor stakeholder participation and evaluate project impacts on different gender groups. By fostering equal representation and voice in engagement activities, the AfDB ensures that projects do not reinforce existing inequalities but rather contribute to empowering women and enhancing social inclusion. This gender-responsive approach strengthens the overall sustainability and social acceptance of development projects supported by the Bank.

2.2.3 Policy on Disclosure and Access to Information (the "DAI Policy")

The African Development Bank's Policy on Disclosure and Access to Information (DAI Policy) also applies to the Irrigation Project, reinforcing the Bank's commitment to maximum transparency. Under this policy, the Bank ensures that all information it holds is disclosed proactively unless it falls within specific exceptions such as confidentiality, commercial sensitivity, or personal privacy. This approach fosters trust, openness, and accountability between the Bank and its stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle.

Key project documents—including the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), stakeholder consultation reports, and project summary notes—will be made readily available by being published on the AfDB website or provided upon request. Proactive disclosure of such documents supports stakeholder awareness, facilitates informed decision-making, and promotes inclusive dialogue among all parties involved in project planning, implementation, and monitoring.

Access to these documents benefits a wide range of stakeholders, including project beneficiaries, local communities, relevant government agencies such as the Rwanda Water Board (RWB) and Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA), and civil society organizations. By ensuring public access to critical information, the policy enhances transparency and enables stakeholders to raise concerns early, thereby strengthening adherence to social and environmental safeguards.

If a request for information is denied, the DAI Policy outlines a clear appeals process. Stakeholders may first appeal to the Bank's internal Information Disclosure Committee. If unsatisfied with the outcome, they can escalate the appeal to an independent Appeals Panel. This mechanism upholds the right to information and provides a formal recourse for stakeholders who feel their requests have been unjustly refused. Additionally, the policy mandates the simultaneous disclosure of strategic documents—such as country strategy papers and project proposals—on the same date they are submitted to the AfDB Board. Regular monitoring and reporting on the Bank's compliance with its disclosure obligations ensure ongoing transparency. In summary, the DAI Policy guarantees that the project is implemented with openness and accountability, providing stakeholders timely access to essential information and channels for raising concerns or seeking redress.

In line with the policy, all safeguards' documents prepared under the project including this SEP will be disclosed on RWB as well as the Bank's website.

3. KEY ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ISSUES FOR ENGAGEMENT

The irrigation project under Muvumba Multipurpose Water Resources Development Program (MMWRDP) presents a wide range of environmental and social considerations that are critical to the interests and well-being of affected communities and other stakeholders. Given the scale and scope of the project, it is essential to identify and address these issues comprehensively through a structured stakeholder engagement process. This process ensures that potential impacts both positive and negative are transparently communicated, and that the voices of all relevant parties, including vulnerable and marginalized groups, are meaningfully incorporated into project planning and implementation. Effective engagement not only mitigates risks but also fosters collaboration, trust, and shared ownership of project benefits.

3.1 Environmental Issues and Risks

The irrigation project will significantly alter water flows within the catchment, which could affect downstream water availability and seasonal river dynamics thus of interest to downstream users especially as the Muvumba river is transboundary. Potential risks include reduced dry-season flows, changes to groundwater recharge rates, and localized flooding during peak discharge events if infrastructure is not properly designed or maintained. Poor water management practices may also lead to conflicts between agricultural, domestic, and ecological water needs causing differences or conflicts between various users.

Construction activities such as earthworks, excavation, and infrastructure installation carry the potential risk of soil erosion, sedimentation of water bodies, and contamination from poor handling of fuel, lubricants. Improper handling of construction waste may pollute surface and groundwater, while heavy machinery operations can degrade riparian habitats posing project issues with regulatory authorities such as Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) as well as communities using the Muvumba river.

The project command area supports various terrestrial and aquatic ecosystems that could be affected by habitat fragmentation, vegetation clearance, and disturbance to fauna. Sensitive ecosystems and biodiversity hotspots particularly wetlands are at risk if buffer zones are not respected. Without mitigation, these impacts could reduce ecosystem services, such as natural water filtration and flood regulation.

3.2 Social Issues and Risks

Land acquisition for irrigation infrastructure, canals, and access roads may lead to physical or economic displacement, especially affecting smallholder farmers and vulnerable households, and Nsheke Primary School. If compensation and livelihood restoration measures are not adequate or timely, project affected persons (PAPs) may experience long-term income losses and reduced food security.

The influx of workers during construction can generate pressures on local resources, housing, and public services, as well as lead to social tensions between host communities and non-local laborers. Additionally, pupils from Nsheke Primary School will be at risk of traffic on their way to or back from school as well as safety risks due to construction works ongoing on the school compound. Some facilities, including sanitation blocks, will be affected and need to be

replaced. There is also a risk of gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) if worker-community interactions are not well managed issues which will be of concern both to the community as well as relevant government offices and the civil society.

Community health and safety risks include increased road traffic accidents from construction vehicles, spread of communicable diseases due to worker mobility, and potential drowning hazards from open canals or reservoirs. Inadequate safety measures and emergency preparedness could increase the severity of such risks. These are all issues of major concern to community and local authorities around the project.

3.3 Economic Issues

The Irrigation Project is expected to generate significant economic opportunities for households, local communities, and the broader economy, though it also presents potential risks that must be addressed.

3.3.1 Positive Economic Opportunities

The project will create employment during both construction and operation phases. Short-term construction jobs will provide immediate income opportunities for local laborers, while longer-term positions in operation, maintenance, and water user associations will help sustain livelihoods. Transparent and inclusive hiring procedures, prioritizing local communities and vulnerable groups, will ensure that benefits are widely shared.

Reliable irrigation water will transform agricultural productivity by reducing dependence on erratic rainfall, enabling multiple cropping cycles, and allowing for crop diversification into higher-value products. This will improve food security, household income, and resilience to climate shocks. Farmers will benefit not only from increased yields but also from training in water management, soil fertility, and climate-smart agriculture. The establishment of market linkages, storage facilities, and value-addition opportunities is expected to boost competitiveness and open regional trade prospects. These are issues of major interest to not only the users' associations but the general farming and livestock keeping community in the proposed project areas.

3.3.2 Potential Economic Risks

Despite these opportunities, there are economic risks if implementation is not equitable. Land acquisition for canals and infrastructure may disrupt farming activities, leading to income loss if compensation and livelihood restoration measures are delayed or inadequate. Unequal access to irrigation water or poorly defined allocation rules could generate conflict and exacerbate inequalities, especially if larger or wealthier farmers benefit disproportionately compared to smallholder or vulnerable households.

3.4 Cross-cutting Issues and Risks

Climate change poses a major cross-cutting risk, with changing rainfall patterns and increasing temperature extremes potentially affecting irrigation water availability and crop productivity. These changes could undermine the long-term sustainability of the project if different

stakeholders' opinions and views are overlooked to support climate-resilient design and adaptive management are not integrated.

Gender equality and social inclusion must be mainstreamed into project planning and implementation to ensure that women, youth, people with disabilities, and marginalized groups benefit equitably. If excluded, these groups may not access irrigated plots, training programs, or market opportunities, perpetuating socio-economic disparities.

Cultural heritage and traditional resource-use practices could be disrupted if project activities do not adequately respect local customs, and indigenous knowledge. Strengthening community participation, safeguarding heritage, and promoting culturally appropriate engagement will help mitigate these risks and build local ownership.

Table 3-1: Key Environmental and Social Issues for Stakeholder Engagement for irrigation project.

Key Environmental & Social Issue	Why It Is Important to Stakeholders	Primary Stakeholders Concerned
Water Resource Availability and Flow Regulation	The diversion of water to the irrigation system reduces downstream flows, impacting other water users, aquatic ecosystems, and biodiversity. Communities depend on reliable water supply for domestic use, agriculture, and livestock. Ensuring equitable water distribution is critical.	Downstream communities, local farmers, livestock keepers, REMA, Rwanda Water Board (RWB), Ministry of Environment
Water Quality and Contamination Risks	Use of agrochemicals (fertilizers, pesticides) and potential oil spills during construction can degrade water quality. Elevated cadmium and heavy metals pose risks to crops, soil health, human and animal health. Maintaining water quality is vital for safe irrigation and drinking water.	Farmers, local residents, health authorities, environmental regulators (REMA), Rwanda Standards Board, Ministry of Health
Soil Erosion and Land Degradation	Construction activities and irrigation can lead to soil erosion, compaction, and degradation if not well managed. Loss of fertile topsoil reduces agricultural productivity, impacting livelihoods and food security. Soil salinization may occur from improper irrigation practices.	Farmers, landowners, local agricultural extension services, environmental agencies
Loss of Agricultural Land and Physical Displacement	Canal construction and other infrastructure require land acquisition, leading to loss of productive land and potential displacement. This threatens household incomes and food security, particularly for smallholder farmers and	Project-Affected Persons (PAPs), vulnerable households (female-headed, elderly),

	vulnerable groups who may have limited alternative land.	Nyagatare District authorities, local leaders
Livelihood Disruption during Construction and Operation	Temporary disruption of farming activities, grazing, local markets, and access roads affects income generation and daily life. Loss of grazing areas impacts pastoralists. Stakeholders are concerned about compensation and alternative livelihood options during these periods.	Local farmers, pastoralists, traders, community leaders, district officials
Community Health and Safety Risks	Construction work, chemical handling, and new water bodies may increase risks of accidents, occupational hazards, and transmission of waterborne and communicable diseases such as malaria, HIV/AIDS, COVID-19. Ensuring safety and health protections is a key concern for workers and local communities.	Local residents, workers, Ministry of Health, local health facilities, NGOs
Biodiversity Loss and Habitat Disturbance	Clearing vegetation, modifying water flows, and infrastructure development can cause loss of habitat for birds, fish, and other wildlife, disrupting ecological balances. Conservation groups and communities dependent on natural resources are concerned about protecting biodiversity.	Environmental NGOs, Ministry of Environment, local communities, conservation agencies
Solid Waste and Wastewater Management	Construction and operation phases generate solid waste (construction debris, packaging) and wastewater which, if improperly managed, can pollute soil and water, posing environmental and health risks. Proper waste management practices are necessary to prevent contamination.	Project contractors, local communities, environmental regulators, district authorities
Air Pollution and Noise during Construction	Dust, emissions from machinery and vehicles, and noise pollution affect air quality and can cause respiratory and stress-related health issues for workers and nearby residents. Monitoring and mitigation of air and noise pollution are important to minimize health impacts.	Local residents, construction workers, environmental agencies, Ministry of Environment
Land and Water Pollution from Chemicals and Fuels	Spills and leaks of fuels, lubricants, and agrochemicals pose risks of contamination to soil and water bodies, affecting agriculture, human health, and ecosystems. Prevention, response plans, and monitoring are essential to minimize these risks.	Project contractors, farmers, local communities, environmental regulators
Impacts on Cultural, Archaeological, and Historical Sites	The project area contains graves and possibly other cultural sites that may be disturbed or lost during construction, affecting community heritage and identity. Respecting and preserving cultural	Local communities, traditional and cultural leaders, Rwanda Development Board

	heritage is critical for social acceptance and compliance with legal requirements.	(RDB), district authorities
Social Inclusion and Gender Equity	Women, youth, and vulnerable groups may face exclusion from decision-making and project benefits. Ensuring their participation and equitable access to resources and opportunities supports social cohesion and development goals. Gender-sensitive engagement promotes empowerment and reduces inequalities.	Women's groups, youth organizations, vulnerable households, local government, NGOs
Access to Information and Grievance Mechanisms	Transparent communication and accessible grievance redress mechanisms are crucial for building trust and resolving concerns promptly, preventing conflicts and delays in project implementation. Stakeholders need clear channels to express views and receive feedback.	All affected communities, civil society, local leaders, project management teams
Climate Change and Greenhouse Gas Emissions	Use of fuel-powered machinery and land clearing contribute to greenhouse gas emissions, impacting climate change. Stakeholders are increasingly concerned about climate resilience and mitigation measures incorporated into project design and operations.	Environmental agencies, Ministry of Environment, local communities, climate-focused NGOs
Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) for Workers	Protecting workers from accidents, exposure to harmful substances, and unsafe conditions during construction and operation is essential for ethical project management and legal compliance. Training and enforcement of safety standards are key stakeholder concerns.	Construction workers, contractors, Ministry of Labor, project managers
Potential Increase in Vector-Borne Diseases	New irrigation canals and water ponds can increase breeding sites for mosquitoes and other disease vectors, raising concerns about malaria and other diseases for communities. Proactive disease control and health education are needed to mitigate risks.	Local health authorities, communities, Ministry of Health, NGOs
Economic Opportunities and Employment	The project offers potential for local job creation and increased agricultural productivity, which stakeholders are keen to maximize. Ensuring fair labor practices and local hiring supports community support and socio-economic development.	Local workforce, district authorities, project proponents
Social Cohesion and Conflict Prevention	Changes in land use, resource access, and economic benefits may cause tensions among community members or between different groups. Inclusive engagement and transparent benefit-sharing arrangements help mitigate conflicts and build harmony.	Local communities, traditional leaders, district authorities, civil society

4. STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION, MAPPING AND ANALYSIS

Stakeholders in the Irrigation Project comprise all individuals, groups, institutions, or entities who are either affected or at risk of being affected directly or indirectly by the project (project-affected parties), as well as those who may have an interest in the project's outcomes even if they are not directly impacted (other interested parties). These include project Affected Persons (PAPs), local communities, and others whose daily lives, livelihoods, or resources may be influenced by project activities.

Additionally, the project involves other interested parties, including government ministries and agencies such as The Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI) and Ministry in Charge of Emergency Management (MINEMA), local authorities, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations, private sector entities involved in agriculture or water use, academic and research institutions, and development partners who may not be directly impacted but hold an interest or influence its planning, implementation, or outcomes.

In compliance with national regulations and international standards, stakeholder engagement forms the foundation for building strong, constructive, and responsive relationships that are essential for the successful planning and implementation of development projects. For a project of this scale and social relevance, such as the Irrigation Project, engaging stakeholders early and meaningfully contributes significantly to minimizing risks, enhancing benefits, and ensuring project sustainability. Stakeholder engagement is particularly vital for understanding and managing the environmental and social impacts that may arise during the project lifecycle.

To develop an effective Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), it is necessary to identify all relevant stakeholders and understand their specific needs, expectations, priorities, and concerns regarding the project. This enables the project team to tailor engagement strategies according to the characteristics of each stakeholder group. Particular attention must be given to individuals or groups who may find it difficult to participate in formal processes or those who are likely to be disproportionately affected by the project due to their vulnerability, location, or livelihood dependence.

4.1 Stakeholder Identification and Mapping

Stakeholder identification is a critical and ongoing process throughout the life of the Irrigation Project, as it ensures that all individuals, groups, and organizations potentially affected by or interested in the project are recognized and engaged. This process involves categorizing stakeholders based on their relationship to the project and identifying specific actors within these groups, considering the project's geographic area of impact where positive or negative effects may occur. It also takes into account the nature of potential impacts to determine relevant stakeholders, including national and local government entities, non-governmental organizations, academic and research institutions, and other bodies with an interest in water resources, agriculture, environmental conservation, and community development. Effective stakeholder identification facilitates inclusive consultations, improves transparency, and supports the integration of diverse perspectives into project planning and decision-making, ultimately enhancing the sustainability and social acceptance of the project.

Stakeholder identification will remain an ongoing process throughout the life of the project. This includes identifying:

- Various stakeholder categories that may be affected by or interested in the Project; and
- Specific individuals, groups, and organizations within each of these categories, taking into account the expected project area of impact that is, the geographical area over which the project may cause positive or negative effects during its lifetime; as well as the nature of potential impacts
- The level and location of the stakeholders e.g. at local, district level and national level
- The type or category of stakeholders such as government entities, NGOs, academic and research institutions, and other bodies that may have a stake in those issues.
- Their proximity to the project e.g. internal (project workers) versus external (community)

The stakeholder identification process enabled the project team to map out various individuals and groups with differing degrees of Impact, influence, interest, and vulnerability. These stakeholders have been categorized based on the nature of their relationship with the project, their capacity to influence outcomes, and the ways in which they may be affected. For ensuring inclusive and targeted engagement, stakeholders have been grouped into key categories to guide consultation and participation efforts throughout the project lifecycle.

4.1.1 Primary Stakeholders / Project-affected parties

This group includes individuals and households who will be directly affected either positively or negatively by the implementation of the project, or those who have direct influence over the project.

4.1.1a. Project Affected Persons (PAPs) including vulnerable groups

These are primarily Project Affected Persons (PAPs) who may lose land, access to land, livelihoods, or other assets as a result of project interventions. As the principal stakeholders, they are expected to feel the most immediate and tangible effects of the project's construction and operation.

Although many residents within the project area stand to benefit from improved agricultural productivity, livestock water supply, and enhanced water management infrastructure, there are also individuals and groups who may perceive risks or adverse impacts. These include those in proximity to the project's infrastructure or whose livelihoods may be altered by changes in land use or water distribution. In total an estimated 2097 households (provisional sum) will be affected.³ It is essential that these directly affected stakeholders particularly the most vulnerable among them are actively involved in assessing potential impacts,

³ Final estimates will be available in the resettlement action plan once finalised and disclosed.

understanding mitigation options, and participating in decision-making processes to ensure equitable and inclusive project outcomes.

Additionally, the project will affect Nsheke Primary school, the only institution affected by the project, located in Nyagatare District, Nyagatare Sector, in the Nsheke Cell. According to RAP, the affected school infrastructures identified are toilet facilities and fence that will be directly impacted by construction activities. This school is situated within close range of labor-intensive zones and access routes. Given the potential exposure of adolescents to Gender-Based Violence (GBV) risks during project implementation, it is strongly recommended that targeted and continuous sensitization efforts be conducted in this school. This should include age-appropriate awareness sessions, engagement with school leadership, and integration of GBV safeguards into community outreach plans.

4.1.1b Disadvantaged / vulnerable individuals or groups

In line with the African Development Bank's Environmental and Social Operational Safeguard 7 (OS7), vulnerable or disadvantaged groups are defined as those who may be disproportionately affected by the project's impacts or who face greater obstacles in accessing its benefits. These groups may also encounter difficulties in participating fully in stakeholder consultations and decision-making processes, thereby requiring tailored engagement strategies and specific support measures to ensure their inclusion.

Based on field assessments and consultations conducted during the study, no Highly Vulnerable Groups (HVGs) or indigenous populations were identified within the project area. However, a provisional total of 971 vulnerable people of the population were noted, including (34%) elderly persons (65+ of age), female-headed HHs (20%) people with disabilities (7%), chronic illness (8%) and minors particularly widows (31%). In the context of the project, additional vulnerable groups may include female-headed households with limited income, landless individuals, child-headed households, persons with chronic illnesses or mental and physical disabilities, and others identified through socio-economic surveys and local community engagement.⁴

Engaging these groups effectively requires targeted, inclusive methods that address their specific needs and limitations. Ensuring that they have access to relevant information and opportunities to participate equitably in the project's planning and implementation phases is essential. Doing so not only upholds principles of fairness and social inclusion but also contributes to more sustainable and community-supported project outcomes.

4.1.1c Broader community in the project area

Although many residents within the project area will benefit from improved agricultural productivity, livestock water supply, and enhanced water management infrastructure, there are also individuals and groups who may be directly affected by potential risks during construction and operation. These include communities living in proximity to project

⁴ Final estimates will be availed in the resettlement action plan once finalised and disclosed.

infrastructure, who may experience temporary disturbances such as dust emissions, noise, and increased likelihood of accidents.

Additionally, riparian communities downstream of the scheme may be affected, along with transboundary considerations for neighboring countries, particularly Uganda, since the Muvumba River that will be used to drain the dam crosses national borders. The project’s area of influence extends across Nyagatare, Karama, Tabagwe, Rwempasha, and Rukomo sectors of Nyagatare District, where both direct and indirect impacts will be most pronounced.

4.1.1d Project implementing agencies

The implementing agencies for the Irrigation project are the government institutions tasked with the day-to-day coordination, preparation, and execution of the project. This category of stakeholder includes the lead institution, RWB which is responsible for managing project activities through the Single Project Implementation Unit (SPIU), as well as RAB as a co-implementer especially for technical support and any other relevant institutions, who will provide specialized technical support within their mandates to ensure the successful delivery of the project.

4.1.1e Project Contractor and Workers

Project Contractor and Workers typically fall into the Low Power, High Interest quadrant of the Power/Interest Grid. While they may not hold decision-making authority over project design or strategic direction, their day-to-day involvement in implementation gives them a high level of operational interest. Contractors are responsible for executing technical components of the project, such as irrigation infrastructure or livestock water systems, and their compliance with environmental and social safeguards directly affects project outcomes. Workers, especially those from local communities, are key to ensuring labor standards, occupational health and safety, and grievance redress mechanisms are upheld. Engaging this group through regular training, clear communication of safeguard requirements, and inclusive feedback channels is essential for maintaining compliance and fostering ownership at the ground level.

4.1.1f Relevant Government Ministries

Other primary stakeholders include ministries, and a summary is provided in the Table 4-1. Below.

Table 4-1: Ministries Involved in the project Implementation

Ministry	Requirements / Mandate	Relevance to SEP & Project
Ministry of Environment (MoE)	Oversees environmental conservation, policy development, EIA enforcement (Art. 65 of Organic Law), climate resilience.	Provides policy guidance; ensures EIA process and compliance; engages with stakeholders on environmental and social safeguards through REMA & RDB.
Ministry of Agriculture and	Develops and modernizes agriculture; technical	Coordinates with RWB and RAB on irrigation design; participates in

Animal Resources (MINAGRI)	oversight on irrigation & mechanization.	consultations with farmers and cooperatives. MINAGRI will provide technical assistance during life cycle of this project.
Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN)	Manages national public finance, budgeting, economic planning, and financial oversight of public projects.	Central role in project funding, approval, and oversight; manages delays and contractor claims impacting project implementation and finances; critical in risk mitigation and contract management discussions with stakeholders.

4.1.1.g Financier (AfDB)

The African Development Bank (AfDB) serves as a key financier and strategic partner in the project, occupying the High Power–High Interest quadrant of the Power/Interest Grid. AfDB’s role extends beyond financial support to include rigorous oversight of project compliance with its applicable Operational Safeguards (OS). The Bank sets the standards for environmental and social performance, requiring the development and implementation of instruments such as the Pest Management Plan (PMP), Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), and Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). AfDB also reviews safeguard documentation, monitors implementation progress, and ensures alignment with broader development goals such as climate resilience, gender inclusion, and sustainable livelihoods. Continuous engagement with AfDB is essential to secure disbursements, meet reporting obligations, and adapt project strategies based on their technical and policy guidance.

4.1.2 Secondary Stakeholders/other interested parties

Secondary stakeholders are those who are not directly affected by the project outcomes but may have an influence or interest in its implementation and success. These include government ministries, civil society organizations, non-governmental organizations (NGOs), private sector actors, media, and academic institutions. Their roles are critical in shaping policy direction, offering technical expertise, ensuring regulatory compliance, facilitating awareness and advocacy, and enhancing community engagement. By contributing oversight, research, innovation, and outreach, these stakeholders help strengthen accountability, inclusivity, and sustainability across the project lifecycle.

4.1.2a Nyagatare District and Departments

In addition to the central implementing agency, local government authorities, particularly those in the targeted areas of Nyagatare District, will play a vital role in facilitating project implementation. Their responsibilities will include supporting resettlement process for land titles (one stop center department in this case), social affairs Department will handle escalated grievances by ensuring fair resolution, protecting vulnerable groups, and fostering social cohesion throughout the project implementation and Good Governance Department will ensure transparency, accountability, and inclusive participation of all stakeholders throughout the project implementation, Agricultural and Natural Resources department will support the project through technical guidance, community mobilization, and monitoring to ensure

sustainable agricultural productivity and natural resource management to ensure smooth and effective project execution.

4.1.2b Relevant Ministries

Ministry	Description	Relevance
Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC)	MINALOC oversees decentralization, governance, and social protection. It strengthens local government capacity and citizen participation.	MINALOC will ensure inclusive service delivery and community-level safeguards.
Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA)	Oversees infrastructure (transport, energy, water, housing); supervises REG & WASAC.	Guides infrastructure standards; participates in stakeholder discussions on access roads, water, and energy needs. MININFRA will ensure technical compliance and sustainability in public works
Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF)	Champions national gender equality and family promotion policies.	Guides gender mainstreaming in stakeholder engagement; ensures vulnerable groups are included.
Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA)	MINEMA leads disaster risk reduction, emergency preparedness, and humanitarian coordination.	MINEMA will ensure disaster risk preparedness in case of infrastructure failure.

4.1.2c Regulatory Authorities

- **Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA)**

REMA is the national body responsible for enforcing environmental laws, reviewing Environmental Impact Assessments (EIAs), and monitoring compliance with environmental standards in Rwanda. For the irrigation project, REMA ensures that all environmental safeguards are rigorously applied and monitored throughout the project lifecycle. It facilitates stakeholder consultations focusing on environmental concerns, supports mitigation planning for impacts such as water quality and biodiversity loss, and ensures the project aligns with Rwanda’s environmental policies and the AfDB safeguard requirements.

- **Rwanda Development Board (RDB)**

The Rwanda Development Board (RDB) is responsible for facilitating investment and economic development in Rwanda, including overseeing environmental compliance for development projects. A key mandate of RDB is reviewing Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) reports and issuing ESIA clearances to ensure that proposed projects meet national environmental standards. For the Irrigation Project, RDB’s role is crucial in formally approving the ESIA report, ensuring that all environmental and social risks are

identified and mitigated before project implementation. This function supports the Stakeholder Engagement Plan by ensuring transparency and accountability in environmental governance.

- **The Rwanda Standards Board (RSB)**

The Rwanda Standards Board (RSB) is a national standards body responsible for developing, publishing, and promoting quality standards across sectors. While it sets benchmarks for products, services, and systems, RSB does not directly enforce regulations. Instead, it provides testing, certification, and metrology services to support compliance and consumer protection. Regulatory enforcement is handled by other agencies, ensuring RSB focuses on technical support, standardization, and quality infrastructure development.

4.1.2d Other Government Agencies and Ministries

- **Gender Monitoring Office (GMO)**

The Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) is tasked with overseeing the implementation and enforcement of gender equality policies across Rwanda. It ensures that public and private sector initiatives comply with national gender frameworks and promote the empowerment of women and vulnerable groups. In the context of the Irrigation Project, Gender Monitoring Office (GMO) plays an essential role in guiding the Project to mainstream gender considerations throughout the project implementation. This includes ensuring women, female-headed households, and other marginalized groups are actively engaged in consultations and benefit equitably from project opportunities, thereby promoting inclusive and equitable development outcomes.

- **Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA)**

The Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA) is responsible for regulating, supporting, and promoting cooperative societies across Rwanda, particularly in agriculture and rural development sectors. Cooperatives play a vital role in enhancing the socio-economic status of smallholder farmers and livestock keepers by facilitating collective action, resource sharing, and market access. In the Irrigation Project, RCA's involvement is key to mobilizing and strengthening farmer cooperatives, ensuring their active participation in irrigation management and livestock water use. Through this engagement, RCA helps promote equitable benefit-sharing and sustainable resource management, thereby contributing to the success and social sustainability of the project.

- **National Land Authority (NLA)**

NLA is mandated to manage land registration, allocation, and dispute resolution in Rwanda. Its role in the irrigation project is critical for ensuring that land acquisition and compensation processes are transparent, fair, and compliant with legal frameworks. NLA supports the SEP by addressing land tenure issues, resolving potential conflicts, and protecting the rights of Project-Affected Persons (PAPs), thereby minimizing social tensions related to land use changes.

- **National Women’s Council (NWC)**

The National Women’s Council (NWC) in Rwanda mobilizes and empowers women through structured representation from grassroots to national levels. Its mandate includes promoting gender equality, advocating for women’s rights, enhancing leadership and economic participation, and coordinating with stakeholders to influence policy. The NWC also supports capacity building, monitors progress on gender commitments, and ensures inclusive development by amplifying women’s voices in governance and community transformation.

- **Rwanda Association of Professional Environmental Practitioners (RAPEP)**

The Rwanda Association of Professional Environmental Practitioners (RAPEP) regulates and promotes ethical, competent environmental practice nationwide. It coordinates licensed experts in EIA, audits, and strategic assessments, ensuring compliance with national standards. RAPEP fosters collaboration, continuous learning, and technical excellence among members, while advocating for improved environmental governance. It also provides expert input to policymakers and stakeholders, helping address challenges and strengthen Rwanda’s environmental management systems.

- **Rwanda Energy Group (REG)**

Rwanda Energy Group (REG) is a government-owned company overseeing electricity generation, transmission, and distribution nationwide. It operates through EDCL, which develops energy projects, and EUCL, which manages utility services and customer connections. REG’s mandate is to ensure reliable, affordable, and sustainable energy access to support Rwanda’s development goals. It also promotes renewable energy, expands grid coverage, and collaborates with stakeholders to improve energy infrastructure and service delivery.

- **Water and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC)**

Water and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC) is Rwanda’s national utility responsible for delivering safe, reliable water supply and sanitation services. Its mandate includes operating and maintaining water infrastructure, expanding access to clean water, and improving sanitation systems. WASAC also develops new projects, partners with private operators, and supports national targets for universal water access. It ensures service quality, promotes sustainability, and contributes to public health and environmental protection.

4.1.2e Media

- **Media High Council**

The Media High Council is the regulatory authority responsible for overseeing the media sector in Rwanda, ensuring professionalism, ethical standards, and freedom of expression. In the context of the Irrigation project, the council plays a vital role in facilitating transparent, accurate, and timely dissemination of project-related information to the public. By engaging the media, the council helps raise awareness about the project’s objectives, progress, and safeguards, enabling informed public participation and fostering trust between the project

developers and stakeholders. This engagement supports the Stakeholder Engagement Plan by promoting open communication channels and addressing misinformation or rumors that could otherwise affect community perceptions and project acceptance.

4.1.2f Civil Society, Local NGOs and Faith-Based Organizations

- **Rwanda Civil Society Platform**

As a coordinating body for civil society organizations, the Rwanda Civil Society Platform facilitates community advocacy and stakeholder mobilization. Its engagement in the project strengthens grassroots participation and social accountability by channeling community concerns and feedback to project developers. This collaboration enhances transparency and responsiveness in project implementation, ensuring that local needs and rights are respected.

On 30th June 2025, a consultation meeting was held with the Rwanda Rural Rehabilitation Initiative (RWARRI), a civil society organization operating in the project area, to engage it as a key stakeholder in discussing current irrigation challenges in the district and strategies for effective community engagement. Through its role, RWARRI strengthens grassroots participation and social accountability by channeling community concerns and feedback to project developers, thereby promoting transparency, responsiveness, and respect for local needs and rights throughout project implementation.

4.1.2g Academic and Research Institutions

Universities and research centers provide technical expertise, data analysis, and independent evaluations critical for evidence-based project design and monitoring. Their involvement in this project enriches the SEP by supplying scientific insights on irrigation practices, environmental impacts, and social dynamics. Collaboration with academic institutions supports continuous learning and innovation, improving project sustainability and adaptive management. These institutions range from the local (e.g.: Umutara Polytechnic, East African University Rwanda, and outside the project area (University of Rwanda, College of Agriculture, Animal Science and Veterinary Medicine, CAVM) as will be required determined by project needs, as well as e.g. provision of project trainees for capacity building and skills transfer.

4.2 Analysis of Project stakeholders

In compliance with national regulations and international standards, stakeholder engagement forms the foundation for building strong, constructive, and responsive relationships that are essential for the successful planning and implementation of development projects. For a project of this scale and social relevance, such as the Irrigation Project, engaging stakeholders early and meaningfully contributes significantly to minimizing risks, enhancing benefits, and ensuring project sustainability. Stakeholder engagement is particularly vital for understanding and managing the environmental and social impacts that may arise during the project lifecycle.

4.2.1 Methodology

To develop an effective Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), it is necessary to identify all relevant stakeholders and understand their specific needs, expectations, priorities, and concerns regarding the project. This enables the project team to tailor engagement strategies according to the characteristics of each stakeholder group. Particular attention must be given

to individuals or groups who may find it difficult to participate in formal processes or those who are likely to be disproportionately affected by the project due to their vulnerability, location, or livelihood dependence.

Equally important is the need to understand how each stakeholder may be affected or how they perceive the project. These perceptions influence the level of interest and response from the stakeholder, which in turn shapes the design of engagement activities. Tailoring communication and engagement methods to the stakeholder's cultural context and level of influence helps ensure that they are adequately informed and that their concerns and insights are meaningfully integrated into project decisions.

In general, engagement should be proportional to a stakeholder's level of influence and the degree to which they are impacted/interested. As the level of impact or influence increases, engagement with that stakeholder group should intensify in both frequency and depth. All interactions must use culturally appropriate and acceptable methods that reflect the norms and preferences of the targeted groups, ensuring inclusivity and respect throughout the engagement process.

4.2.2 Power/Interest Stakeholder Analysis Grid

Once stakeholders were identified and categorized, a detailed profiling exercise was conducted. This involves gathering specific information about each stakeholder, such as their objectives, level of influence, resources, and potential contribution to the project. Profiling helps in understanding the stakeholders' perspectives and expectations, which is essential for effective engagement.

The power/interest quadrant was used to categorize stakeholders. This involves assessing the influence and interest of each stakeholder group as explained below and illustrated by the power/interest matrix as shown in Fig. 4-1 and results in Table 4-2.

- **High Power, High Interest:** These are key stakeholders who have significant influence over the project and are highly interested in its outcomes. They require close engagement and active management.
- **High Power, Low Interest:** Stakeholders in this category have significant influence but are less interested in the project. They need to be kept satisfied but not necessarily involved in every detail.
- **Low Power, High Interest:** These stakeholders are highly interested in the project but have less influence. They need to be kept informed and involved in specific aspects of the project that directly affect them.
- **Low Power, Low Interest:** These stakeholders have limited influence and interest. They require minimal effort but should be monitored to ensure they do not become more influential or interested over time.

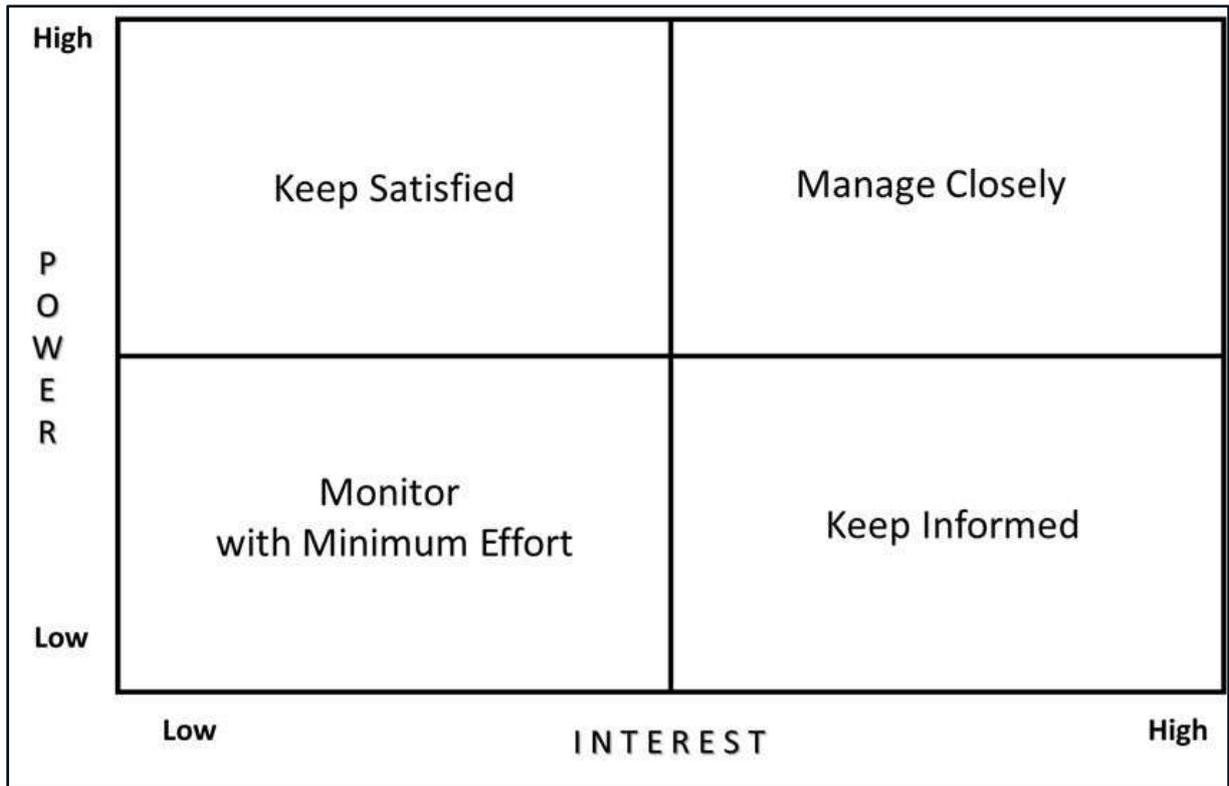


Figure 4-1: Power/Interest Stakeholder Analysis Grid

Table 4-2: Assessment of the identified stakeholders for the Project, categorized by their level of interest in or influence over the project

No	Stakeholder	Potential Contribution/Role	Interest in the Project	Interest	Influence	Action
Primary Stakeholders						
1	Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB)	Lead agency for project implementation, coordination, monitoring, and compliance with environmental and social safeguards.	Successful implementation and timely delivery of the irrigation project	High	High	No action required as are the parties to manage or inform others
2	Nyagatare District Authorities	Local-level facilitation, ensuring compliance with district regulations, and supporting stakeholder mobilization.	Successful implementation and timely delivery of the irrigation project	High	High	
3	Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA)	Oversight on environmental compliance.	Compliance with environmental and social safeguards requirements, and protection of the environment	High	High	Manage closely
4	Ministry of Environment (MoE)	Policy oversight for environmental protection and water resources management.	Alignment with environmental and water resources policies	High	High	Manage closely
5	Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI)	Ensure agricultural and livestock development policies are aligned with the project.	Agricultural transformation and food security	High	High	Manage closely
6	Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB)	Provide technical expertise on irrigation, livestock water use, and farmer capacity building.	Successful implementation and timely delivery of the irrigation project Capacity building and technical support for productivity	High	High	Manage closely
7	Rwanda Development Board (RDB)	Review and approve ESIA, coordinate investment facilitation, and monitor	Compliance with investment and ESIA requirements	Low	High	Keep satisfied

		compliance with investment regulations.				
8	Water and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC)	Provide guidance on sanitation matters and water supply to campsites	Sanitation at the site to protect workers from exposure to communicable diseases.	High	High	Manage closely and keep informed
9	Rwanda Energy Group (REG)	Ensure electricity access at the site	Power/electricity supply	High	High	Manage closely and keep informed
10	Rwanda Association of Professional Environmental Practitioners (RAPEP)	Provides accredited experts for ESIA	Ensure professional and registered or licensed expert is used to conduct ESIA.	Low	High	Keep satisfied
11	Local Communities (including PAPs)	Directly impacted by project activities; beneficiaries of improved infrastructure.	<p>Fair Compensation for their assets and livelihoods due to the project land take, minimal disruption to their daily life due to project activities, benefit from project e.g. jobs, timely updates on the project progress, timely resolution of their grievances</p> <p>To Maximize the benefits from the project e.g. access to water for irrigation purposes as well as jobs during construction, guaranteed health and safety and safeguard from project negative impacts arising from construction</p>	High	High	Manage closely and keep informed
12	Nsheke Primary School (project affected institution)	Directly impacted by project activities	Fair Compensation for their assets and livelihoods due to the project land take, minimal disruption to their daily life due to project activities, benefit from project e.g. jobs, timely updates on the	High	High	Manage closely and keep informed

			project progress, timely resolution of their grievances			
13	Broader community in the project area	Feedback on the environmental and social issues downstream	guaranteed safety and safeguard from project negative impacts arising from construction Broader project benefits such as employment for locals	High	Low	Keep informed
14	Contractors and workers	Executing technical components of the project and supply of goods	Timely delivery of project	High	High	Manage closely
15	Vulnerable Groups (women-headed households, elderly, disabled, etc.)	Need targeted engagement to avoid disproportionate adverse impacts.	Fair Compensation for their assets and livelihoods due to the project land take, minimal disruption to their daily life due to project activities, benefit from project e.g. jobs, timely updates on the project progress, timely resolution of their grievances Livelihood security, inclusion, social protection	High	Low	Keep informed
16	Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN)	Allocate budgetary resources, approve funding, and ensure economic alignment.	Achievement of National development priorities and value for money Successful implementation and timely delivery of the irrigation project	High	High	Manage closely
17	African Development Bank (AfDB)	Financing, safeguard compliance monitoring, and technical support.	Effective use of funds, safeguard compliance, successful outcomes Successful implementation and timely delivery of the irrigation project	High	High	Manage closely and keep informed

Secondary Stakeholders						
18	Gender Monitoring Office (GMO)	Monitor and promote gender equality compliance in project implementation.	Gender mainstreaming and social equity	Low	High	Keep satisfied
19	National Women's Council	Advocates for women's rights and participation; mobilizes women.	Women's participation in project activities and consultations.	Low	Low	Monitor with minimum effort
20	Rwanda Standards Board (RSB)	Ensures construction materials and equipment meet standards; communicates requirements to contractors and suppliers.	Quality construction materials and equipment	Low	High	Keep satisfied
21	Rwanda Cooperative Agency (RCA)	Support and mobilize farmer cooperatives for sustainable project outcomes.	Strong cooperatives for sustainability	High	Low	Keep informed
22	National Land Authority (NLA)	Provide land use planning, tenure security, and land registration support.	Secure land tenure and land-use planning	Low	High	Keep satisfied
23	Ministry of Local Government (MINALOC)	MINALOC will ensure inclusive service delivery and community-level safeguards.	Community engagement and inclusion	High	High	Manage closely
24	Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA)	Provide guidance on infrastructure standards and integration with national infrastructure plans.	Compliance with infrastructure standards	High	High	Manage closely
25	Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF)	Ensure gender mainstreaming and family welfare considerations in project activities.	Social inclusion and gender equity	Low	High	Keep satisfied
26	Ministry of Emergency Management (MINEMA)	Integrate disaster risk reduction and emergency	Risk reduction and disaster resilience	Low	Low	Monitor with

		preparedness into project design.				minimum effort
27	Academic and Research Institutions	Provide research data, capacity building, and innovation support.	Research opportunities and knowledge sharing Opportunities for graduate trainees	Low	Low	Monitor with minimum effort
28	Private Sector Federation (PSF)	Engage private sector participation in supply chains and service provision.	Market linkages and economic opportunities	Low	low	Monitor with minimum effort
29	NGOs and CBOs	Advocacy, mobilization, and support in community engagement and grievance redress.	Strengthening community voices and accountability Observance of rights as provided for in the law and international standards	High	Low	Keep informed
30	Media	Dissemination of project updates and disclosure to the public.	Public awareness and transparency	Low	High	Keep satisfied

5. STAKEHOLDERS' CONSULTATION AND ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

The SEP for this Project seeks to define a technically and culturally appropriate approach to consultation and disclosure. The goal of this SEP is to improve and facilitate decision making and create an atmosphere of understanding that actively involves project-affected people and other stakeholders in a timely manner and ensure that these groups of stakeholders are provided with sufficient opportunity to voice their opinions and concerns that may influence Project decisions. SEP is a useful instrument for managing communications between the project proponent and its stakeholders. An effective engagement helps translate stakeholder needs into organizational goals and creates the basis for effective strategy development.

SEP will describe the agreed Grievance Redress Mechanisms that will be available for project-affected persons/interested stakeholders/local community for handling grievances, observations, and requests to the project team.

5.1 Stakeholder consultation methods

There are a variety of engagement techniques used to build relationships with stakeholders, gather information from stakeholders, consult with stakeholders, and disseminate project information to stakeholders.

Table 5-1: SEP Techniques

Engagement Technique	Appropriate application of the technique
Correspondences (Phone, Emails, Text, instant messaging)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute information to Government officials, NGOs, Local Government, and organizations/agencies • Invite stakeholders to meetings and follow-up
One-on-one meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Seeking views and opinions from key informants such as Government officials, NGOs, Private Sectors and local leaders • Enable stakeholder to speak freely about sensitive issues • Build personal relationships Record meetings
Formal meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present the Project information to a group of stakeholders that will include Government Officials, NGOs, Private Sectors and Faith Based Organizations. • Allow group to comment – opinions and views • Builds impersonal relation with high level stakeholders • Disseminate technical information • Record discussions

Online meetings via social media means such webex, Microsoft team 365, google meet among others	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present the project information to a group of stakeholders (Government officials, NGOs, Private Sectors and local leaders)
Public meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present Project information to a large group of stakeholders, especially communities • Allow the group to provide their views and opinions Build relationship with the communities, especially those impacted • Distribute non-technical information • Facilitate meetings with presentations, PowerPoint, posters etc. • Record discussions, comments, questions.
Focus group meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present Project information to a group of stakeholders that include local community, local leaders/authorities, School General Assembly and Government Officials. • Allow stakeholders to provide their views on targeted baseline information • Build relationships with communities Record responses
Project on website/Information Centre/information Boards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establish an Information Board in each project area • Present project information and progress updates • Disclose ESIA, ESMP and other relevant project documentation to be accessed by the public such on the websites of the implementing agency and that of AfDB
Direct communication with affected crops/asset/goods/landowners	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share with the project affected people information on timing of project activities • Valuation of properties, signing of consents and Agreeing with Project Affected People on options for removing crops and relocation of properties.
Radio/TV emissions	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Arrange for broadcast Radio/TV emissions to bring the project to large public awareness (radio/TV users) and allow question/answer session • Used by project to locate absentee landowners
Project information on site	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share information on project activities with workers, school managers, teachers and pupils. • Provide information on bids and tenders to incite potential suppliers
Project leaflet	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Brief project information to provide regular update to social media platforms and RWB website Site specific project information.

Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Present project information to a group of stakeholders such as Government Officials, NGOs, Private Sectors and Faith Based Organization Leaders. • Allow stakeholders to provide opinions and views. • Use participatory exercises to facilitate discussions, brainstorm issues, analyze information and develop recommendations and strategies • Train groups of people
Focus group meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow small groups of people (women, youth, vulnerable people, disabled people, etc.) to provide their views and opinions • Build relationship with neighboring communities • Use a focus group interview guideline to facilitate discussions • Response recording
Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gather opinions and views from individual stakeholders (workers, pupils, teachers, faith-based organization leaders and parents) • Gather baseline data Record data • Develop a baseline database for monitoring impacts

5.2 Past and Current Engagement Activities

Stakeholder consultations are planned to continue throughout all phases of the project.

5.2.1 Previous Engagement During the Feasibility Stage

During the feasibility preparation phase, several consultations were already carried out with key institutions and local communities. These were especially during preparation of draft ESIA and RAP as part of the feasibility studies.

5.2.1.a Discussions with Authorities and District officials

During the field mission, the team of consultant had fruitful meetings with senior officers in Nyagatare District, including the Director of Agriculture and Natural Resources, the District Agronomist and Veterinarian officers. During the meeting, exchanges were focused on the project advantages to be promoted as well as the negative impacts that must be minimized or eradicated. The participants in the meeting were advised to work together for the successful implementation of the project.

Furthermore, the following main adverse impacts likely to generated by the project implementation on the human communities and on the environment in general were highlighted, in order to solicit the views of senior officers as how to minimize these impacts

and enhance the socio-economic development of the beneficiary populations of the project as well as the preservation of the environment in general.

After fruitful exchanges on the impacts enumerated above, the district's senior officers expressed the roles they will play as key stakeholders in this project as well as expected contributions from the district in terms of means and knowhow for the successful implementation of the planned activities.

Table 5-2: Consultations with District officials

Date	Type of Stakeholder Met	Male	Female	Total
26/09/2022	District staffs (Vice Mayor in Charge of Economic Development, sector executive secretaries of the project area, and President of Maize cooperative)	14	3	17
30/08/2022	Nyagatare District staffs, local authorities and Representative of Maize Cooperative	7	2	9
30/09/2022	Nyagatare District staffs (District Environment Management Officer-DEO and District Animal Resources Officer-DARO)	2	0	2
	Total	23	5	28

5.2.1.b Community Meetings

In addition, during the field mission, the team of consultant coupled with experts from Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) had fruitful meetings with Administrative Authorities and local population at different Sectors and Cells' offices.

Table 5-3: Key stakeholder engagement meetings held during feasibility stage

Type of Engagement	Date	Venue	Cells Targeted	Sector	Nature of stakeholders	Male	Female	Total
Public Meeting	22/09/2022	Nyakagarama	Nyakagarama	Rukomo	PAPs and other beneficiaries (with different profession)	88	32	120
Public Meeting	21/09/2022	Bushara	Bushara	Karama	PAPs and other beneficiaries (with different profession)	07	21	28
Public Meeting	28/09/2022	Gitengure	Gitengure	Tabagwe	PAPs and other beneficiaries (with different profession)	17	02	19
Public Meeting	30/09/2022	Nsheke	Nsheke&Barija	Nyagatare	PAPs and other beneficiaries (with different profession)	32	22	54
Public Meeting	27/09/2022	Cyenjojo	Cyenjojo	Rwempasha	PAPs and other beneficiaries (with different profession)	42	10	52
Public Meeting	27/09/2022	Rutare	Rutare	Rwempasha	PAPs and other beneficiaries (with different profession)	12	06	18
Public Meeting	21/09/2022	Gikundamvura	Gikundamvura	Karama	PAPs and other beneficiaries (with different profession)	31	35	66
Public Meeting	28/09/2022	Nkoma	Kazaza	Rwempasha	PAPs and other beneficiaries (with different profession)	38	22	60
Public Meeting	28/09/2022	Nyagatoma	Kabare	Tabagwe	PAPs and other beneficiaries (with different profession)	32	22	54
Public Meeting	27/10/2022	Nyabitekeri	Nyabitekeri	Musheri	PAPs and other beneficiaries (with different profession)	48	5	53
Total						347	177	524

The following key points were presented to the participants in meetings, exchanges raised and point of views given for a common understanding of the project:

During the consultations, the irrigation project was introduced to participants, highlighting its overall benefits in improving agricultural productivity, water access, and socio-economic development in the district. At the same time, stakeholders were sensitized on potential negative environmental and social impacts that could arise during construction and operation, along with proposed mitigation measures to minimize risks and ensure environmental sustainability and community health and safety.

The discussions also covered resettlement and compensation aspects, where participants were informed that project-affected persons (PAPs) will be compensated for assets impacted by infrastructure development such as intakes, canals, reservoirs, cow watering points, and dipping tanks. Local leaders were urged to continue raising awareness at cell and village levels, mobilize communities for active participation, and coordinate with other development initiatives to prevent conflicts of interest. Through this inclusive approach, the project seeks to balance environmental and social safeguards with fair compensation, fostering community ownership, transparency, and sustainable implementation.

The consultations contributed directly to the development of Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), and Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), ensuring that community views and concerns were incorporated into the project’s planning and design.

Table 5-4: The summary of Concerns from the previous consultations

Issues raised by participants	Responses Provided
Need to clarify about expropriation and compensation of the properties to be affected by project activities	<p>The Consultant team together with experts from RWB and local authorities explained the processes of expropriation:</p> <p>Valuation will be continuing for all assets to be affected by the project;</p> <p>Collection of expropriation documents is still ongoing for the remaining PAP that are not yet consulted;</p> <p>In accordance with the expropriation Law and AfDB Policy, the project implementation will start after completion of compensation procedures.</p>
Concerns on potential biodiversity loss and disturbance of wetlands in the project command area.	The Consultant team and RWB experts highlighted that biodiversity and wetland ecosystems will be safeguarded through the establishment of buffer zones, strict adherence to environmental management plans, and monitoring in collaboration with relevant authorities to prevent habitat degradation.
Waste management during construction and operation phases.	The Consultant team explained that a site-specific waste management plan will be developed to ensure proper collection, disposal, and recycling of construction and domestic waste, minimizing risks of pollution to soil, surface water, and groundwater.

<p>Anticipated Benefits offered by the project dedicated to stakeholders.</p>	<p>Project benefits were explained and identified as for water and infrastructures for irrigation, livestock water use, jobs opportunity etc.</p> <p>The project is located in areas that suffer lack of water during dry season. This project will be a solution of water problem during dry season;</p> <p>Increasing of agricultural productivity in accordance with the irrigation plan (about 9,900 Ha will be irrigated in the seven Sectors);</p> <p>Increasing of livestock products and income generation for farmers;</p> <p>A contribution to the local economic development through employment increasing and salaries paid;</p> <p>Increasing income for local companies for different paid services that will contribute to the development of their families.</p>
<p>All involved stakeholders have expressed their willing to accept and participate in resource mobilization for success of the project</p>	<p>The local authorities in the seven Sectors concerned will manage and assist in the compensation and expropriation procedures and solving raised complaints accordingly;</p> <p>Local communities are willing to give land for the project implementations as soon as they will be fairly compensated.</p>
<p>The residents requested that the project can benefit the farmers whose lands may be somehow located at a long distance from irrigation canals to be constructed.</p>	<p>Secondary and tertiary canals are planned to be installed within the command area.</p> <p>With agreement from the district and local authorities, people may be accepted to connect to the installed irrigation network.</p>
<p>People asked if the new irrigation project is related to the previous ones already implemented in the district</p>	<p>The irrigation project is a standalone project but complementary to the previous ones already implemented in Nyagatare District.</p>

5.2.2. Engagement During the Preparation of Current ESIA, RAP and SEP in 2025

In the course of preparation of the ESIA and RAP report, consultations were carried out between June 12 and July 05 2025 to validate earlier findings, capture evolving community dynamics, and address new project components. Special attention was given to engaging vulnerable groups. Consultations with decision making bodies such as district authorities, technicians in public and private institutions including paddy rice operators as well as environmental experts from REMA were convened on the concept and nature of the proposed irrigation project in the four sectors (Karama, Rwempasha, Nyagatare, Rukomo, and Tabagwe) of Nyagatare District. The importance of project implementation with fully public and stakeholders' participation, the roles to be played by key stakeholders as well as joint

contributions from these actors to the success of the project have been emphasized.

In addition, the scope of the proposed project and possible means of maximizing local communities' social, economic and environmental benefits from the project implementation were underlined.

5.2.2.a Discussions with Authorities and District officials

The workshop held in Nyagatare District from 12–15 May 2025 brought together RWB and RAB officials to finalize key technical and safeguard instruments for the irrigation project. Discussions focused on project scope, ESIA, RAP, SEP, Gender Action Plan, and strategies for implementing 3,073 ha of modern irrigation infrastructure, including canals, booster stations, and paddy field expansion. The goal was to enhance food security, climate resilience, and livestock water access in Nyagatare.

RAB emphasized its role in technical guidance, farmer capacity building, and irrigation system oversight to ensure sustainable outcomes.

Consultations with Nyagatare District authorities and local communities formed an essential component of Phase One engagement. These meetings allowed project teams to present the scope of works, highlight expected environmental and social impacts, and provide space for participants to share their concerns. The emphasis was placed on participatory irrigation management, particularly the establishment of Water User Associations (WUAs) and cooperatives, ensuring that local voices are central to project design and long-term sustainability.

Further consultations were conducted with District Senior Officers on 28 July 2025, including the District Environmental Officer. The project team presented the anticipated socio-economic benefits such as improved irrigation, livestock water supply, and agricultural productivity, while also addressing potential environmental and social risks. District officials acknowledged these challenges and pledged their commitment to supporting the project through mobilizing local expertise, technical guidance, and coordination with other development initiatives. Their input reinforced the district's ownership and alignment with broader development goals.

A joint field mission on 3 July 2025 involving the ESIA Consultant (IBC Group), Client ES staff, REMA, and RAB representatives assessed the proposed irrigation sites. The mission confirmed that the dam design would secure downstream flows for the existing Muvumba P-8 scheme, avoiding water shortages. It also observed that underutilized hillside lands could be transformed into productive areas with new irrigation, increasing socio-economic benefits. The mission concluded that the project would not interfere with acacia plantations or existing schemes but would instead generate positive environmental and social outcomes through sustainable land and water management.

Table 5-5: Stakeholder Consultation Schedule and Attendance

Type of Stakeholders	Date of Meeting	Participants		
		Female	Male	Total
Nyagatare District's staffs (District Environmental officer and Irrigation Engineer/RAB)	28/07/2025	0	2	2

RAB/Commercialization and De-Risking Agriculture Transformation Project Staff (CDAT) and Rwanda Environmental Management Authority (REMA)	03/07/2025	0	2	2
Rwanda Rural Rehabilitation Initiative (RWARRI)	30/06/2025	0	1	1
Total		0	5	5

Table 5-6: Summary of concerns raised and responses by Authorities and stakeholders

Issues raised by participants	Responses Provided
District officials asked consultant how the project plans to prevent potential loss of cultivable land and crops due to infrastructure installation	The loss of cultivable land could not be avoided. However, compensation will be provided to all Project Affected Persons (PAPs) as per national resettlement and compensation guidelines and bank policies
The alteration of Muvumba River flow downstream and impacts on habitats and biodiversity was raised by REMA officials, and asked which measures taken by the project developer.	Environmental flow will be maintained according to the dam design; therefore, no significant adverse impacts on the downstream ecosystem are anticipated as proper flows are provided for.
District officials raised concern over risk of increased pests, diseases, and soil fertility decline due to crop intensification	Integrated Pest Management (IPM) and soil fertility conservation measures will be implemented as part of the ESMP.
Contamination from agrochemicals and pesticides was also asked by district officials	Training and awareness programs on safe agrochemical use and promotion of organic alternatives will be part of project implementation.
RAB officials raised concerns over risk of waterborne diseases (e.g., bilharzia, malaria)	Preventive health measures including community sensitization and collaboration with health institutions will be ensured.
RAB officials also shared experience of sediment accumulation in canals due to erosion from upstream areas and asked how this will be prevented.	Catchment management, reforestation, and erosion control measures will be implemented around the dam and canal areas.
RAB & REMA officials were worried about the possibility of introducing invasive species into water bodies	Only approved and locally adapted species will be introduced; environmental safeguards will be monitored during implementation.
District senior officials asked how the project will involve of local leaders and communities during project execution	Continuous engagement is planned through the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), with local leaders playing a key coordination role.
Compensation modalities and eligibility concerns were raised by district officials	Stakeholders were informed that compensation will be based on asset valuation, with a clear cut-off date and grievance redress mechanisms in place.

<p>District officials asked how the project differ from CDAT project which will also focus on irrigation in Muvumba P-8</p>	<p>The proposed project differs from CDAT project in terms of both command area and infrastructure. Irrigation project targets hillside irrigation and will use pivot to irrigate hillside scheme. While CDAT project will also focus on irrigation the same district, it is restricted from Muvumba P-8 (Marshland) and it does not interfere with the proposed irrigation project. Local authorities are requested to align all ongoing initiatives and ensure harmonized planning to avoid overlap or conflict.</p>
<p>District officials and representatives of CBO raised concern over continuous competition of labor influx and asked how the project plans to prevent this risk to improve the livelihood of the community</p>	<p>Priority will be given to local employment and service provision where possible, with capacity building for community-based organizations.</p>

5.2.2.b Consultation with Nsheke Primary School

On 29/08/2025, a face-to-face consultation was held at Nsheke Primary School with the Head Teacher by the consultant facilitated by the RWB staff and property valuer. The team presented the Irrigation Project, detailing canal construction, livestock infrastructure, and compensation measures. The school will be partly affected on toilet facilities and fencing subject to compensation. Key concerns raised included latrine replacement, pupil safety during construction, and GBV risks due to labour influx. Commitments were made to build new toilets, assign a security guard, and conduct GBV awareness sessions. Inputs will inform ESIA and RAP mitigation planning prior to works commencement.

5.2.2.c Engagements with community and Project Affected Persons

During the stakeholder consultation meetings conducted across various sectors of the Muvumba catchment, participants raised a range of concerns related to the design, implementation, and potential impacts of the Irrigation. These concerns reflected the diverse interests and priorities of farmers, pastoralists, local leaders, women’s groups, youth representatives, and vulnerable households.

The consultation team, comprising the ESIA consultants and technical experts from the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB), provided clarifications, technical explanations, and policy guidance in response to each issue raised. The dialogue was conducted in an open and participatory manner, ensuring that all voices were heard and documented.

Community-wide discussions held across various sectors of the Muvumba catchment revealed a broad awareness and interest in the Irrigation project. Participants including farmers, pastoralists, local leaders, youth representatives, women’s groups, and vulnerable households recognized the project’s potential to significantly improve agricultural productivity, reduce

livestock mortality, and enhance access to clean and reliable water sources. Many welcomed the anticipated benefits, such as increased crop yields, improved food security, and the creation of local employment opportunities, particularly for women and youth. However, several concerns were raised related to project design and implementation. These included fears of waterborne diseases due to stagnant or poorly maintained irrigation canals, social disruptions from an influx of external laborers during construction, and the potential rise in gender-based violence (GBV) incidents.

In response, the consultation team comprising Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) consultants and technical experts from the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) engaged participants in open, participatory dialogue sessions to address each issue raised. The team explained how the ESIA process integrates robust public health safeguards, including requirements for proper water treatment and regular canal maintenance. Construction contractors will be obligated to implement comprehensive Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs), covering community health, GBV prevention, and conflict mitigation. Community members were also informed about efforts to prioritize local hiring, ensure inclusive participation in training programs, and promote gender equity in access to project benefits. These transparent and inclusive engagements reassured the public and strengthened their confidence in the project's ability to balance infrastructure development with environmental protection and social wellbeing.

General community members and likely PAPs expressed mixed feelings about the project. While many were optimistic about improved water availability for farming and livestock, they raised concerns about potential displacement or disruption to land access and use. Some PAPs feared that their plots might be affected by the construction of canals or livestock watering facilities, especially without clear communication about compensation or land reallocation procedures. Others asked whether they would be consulted during site-specific planning and whether vulnerable households, such as female-headed families, would receive special consideration.

To address these concerns, the RAP consultants outlined Rwanda's resettlement and compensation framework, clarifying that no displacement would occur without prior consent, valuation, and compensation in line with national laws. Community members were informed of grievance redress mechanisms and encouraged to continue voicing their feedback. The team emphasized that extensive baseline data collection and mapping were underway to minimize adverse impacts and ensure inclusive benefits. The consultative approach, which encouraged open dialogue and local knowledge sharing, helped build trust among participants and allowed for more nuanced understanding of on-the-ground realities.

During the consultation meetings, representatives of existing Water Users Associations (WUAs), expressed both optimism and critical reflections regarding the Irrigation project. While acknowledging the project's potential to improve water availability for both agriculture and livestock, they raised important concerns about its compatibility with the National Zero Grazing Policy. They highlighted that a significant number of livestock farmers in the area are in transition toward zero grazing systems, and they urged the project to consider appropriate infrastructure, such as household-level water connections or livestock troughs—to support this shift. The WUA leaders also questioned whether their existing bylaws, local governance mechanisms, and water distribution systems would remain valid, or if they would be

overhauled. Issues related to infrastructure maintenance, seasonal water allocation, and equitable access, especially during dry seasons, were also key points of discussion.

In response, the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) officials and ESIA consultants clarified that while the current WUAs have played a pivotal role in water resource management, the project plans to establish new Water Users Associations that will be tailored to the upgraded irrigation and livestock water systems. However, they emphasized that the new WUAs would build on the strengths of the existing structures by incorporating their experiences, leadership, and local knowledge. The project also includes dedicated components for institutional support, such as training on irrigation scheduling, infrastructure maintenance, and participatory conflict resolution. Furthermore, the team assured the participants that the new associations would be aligned with national policies, including the zero-grazing directive, and that livestock water access points would be designed accordingly. WUA representatives appreciated the clarity and reaffirmed their readiness to collaborate, provided their voices continue to be heard and that a smooth, inclusive to help the new associations is ensured.

Table 5-7: Stakeholder Consultation Schedule and Attendance

Type of Engagement	Date	Venue	Nature of stakeholders	Male	Female
Public meeting	07/06/2025	Nyakagarama cell	Local Community (including PAPs) in the project area	36	43
Public meeting	01/07/2025	Cyenjojo cell	Local Community (including PAPs) in the project area	62	26
Public meeting	01/07/2025	Rutare	Local Community (including PAPs) in the project area	18	23
Public meeting	18/06/2025	Nyabitekeri	Local Community (including PAPs) in the project area	38	12
Public meeting	19/06/2025	Gitengure	Local Community (including PAPs) in the project area	33	3
Public meeting	19/06/2025	Nkoma	Local Community (including PAPs) in the project area	30	20
Public meeting	18/06/2025	Nkoma	Local Community (including PAPs) in the project area	37	11
Public meeting	03/07/2025	Bushara center village	Local Community (including PAPs) in the project area	63	78
Formal Meeting	02/07/2025	Water Users Association Office	Water user association	2	0
Total				319	216

Table 5-8: Community Engagement Outcomes: Concerns and Responses

Issues/Concerns Raised in Community Meetings	Responses
Community member expressed their concerns and had different perceptions about the proposed project	Communities were explained about the project and they were aware of the project and acknowledged its importance due to detailed explanations were provided by the Consultant and RWB experts.
The community also asked the anticipated benefits of the project	<p>The consultant responded to them benefits of the project including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Access to irrigation and livestock water infrastructure. • Water supply solution during dry seasons. • Job creation and income generation. • Boost in agricultural productivity and local economic development.
Concerns from farmers with land far from main irrigation canals	Secondary and tertiary canals are planned. With local authority approval, distant users may connect to the system.
The community asked if the proposed project is related to previous irrigation projects	The project is a standalone initiative, but complements previous irrigation efforts in Nyagatare District.
Community asked if there won't be shortage of water downstream due to abstraction from the upstream dam, which would bring into water use conflicts between upstream and downstream users	Environmental flow assessment conducted as part of Muvumba dam design, it was observed that there was no shortage of water downstream. Hence no water conflict expected between upstream and downstream water users. In addition, in any case of water conflict among water users due to poor water management among users, WUA and GRM will be involved in resolution as it is always done in other irrigation schemes.
Community raised concern on potential pollution of water sources by agrochemicals	Training on safe pesticide use and IPM will be provided. Buffer zones and runoff controls will help prevent contamination.
They also asked about employment competition with external workers	Priority will be given to local labor for unskilled and semi-skilled jobs. Contractors will report on local recruitment.
Some members asked about insurance to cover issues related to Health and safety risks from construction activities	An HSE Plan will be implemented. Health centers will be supported. Awareness campaigns on STDs, hygiene, and COVID-19 will be conducted.
Communities raised concerns and asked how the project plans to protect underground cultural assets	A Chance Finds Procedure will be enforced during excavation works. The consultant advised the community to work closely with them and provide

such as graves.	information where they expect these assets. Consultant rest assured them that all expenses for burial will be covered by RWB in case graves/human body are identified.
Some farmers expressed concerns over the new irrigation scheme and gaps in knowledge/skills and requested for technical support and capacity building	Farmers will be trained in irrigation system use and maintenance, supported by extension services and demonstration sites.
Cattle keepers expressed their concerns over livestock disease risk due to animal concentration at troughs	RAB and District veterinarians will implement a livestock health monitoring plan with sanitation measures at watering points. Additionally, pest management plan (PMP) will be developed and measures to prevent these risks be implemented.
Farmers asked how the irrigation infrastructure will be maintained for sustainability.	Consultant responded that WUAs will be established and trained for routine maintenance. RWB and Nyagatare District will manage major repairs.
Farmers and WUA asked how the livestock water use aligns with the national zero grazing policy	The project will support access to water for zero-grazed livestock without contradicting the policy. Troughs may be placed on-farm or near channels.
Cattle keepers asked about ownership of land, where troughs will be constructed	Troughs will be constructed in farmer's land after their consent and the troughs will be community property.
Community asked if the project will establish new WUAs	Yes. New WUAs will be created and supported by RAB for irrigation and livestock water use.
Farmers raised concerns/issues over the split lands due to construction of canals	The consultant responded that bridges are included in the design to ensure continued access to all land parcels.
They also asked about land titles issues of the split lands	The project will assist landowners in securing legal titles for split parcels.
Some members asked if there will be displacement of people	Physical displacement will occur only where homes are directly affected. Economic displacement (loss of land, assets) is expected and will be compensated.
They also asked about compensation for farmers renting lands	Renters will be compensated for affected crops on the land they rent.
Cattle keepers asked about ownership of troughs after construction	Troughs will be owned by local farmers or the community, potentially managed under livestock WUAs.
Increased pest risks from livestock migration for watering were also raised as concerns by cattle keepers	Pest management measures will be implemented, including development of PMP that will entail all anticipated pests and diseases and how all will be managed to prevent or minimize impacts.
Community asked about land inheritance issues (e.g., deceased owners)	Compensation will require completed succession processes for land inherited from deceased individuals.
The Nsheke P.S head teachers asked how the project plans to protect pupils' safety during	Measures to protect pupils were taken into account including mobilization about GBV in the school during construction phase, Safety measures will also be

construction as well as compensation issues.	respected including traffic management. Regarding compensation, the consultant explained that compensation of the affected properties including fences, toilets will be done before any construction activities and care will be taken to avoid disruption of the school activities.
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5.2.2.d Consultation with Civil Society Organization

On 30th June 2025, a stakeholder consultation meeting was conducted at the head office of the Rwanda Rural Rehabilitation Initiative (RWARRI), following an official invitation letter. RWARRI is a non-governmental organization committed to promoting and enhancing the social and economic well-being of rural communities across Rwanda.

The face-to-face consultation aimed to gather insights and perspectives on improving agricultural practices, particularly in Nyagatare District, where RWARRI is actively engaged in livelihood enhancement programs. The discussion was structured around a set of key questions provided by the African Development Bank (AfDB) to guide the interview process.

Table 5-9: Guiding questions and the corresponding responses provided by RWARRI representatives during the consultation.

Question	Response provided
What are the community's main concerns or expectations and how does it relate to this project?	Key concerns include limited access to irrigation water, The community expects this project to provide sustainable infrastructure, improve water availability for farming, and create job opportunities for youth and women.
How do you think the project can meet these expectations?	The project should prioritize inclusive community participation in planning and implementation, invest in resilient infrastructure, support agricultural value chains
From your engagement, do you feel the project aligns with the community's needs and priorities?	Generally, yes. The project addresses critical issues such as water access and livelihood support. However, the alignment can be improved by ensuring regular consultations and involvement of grassroots groups in decision-making.
Are there any groups or issues that may have been overlooked that should be better addressed within this project?	People with disabilities and landless youth are often overlooked in project activities. There is a need to ensure their inclusion in employment and training components. RWARRI has also provided advice that maintenance of irrigation infrastructure should be given priority as sometimes are the main cause of irrigation project failures

5.3 Future Stakeholder Engagement

Stakeholder engagement activities will follow an adaptive and ongoing approach, guided by continuous stakeholder identification, analysis, and mapping. These efforts will be adjusted based on feedback gathered throughout the project's implementation. Before initiating engagement in any project phase, the Rwanda Water Resources Board – Single Project Implementation Unit (RWB-SPIU) will define the appropriate engagement level, methods, and planned activities to be communicated to stakeholders. The execution of engagement activities will vary depending on each stakeholder's role and level of influence.

1. Timing of consultations and locations

Stakeholder consultations are planned to continue throughout all phases of the project. The target area of 3,073 ha and the specific details regarding intervention areas and project activities are already well established. A clear framework for the timing and locations of future consultations has been outlined to ensure continuous engagement with affected and interested stakeholders.

❖ **Gender and participation considerations** — meetings will be short and precise to avoid disrupting daily work, particularly for women who often manage both household and income-generating tasks. For farmers, meeting schedules will take into account the cultivation season and be held after garden work hours to maximize attendance.

❖ **For affected parties** — during project implementation, monthly public meetings will be organized to discuss and disclose information on activities planned for the following month. These meetings will be held at the end of each month to allow sufficient time for stakeholders to provide feedback and for the project team to respond. Venues will be locally accessible such as village, cell, or sector administration offices, public schools, churches, or other community gathering spaces.

❖ **Interested parties:** consultations with interested parties will take place quarterly during the public meetings. The implementing project will provide information about the project to the district which include representatives of local communities. The regular workshops will be organized quarterly or at any other appropriate time for all stakeholders. Participants will be officially communicated with the workshop objective and venue at least one week before to ensure their participation.

2. Location

Consultations and public meetings will be held in suitable and easily accessible locations within the project area to encourage maximum participation. These include venues familiar to the community such as village, cell, and sector administration offices, public schools, churches, community halls, and other recognized public gathering spaces. Selection of venues will consider proximity to affected communities, accessibility for women, persons with disabilities, and other vulnerable groups, as well as safety, seating capacity, and availability during the preferred meeting times.

3. Accessibility and Inclusivity

Consultations will be designed to accommodate the varying literacy levels within the project area, ensuring that all stakeholders, including vulnerable groups such as women, youth, persons with disabilities, the elderly, and marginalized households, can fully understand and participate in discussions. Information will be presented in clear, simple language and, where appropriate, supported by visual aids such as maps, diagrams, and illustrations. Meetings and materials will be delivered primarily in Kinyarwanda, the local language, with translation into other languages such as English or French when necessary for specific stakeholder groups. Facilitators will ensure that technical concepts are explained in an accessible manner, while also providing additional support when needed to encourage open dialogue and feedback from all participants, regardless of their educational background, gender, or vulnerable status.

4. Notice period for meetings

To ensure effective participation, all stakeholders will be given adequate advance notice before any meetings or consultations. Notices will be issued at least seven (7) days prior to the scheduled meeting date through multiple communication channels such as community leaders, local administration offices, public announcements at markets, churches, and via radio where appropriate. This advance notice period allows stakeholders sufficient time to plan their attendance and prepare any questions or feedback they may wish to raise.

5. Key Messages

To ensure clear understanding and meaningful participation, the project will deliver simple and clear messages that explain the project status, benefits, and stakeholder rights. Visual summaries such as diagrams of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), step-by-step guides on the compensation process, and informative signages addressing critical issues like Gender-Based Violence (GBV) will be used. These visual tools will support effective communication, especially for community members with varying literacy levels, helping to foster transparency, trust, and active engagement throughout the project lifecycle.

In order to ensure transparency and prevent misconceptions about the project, RWB through SPIU will ensure that information to be disclosed:

- Is accurate, up-to-date and easily accessible;
- Emphasizes shared social values;
- Includes where people can go to get more information, ask questions and provide feedback;
- Is communicated in formats considering language, literacy and cultural aspects.
- Over time, based on feedback received through the Grievance Redress Mechanism and other channels, information disclosed should also answer frequently asked questions by the public and the different concerns raised by stakeholders.

5.3.1. Proposed strategy for consultation

Stakeholder consultation and engagement for the project will be implemented through inclusive and participatory processes that utilize a diverse range of methods. These include technical meetings, public meetings, workshops, and knowledge-sharing forums, as well as focus group discussions, household visits, community radio broadcasts, and the use of local community

champions or leaders to facilitate outreach. Additionally, surveys, suggestion boxes, and digital platforms such as SMS messaging or social media may be employed to gather input and provide timely information. This multi-faceted approach is designed to accommodate different stakeholder preferences, literacy levels, and accessibilities, promoting transparency and fostering collaborative decision-making throughout the project lifecycle as summarized in Table under section 3.2 above.

Table 5-10: Stakeholder Engagement Methods

Stakeholder Group	Engagement Methods
<p>GoR Ministries, Institutions and Agencies:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RWB • Ministry of Environment (incl. REMA, Rwanda Green Fund (RGF) NLA) • MINALOC (incl. Districts & other Local Governance Institutions) • MINAGRI (incl. RAB) • MIGEPROF <p>Project Affected Persons/group</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Households to be relocated due to canal construction and irrigation infrastructure development • Households within targeted irrigation zones • Neighboring communities located near the project area • Nsheke Primary School 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Email and text messages • Workshops • Formal Video Conference meetings • Electronic Factsheets with text message feedback contact details • One-On-One phone conversations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Group Discussions; One-On-One conversations/meetings • Electronic Factsheets with text message feedback contact details • Information boards; Social medial announcements; Text messaging.
<p>Other Stakeholders:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Other GoR institutions with social and economic development mandates 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Radio and TV Public Service Announcements; • social medial announcements; text messaging; • Focus Group Discussions; • One-On-One phone conversations • Electronic Factsheets with text message feedback • contact details
<p>Disadvantaged/ Vulnerable Individuals or Groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elderly • People with disabilities • Female-headed households • Children-headed households • Persons with disabilities • People with chronic illness • Youth and teenage mothers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focus Group Discussions with affected persons • Focus Group Discussions with local influencers and local network reps • One-On-One conversations/meetings

<p>Other Interested Groups:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Private Sector Federation • Academic and research Institutions • National and international development organizations • Politicians • The public at large • NGOs/civil society 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Electronic Factsheets with text message feedback contact details • Short video broadcasts with text message feedback contact details • One-On-One phone conversations • Workshops • Emails
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Overall implementation of the project’s Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is the joint responsibility of the RWB and RAB through the Project Implementation Unit (PIU). Given that Rwanda Agriculture Board (RAB) is responsible for irrigation development and management in the country, RWB will lead in the technical implementation of the irrigation project. Thus, the experts from RAB will form part of the PIT.

RWB will host the Project Implementation Team (PIT) within the Single Project Implementation Unit (SPIU) of RWB. RWB currently employs one Environmental safeguards Specialist and one Social Safeguards Specialist who oversee environmental and social risk mitigation for the Muvumba dam project, while the PIU will recruit dedicated E&S risk management specialists for the irrigation project under the Project Implementation Team (PIT) for the irrigation project to ensure compliance with environmental and social standards specific to this project. The level, methods, and activities of stakeholder engagement will be selected by the E&S Safeguards Specialists from the stakeholder engagement plan matrix (featured in the table below), in collaboration with the project team, prior to engaging target stakeholders. The Environmental and Social Safeguards specialists are responsible for documenting stakeholder engagement activities and preparing monthly reports on the SEP. Since the project design and feasibility studies have already been completed, the stakeholder engagement plan focuses on the pre-construction, construction, and operation phases, during which the stakeholders may vary to some extent. The stakeholder engagement strategy for these phases is presented in Tables below. This plan includes a matrix outlining the relevant project stages, target stakeholders, key engagement topics, suitable methods, locations, and frequency of engagement. The RWB will ensure that all stakeholder engagement activities are carried out in accordance with the approved plan.

5.3.1a Pre-Construction Phase

During the pre-construction phase, the Irrigation Project will engage stakeholders on key matters such as compensation and grievance redress for Project-Affected People (PAPs), land-related issues with district authorities, public disclosure of project documents, and procurement of contractors and consultants. Majority of these issues will revolve around relocation and resettlement of PAPs (or just their compensation) and getting a contractor and supervision consultant on board in readiness for construction works. All activities will be carried out by the PIU (RWB and RAB) according to the agreed schedule and methods, with consultation with other relevant parties where needed e.g. AfDB procurement and Safeguards departments.

Topic of consultation/Type of information	Target stakeholders	Method used	Frequency	Responsibility
Compensation processes and procedures, Grievance Redress Mechanism process, Livelihood restoration	Project Affected People including: Households to be resettled/compensated,	Physical public meeting One on one meetings and household visits Project brochures	Monthly as well as more frequently as needed	PIU (RWB and RAB)
Land related issues, mutations, subdivisions	District authorities	Formal meetings; Official correspondence	Monthly, and as required based on emerging cases	PIU (RWB and RAB)
Disclosure of project documents	General public, civil society, relevant institutions	Website postings; Public notices; Media announcements, disclosure meetings with PAPs	Upon finalization of documents and during key project phases	PIU (RWB and RAB)
Procurement of the contractor and supervision team	Prospective contractors and Consultants	Online adverts on website, social media, hard copy bid document	Posted once for stipulated period of time e.g., 1 month posting period	PIU (RWB and RAB)
Grievance redress	Project Affected People including: Households to be resettled/compensated,	Grievance redress committees at cell/sector/district level; Hotline/phone calls; Suggestion boxes; One-on-one follow-up meetings	Continuous, as grievances are raised	PIU (RWB and RAB), District Grievance Redress Committees
Monitoring and evaluation of land acquisition process and livelihood restoration	PAPs, AfDB	PAPs meetings, Monthly E&S Report to AfDB Annual RAP audit RAP completion Audit Bi-annual AfDB Missions	Continuous monitoring; Monthly, annual, and bi-annual reporting cycles	PIU (RWB and RAB), Independent RAP Auditor, AfDB

5.3.1b Construction Phase

The project will engage stakeholders on key construction-related matters, including progress updates and work plans, occupational health and safety, grievance redress, environmental management, GBV/SEA prevention, traffic management, and employment opportunities. Engagement will be carried out through scheduled meetings, awareness activities, public notices, and targeted outreach, coordinated by the Contractor and RWB-SPIU in line with the agreed timetable.

Topic of Consultation / Type of Information	Target Stakeholders	Method Used	Frequency	Responsibility
Construction progress updates, schedule changes, and work plan	Contractors, Supervising Engineer, RWB-SPIU, District Authorities, General community	Progress meetings (physical or virtual), formal progress reports	Bi-weekly or monthly	Contractor & RWB-SPIU
Occupational health and safety measures, incident reporting, emergency preparedness	Construction workers, Supervising Engineer, RWB-SPIU, local health authorities	Toolbox talks, safety briefings, on-site demonstrations, posters	Daily toolbox talks; monthly refresher sessions	Contractor (HSE Officer) & RWB-SPIU
Grievance Redress Mechanism process during construction activities	Project Affected People (PAPs), local leaders, District Authorities, General community	GRC meetings with the aggrieved party, public meetings, individual outreach, grievance boxes, hotline	Continuous – grievances addressed as received; summary updates monthly	GRCs, RWBPIU E&S team, Contractor and Supervision Consultant
Environmental management measures (dust control, noise mitigation, waste disposal)	PAPs, Environmental Authorities, District Environmental Officer, General community	On-site demonstrations, environmental monitoring reports, awareness meetings	Monthly; more frequently during high-impact activities	Contractor & RWBPIU E&S team and Supervision Consultant
GBV/SEA prevention and Code of Conduct enforcement	Workers, Supervising Engineer, RWB-SPIU, local community	Awareness campaigns, trainings, distribution of codes of conduct, posters	Quarterly; refresher sessions as needed	Contractor (Social Officer) & RWB-PIU, One stop centre

	representatives, General community			
Traffic management and access arrangements	PAPs, transport operators, District Traffic Police, local leaders, General community	Public notices, road signage, community meetings	Monthly; updates before major road closures or diversions	Contractor & RWB-PIU and Supervision Consultant
Employment opportunities and local hiring process	Local communities, PAPs, District Labour Office	Public notices, community boards, local leader announcements	At start of recruitment and whenever new hiring occurs	Contractor & RWB-PIU and Supervision Consultant
General Community Health and Safety	General community	Community awareness campaigns; posters and leaflets; radio announcements; meetings with health officers	Quarterly, and during any outbreak or construction-related health risk	Contractor (HSE & Social Officers), RWB-PIU, District Health Office
Monitoring and evaluation of the ESMP measures implementation	Contractor, AfDB	Monthly contractor E&S Report Monthly E&S Report to AfDB Annual E&S Audit Completion Audit Bi-annual AfDB Missions	Continuous monitoring; monthly, annual, and bi-annual cycles	Contractor, RWB-PIU, Independent Auditor, AfDB

5.3.1c Operation Phase

During the operation phase, the Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Development Board (RAB) will take full responsibility for managing and operating the irrigation scheme in close collaboration with Water Users' Association, local authorities, local other relevant partners. RAB's role will be to ensure that farmers and other scheme beneficiaries receive timely, practical, and technically sound information to optimize water use efficiency, sustain infrastructure functionality, and maximize agricultural productivity.

Topics/Engagement Activities	Target Stakeholders	Planned Method	Planned Frequency	Responsibility
Irrigation Scheme Operation and Agricultural Support: crop calendar updates, crop variety trials, climate-smart agriculture practices, irrigation scheduling, water allocation rules, soil fertility management, post-harvest handling and storage, market linkage opportunities, scheme maintenance schedules, water fee payment procedures	Water User Committees, farmers, irrigation service providers	Farmer field days, demonstration plots, technical training workshops, mobile/SMS alerts, radio programs, distribution of technical guides, group meetings	Planned monthly during planting seasons, before each irrigation cycle, and as needed in response to emerging issues	RAB in collaboration with Water User Committees
Pest and Disease Management: identification of common pests/diseases, integrated pest management practices, safe use of pesticides, biological control options, monitoring and early warning systems	Farmers, Water User Committees, local agronomists	On-farm demonstrations, farmer field schools, training workshops, radio programs, printed guides, mobile/SMS alerts	Planned quarterly and during outbreak periods	RAB in collaboration with Water User Committees
Strengthening GRM: Continuous capacity building on conflicts over water allocation, disputes on irrigation scheduling, disagreements on operation and maintenance contributions, conflicts arising from crop damage or pest control measures, and other farmer-to-farmer issues	Farmers, Water User Committees	Farmer forums, mediation meetings, grievance redress committee sessions, individual outreach, feedback forms, hotline/SMS reporting channels	Planned quarterly and as needed in response to specific issues raised	RAB in collaboration with Water User Committees
Enhancement of Smart Agriculture: Introduction and training on the use of digital tools for weather forecasting, precision irrigation, soil moisture monitoring, crop health monitoring via mobile applications, and data-driven decision-making	Farmers, Water User Committees, local agronomists	Demonstration of tools, training workshops, mobile/SMS alerts, radio programs, farmer field days, distribution of user guides	Planned semi-annually and before each major planting season	RAB in collaboration with Water User Committees
Biodiversity and Habitat Loss: Awareness on sustainable land use, conservation of wetlands and buffer zones, protection of aquatic ecosystems, tree planting, sustainable grazing, monitoring of key species, and promotion of agroforestry practices	Farmers, Water User Committees, District Environmental Officers, Rwanda Environment	Awareness meetings, community dialogues, demonstration plots for agroforestry, training workshops, radio programs, distribution of	Planned bi-annually and during land preparation/irrigation expansion phases	RAB in collaboration with Water User Committees, REMA, and District

	Management Authority (REMA), local conservation NGOs	guidelines, participatory biodiversity monitoring		Environmental Officers
Monitoring and evaluation of the Scheme, farmer performance and the functioning of the Water user committees	Community/farmers, Water User Committees	Monitoring meetings, field visits	Quarterly	RAB

5.4 Proposed strategy to incorporate the views of vulnerable groups

In line with the AfDB's OS10 Guidance Note and recognizing that this project involves involuntary resettlement the stakeholder engagement process integrated the special disclosure and consultation requirements set out in OS5, OS7, and OS8. Vulnerable individuals and groups identified for this Project include female- and child-headed households, teenage mothers, youth, persons with disabilities, elders, chronically ill individuals, economically marginalised households, and any others identified through socio-economic surveys.

During the RAP preparation, targeted engagement was conducted through household-level consultations with vulnerable PAPs to explain compensation eligibility, valuation processes, resettlement assistance, and livelihood restoration measures in simple Kinyarwanda. Where needed, trusted intermediaries such as local leaders, community health workers, and women's representatives facilitated one-on-one sessions. For persons with disabilities, home visits conducted. These approaches ensured that each vulnerable PAP could understand and give feedback on proposed mitigation measures.

Similarly, during the ESIA consultations, special efforts were made to ensure the inclusion of vulnerable and marginalized stakeholders, such as holding separate women-only focus group discussions, scheduling meetings at times convenient for subsistence farmers and the elderly, and using visual aids for low-literacy participants. Where cultural heritage considerations were identified, engagement extended to traditional authorities, custodians of cultural sites, and elders with heritage knowledge, following local customs and protocols in line with OS8 requirements.

Going forward, these tailored approaches will continue and be expanded. Under OS5 (Involuntary Resettlement), vulnerable PAPs will receive ongoing, small-group or one-on-one engagement with additional time for explanations, materials in simple formats, and translation support for hearing or visually impaired persons. Under OS7 (Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups), culturally appropriate methods will be used, including trusted intermediaries and separate sessions for women or minorities where mixed forums may limit participation. Project will maximize more on household visits for these groups rather than community meetings to ensure they are reached (although still welcome to community meetings). Under OS8 (Cultural Heritage), engagement will continue respectfully with traditional custodians, ensuring agreed preservation or mitigation measures are documented and honoured.

To remove barriers to participation, the project will apply a mix of methods:

- Face-to-face discussions and regular home visits;
- Regular follow-up phone calls;
- Inclusion in or special orientation to the Grievance Redress Committee (GRC);
- Collaboration with local authorities, community health workers, and environment/catchment committees to relay information;
- Holding public meetings in close proximity to vulnerable communities.

Stakeholders, particularly vulnerable groups, will be kept informed throughout project implementation. Monthly Umuganda meetings will serve as a community update platform, while urgent updates will be disseminated via local radio, social media, and direct outreach. This

integrated approach ensures that vulnerable groups are not only informed but actively engaged in ways that reflect their needs, safeguard their rights, and align with both AfDB safeguard policies and Rwandan legislation.

5.5 Information disclosure

5.5.1 Methods of Project Disclosure

The project considers it essential that all activities are conducted with transparency and accountability. This includes maintaining effective communication within the implementing agency, such as the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) through the Project Implementation Unit (SPIU), to ensure timely information sharing and consistent messaging. As stipulated in paragraphs 21 and 22 of the OS10 Guidance Note, the Project Owner is required to disclose, in an accessible form and language, all relevant project documentation—including the SEP, Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), Resettlement Action Plan (RAP), and any updates.

Disclosure of project information is a critical component for the successful implementation of the Irrigation Project. To ensure transparency and inclusiveness, a variety of methods will be employed to share relevant project information with stakeholders. These methods include public meetings, community forums, household visits, distribution of brochures and printed materials, radio programs, SMS/mobile alerts, online postings on official websites, and media announcements. Additionally, technical guides, visual aids such as maps and diagrams, and interactive workshops will be used to communicate complex information in an accessible manner. These tools aim to reach all stakeholders, including vulnerable and marginalized groups, ensuring that they are fully informed, able to provide feedback, and actively engaged throughout project planning, implementation, and monitoring phases.

Table 5-11: Irrigation Project – Methods of Project Disclosure

Tools	Description / Use for Irrigation Project
Official Project Websites	Dedicated project portals or the Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) website will host comprehensive information on the ESIA, project description, impact mitigation strategies, and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). Stakeholders can access reports, updates, and key documents online.
Flyers	Distributed to local communities in the Muvumba command area, flyers will summarize key project information, environmental and social measures, and provide contact details for project representatives. They focus on simple, accessible messaging for all stakeholders.
Posters	Placed in public spaces such as sector offices, community centers, and near irrigation infrastructure sites, posters will communicate key project dates, consultation schedules, and important topics using graphics and simple language to attract attention.
SMS	Text messages will be sent to alert farmers, water users, and community members about upcoming consultations, deadlines for feedback, and major construction activities.

Tools	Description / Use for Irrigation Project
Bulletins	Regular newsletters or bulletins issued by RWB and partner agencies will provide updates on project progress, ESIA findings, and mitigation measures to ensure continuous public awareness.
Notice Boards	Local government offices, community centers, and project sites will display official notices, updates, and information about consultations and project milestones.
Letters	Formal letters will be sent to district authorities, local leaders, and other official stakeholders to communicate important notifications related to project planning, compensation, and engagement activities.
Public Meetings	Announced through flyers, SMS, and websites, these meetings allow stakeholders—including vulnerable groups—to provide feedback, ask questions, and learn about project progress and implementation plans.
Monthly Reports	RWB will prepare and submit monthly reports to AfDB detailing project progress, implementation of mitigation measures, and stakeholder engagement activities.
Social Media	Information will be shared on RWB's Facebook page and WhatsApp groups to reach urban and connected community members. Social media campaigns will provide updates, reminders, and interactive engagement opportunities.

Table 5-12: ESIA/PMP Information Disclosure Program

Topic (ESIA/PMP RELATED)	What to disclose	Tools	Stakeholder	Implementing Agency	Project Phase
ESIA/PMP Disclosure	Full ESIA and PMP Reports	Submission of the Report to technical offices including district	Government Authorities	RWB/RAB (PIU)	Detailed Design
		Rwanda Water Resources Board Website and AfDB website	Large public	RWB/RAB (PIU)	Detailed Design
Project Schedule Notification	Notification of Mobilization before Effective date	Notification letters one months before	Government Authorities and Villages Authorities	RWB/RAB (PIU)	Pre-Construction/ Mobilization & Construction
	Project Schedule, Stakeholder Plan Presentation and Grievances Mechanism Presentation	Meeting one month before	Government Authorities and Villages	RWB/RAB (PIU) & presence of Contractor	Pre-Construction/ Mobilization
	Notification of Mobilization Effective date	Boards and Bulletins one month before	Government Authorities and Villages	RWB/RAB (PIU) & presence of Contractor	Pre-Construction/ Mobilization
	Notification of Mobilization Effective date	Meetings and SMS two weeks before	Government Authorities and Villages	RWB/RAB (PIU) & presence of Contractor	Pre-Construction/ Mobilization
Community HS Plan Disclosure (ESIA Sub-Plan)	Community HS Plan Presentation	Village Meeting	Villages	Contractor supervised by RWB/RAB (PIU)	Pre-Construction /Mobilization

	Community Health and Safety Rules	Summarized Flyers and Board on Public Spaces	Villages	Contractor supervised by RWB/RAB (PIU)	Pre-Construction/ Mobilization
Traffic and Access Plan Disclosure (ESIA Sub-Plan)	Full Traffic Management Plan Report	Report	Government Authorities	Contractor supervised by RWB/RAB (PIU)	Pre-Construction/ Mobilization
	Traffic rules	Flyers and Boards	Villages/Workers	Contractor supervised by RWB/RAB (PIU)	Pre-Construction/ Mobilization & Construction
Training and Awareness plan Disclosure (Health, Safety and GBV)	Notification of training schedule for the affected communities	Letter, public posters and through cell leaders officer and Meeting	Villages/Workers	Contractor supervised by RWB/RAB (PIU)	Pre-Construction/ Mobilization & Construction
	Notification of training schedule for the affected communities	Posters in public spaces	Villages/Workers	Contractor supervised by RWB/RAB (PIU)	Pre-Construction/ Mobilization & Construction
Labour Management Plan, Employment Plan and procedures	Full Labour Management Plan, Employment Plan and procedures report	Rwanda Water Resources Board Website and AfDB website	Large public	Contractor supervised by RWB/RAB (PIU)	Pre-Construction/ Mobilization & Construction
Maintenance requirements and water user fees	Water use fees and related requirement	Flyers through cell leaders officer and community Meeting	Water users and their associations	RAB	Construction and Operation
Pest Management Plan (PMP)	Full PMP report	Resources Board Website and AfDB website	Large public	RAB	Operation

		through cell leaders officer and community Meeting	Water users and their associations		
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Table 5-13: RAP and SEP Information Disclosure Program

Topic (RAP RELATED)	What to disclose	Tools	Stakeholder	Implementing Agency	Project Phase
CUT OFF date	CUT OFF date	Meeting	All landowners/PAPs	RWB	Feasibility/RAP Preparation
	CUT OFF date	Information through villages to affected peoples (by bulletin board, letters)	Villages	RWB	Feasibility
Disclosure of SEP and RAP with LRP Sub-Plan	RAP	Full Report	District One Stop Center Unit and Certified Valuer	RWB	Feasibility
	RAP	Meeting	All landowners	RWB	Feasibility
	Full RAP and SEP	RWB and AFDB website	General public	RWB	Pre-Construction
RAP Implementation	Valuation and collection of PAPs signature	Individual house visits	All landowners/PAPs	RWB	Pre-Construction
	Valuation Report	Letter and Report	District	RWB	Pre-Construction
	Payment Notification	Letter and Meeting	All Affected Parties (PAPs)	RWB	Pre-Construction
	Displacement Notification	Letter and Meeting	All Affected Parties (PAPs)	RWB	Pre-Construction

In order to ensure transparency and prevent misconceptions about the Project, RWB through SPIU will ensure that information to be disclosed:

- Is accurate, up-to-date and easily accessible;
- Emphasizes shared social values;
- Includes where people can go to get more information, ask questions and provide feedback;
- Is communicated in formats considering language, literacy and cultural aspects.

Over time, based on feedback received through the Grievance Redress Mechanism and other channels, information disclosed should also answer frequently asked questions by the public and the different concerns raised by stakeholders.

5.6 Recording

To keep track of all engagements, the project will keep a log. A stakeholder log, is a project management document that is designed to record and summarize key communications with project stakeholders. It helps maintain a clear history of contact points, decisions made, and actions requested or taken to ensure transparency and alignment throughout the project lifecycle. It also helps teams capture, track, and respond to feedback from key stakeholders. The log is presented in the table below. And will be backed up by records or evidence of the engagements including minutes and lists of attendance.

Table 5-14: Stakeholder Engagement Log

No.	Individuals/groups contracted	Participants involved	Date of stakeholder contact	Method of stakeholder contact (email, meeting, phone call, other)	If meeting (provide venue)	Description of Stakeholder Engagement and Feedback	Summary of concerns discussed	Outstanding concerns for follow up

6. GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM

Effective grievance redress is a critical safeguard requirement in development projects, particularly those involving potential land acquisition, construction impacts, and changes to local livelihoods. In alignment with the African Development Bank's Operational Safeguards particularly OS10 (Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure) the Irrigation project has established a structured Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). This mechanism is intended to ensure that all complaints, concerns, and disputes related to the project are addressed promptly, transparently, and fairly.

The GRM provides a formal process through which Project Affected Persons (PAPs) and other community members can file grievances related to compensation, asset valuation, construction-related disturbances, or other project impacts. It ensures that such grievances are acknowledged, documented, and resolved within clearly defined timeframes at the lowest appropriate administrative level. The mechanism contributes to maintaining social harmony and project credibility by reducing the risk of unresolved conflicts that could delay implementation or lead to reputational damage.

6.1 Grievance Structure

6.1.1 External Project Grievance Redress Mechanism

The GRM is structured across four levels Cell, Sector, District, and the national level at the Rwanda Water Board (PIU-RWB) to allow for progressive grievance escalation when resolution is not achieved at lower levels. At each tier, designated Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs) are responsible for receiving, reviewing, and resolving complaints, with oversight from the Project's safeguards team.

6.1.1a National Level Grievance Redress Committee

This grievance redress committee will be put in place and made of members from Rwanda Water Resources Board and its implementing partners. Complainants will submit their complaints at the head office of RWB, project staff at Nyagatare level or through its social media: **Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB)**, Email: info@rwb.rw , Hotline: 9977, Twitter: @ RwandaWater, Po Box: 6213 Kigali

The committee will also handle grievances not resolved or escalated by Level III: District Level GRC. The President of GRC could invite any staff whose responsibilities matches with the complaints and dissatisfaction raised. The maximum number of days for resolving a complaint or dissatisfaction is 14 days from its reception if it doesn't compromise the judicial process. If the complaint is not addressed to within 14 days, the complainant is advised to seek Justice from the court of law.

In terms of the grievance levels, this will serve as Level 3 of the GRM.

6.1.1b The Community based Grievance Redress Committees

As the GRM works within existing legal and cultural frameworks, it is organized in such a way that the Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) will comprise of local community representative, PAPs representative, local authority representative at village and cell levels, Contractor and Supervising firm representative.

Table 6-1: GRM Levels

GRC Levels	Membership	Remarks	Roles and responsibilities	Timeframe for resolving complaints
Level I: Cell Level GRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Grievance committee was elected by the Project affected people during the second consultation meeting held between the district officials, Project representative and the Project Affected People. 13 committees were established in 2022 within 5 sectors to be affected. We found that these committees were still in place during the public consultation in 2025. • The elected committee is based at the cell level and is made up of at least 7 members. • The PAPs select and vote for 3 candidates President, Vice President and a Woman Representative (who can also represent the youth and vulnerable groups where relevant and possible).. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First level GRC • The main objective of the GRC is to ensure faster and better resolution of Project-related complaints. • The grievance committee is meant to be near the community in such a way that the PAPs' complaints are followed up and addressed as soon as possible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive and handle complaints from the Project Affected People (PAPs) • Organize consultation meetings for parties involved in the Grievance; • Provide responses to received grievances and request concerned parties to implement recommended actions; • Follow up on the implementation of recommended actions to attended complaints; • Provide minutes to the grievances received and resolved to the Sector level; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The maximum number of days for resolving a complaint at the cell level is 14 days. These days comprise the day on which the GRC has received the complaint/grievance. • Depending on the nature of the complaint, some are resolved immediately while others may require field visits. • The required quorum for the GRC meeting to convene is at least

GRC Levels	Membership	Remarks	Roles and responsibilities	Timeframe for resolving complaints
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The village Leader and the cell Executive Secretary of where the sites are located will be part of the cell level Grievance Redress Committee. Program safeguard staffs, contractor representative, supervising firm representative and representative of District Isange One Stop Center will also attend GRC meetings whenever deemed necessary, acting in advisory role. <p><u>Note:</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In case the site is located in the same cell but in different villages, the cell executive secretary will select among the village leaders the one who will join the cell level Grievance Redress Committee. 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Organize and participate in community meetings. Submit to the Sector level the GRM report on monthly basis 	<p>presence of 2/3 of the total members.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The GRC Meeting is convened every month (Even when there are no grievances received, the committee can sit to review the implementation of previous meetings resolutions). However, it can be convened any time there is the urgent grievance raised. On basis of a genuine reason, RWB in collaboration with the Nyagatare District can temporarily or permanently terminate the operations of a GRC through a notice of 30 days prior to decision effectiveness. In case of temporary

GRC Levels	Membership	Remarks	Roles and responsibilities	Timeframe for resolving complaints
				<p>termination, RWB in collaboration with the district will issue a notice for reoperation of a GRC, 5 days before the effective time.</p>
<p>Level II: Sector Level GRC</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The GRC at sector level will comprise 6 members: • The Sector Executive Secretary: President, • The Social Protection Officer: The vice President, • The Sector Land, habitat and community settlement Officer • Women representative from the Sector Staffs: represent youth and vulnerable groups. • Sector Agronomist • Sector animal resources Officer • Project representative, contractor representative, supervising firm representative and representative of District Isange One Stop Center will also attend GRC meetings whenever 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escalation mechanism for grievances not resolved at cell level • Cost free for PAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive and handle grievances referred to them from the cell elected GRC; • Organize consultation meetings with parties involved in the Grievance; • Follow up on the implementation of recommended actions to grievances raised; • Minute the GRC Meetings proceedings and resolutions and produce reports to District level; • Organize community meetings for sensitization on prevention of general community-based complaints. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The maximum number of days for resolving a complaint at the Sector level is 14 days. These days will comprise of the day which the Sector has received the complaint from GRC. The Sector level GRC Meeting is convened when there are grievances to be resolved through it. • The Sector executive Secretary will call for a meeting with the PAP complaining, carry out field verifications and come up with the

GRC Levels	Membership	Remarks	Roles and responsibilities	Timeframe for resolving complaints
	deemed necessary, <i>acting in advisory role.</i>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Submit to RWB, the GRM report on monthly. 	<p>decision on the action to be taken in case both parties have agreed with the decision.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The required quorum for the GRC meeting to convene is at least presence of 2/3 of the total members. • RWB can provide a notice of 30 days to terminate the GRCs term if necessary.
Level III: District Level GRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The committee will be composed of the following members namely: • The Vice Mayor in charge of Social Affairs who will be the President, • District Director of One Stop Centre who will be the Vice President, • District Director of Agriculture and Natural resource • The District Environmental Management Officer, • Gender promotion officer: Women representative, the Secretary 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escalation mechanism for grievances not resolved at cell level. • Cost free for PAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive and handle complaints referred by the Sector Level GRC • Organize consultation meetings for parties involved in the Grievance; • Provide responses to received grievances and request concerned parties to implement recommended actions; 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In case the PAP doesn't agree with the Sector's decision, they are advised to go to the district level. The district will receive the complaint and will call for a combined meeting with the GRC and the Sector representatives together with the PAP

GRC Levels	Membership	Remarks	Roles and responsibilities	Timeframe for resolving complaints
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Though not part of the committee, District Property Valuation Officer, Land and GIS Officer, Social Protection Officer, District Animal resources Officer, Program safeguard staffs, Isange One Stop Centre Representative will participate in District GRC meetings whenever deemed necessary. • Project representative, contractor representative, supervising firm representative and representative of District Isange One Stop Center will also attend GRC meetings whenever deemed necessary, acting in advisory role. <p>Note: The committee at each level has the right to invite any resource person to the meeting but this doesn't participate in voting.</p>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Follow up on the implementation of recommended actions to attended complaints raised; • Provide minutes to the grievances received and resolved to RWB • Organize and participate in community meetings. • Submit to RWB, the GRM report on monthly basis. 	<p>and program safeguard staff. Several field visits are conducted, and the community will be involved. However, if the complaint is not addressed to within 14days, the PAP is advised to seek Justice from the court of law.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The district level GRC Meeting is convened when there are grievances to be resolved through it. • The required quorum for the GRC meeting to convene is at least presence of three (3) out of five (5) members.

GRC Levels	Membership	Remarks	Roles and responsibilities	Timeframe for resolving complaints
				<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • RWB can provide a notice of 30 days to terminate the GRCs term if necessary.
Level IV: National Level GRC	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As described above 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Escalation mechanism for grievances not resolved at district level • Cost free for PAP 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Receive and handle complaints in case escalated from District • Organize consultation meetings for parties involved in the Grievances. • Provide responses to received grievances and request concerned parties to implement recommended actions; • Follow up on the implementation of recommended actions to attended complaints raised; • Be responsible of the overall coordination of Grievance Redress Mechanism countrywide. • Ensure the smooth communication with funder 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The National Level GRC will receive grievances from the complainants and address them accordingly. However, if the complaint is not addressed to within 14days, the PAP is advised to seek Justice from the court of law. • The National level GRC Meeting is convened when there are grievances to be resolved through it.

GRC Levels	Membership	Remarks	Roles and responsibilities	Timeframe for resolving complaints
			on the matter related to GRM of the project	
Court of Law	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The court 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Last resort for PAPs • PAPs meet the costs of the suit 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project level process will not impede PAPs access to the legal system. Local communities have existing traditional and cultural grievance redress mechanisms (Abunzi committees) established and regulated by law no 37/2016 of 08/09/2016 determining organization, jurisdiction, and competence and functioning of Abunzi committee. These are established at cell and Sector level to solve community-based conflicts and grievances their regulatory body being the Ministry of Justice. This mechanism cannot be overlooked by the project. The population can choose to use this channel instead of the project GRC. The escalation at this level leads to the court process. At any time, the complainant may take the matter to the appropriate legal or judicial authority as per Rwanda National Legal procedure. 	

All PAPs representatives were directly elected by their peers and the number of members may vary depending on the context and particularities of each project site characteristics.

The project plan to facilitate any other person external to the project to communicate with the project, to provide or request for information or file a complaint.

❖ *Particularity on some members of GRCs*

1. Program safeguard staffs

- Muvumba program safeguard staffs can attend the GRCs meetings at District, Sector and Cell levels whenever deemed necessary, *acting in advisory role*,
- Conduct trainings to the elected GRCs on resolving complaints.
- Make a follow up to ensure that all grievances raised have been responded to in a timely manner.
- Ensure that the contractor responds to the complaints raised by employees/workers and the community;
- Participate in community meetings with the GRCs whenever deemed necessary.
- Verify the proper record keeping of logbooks and proper recording of the complaints.

2. Isange One Stop Center Representative

- Attend and provide guidance to the GRCs meetings at all levels where there is a case of Gender Based Violence (GBV), Sexual Harassment or Violence Against Children (VAC). Often where such cases are reported, the guidance is to escalate the issue for handling by the one stop center or if SEA/SH handled by the project team directly for investigation in collaboration with the one stop center.
- Participate in awareness campaigns on GBV and VAC at the community level.

6.1.1c AfDB Grievances Redress Mechanism

The African development bank provides for grievance redress mechanisms that provide avenues for individuals and communities to submit complaints directly if there is belief that they have been, or are likely to be, adversely affected by AfDB-funded project. This Can be done in 2 ways:

1. Registering a grievance with the AfDB in country/project Team: Ideally PAPs are encouraged to reach out to the country/project team if they feel aggrieved (and if issues reported to RWB team persist unaddressed).
2. The Independent Review/Recourse Mechanism

The IRM is an independent accountability instrument established by the Boards of Directors of the AfDB to provide people adversely affected by Bank-financed operations with an independent complaints mechanism through which they can seek redress and hold the bank to account to respect its policies and procedures related to sustainability.

The Independent Review Mechanism (IRM) administered by Compliance Review and Mediation Unit (BCRM) provides people adversely affected by projects financed by the African Development Bank Group (AfDB) with an independent mechanism through which they can request the Bank Group to comply with its own policies and procedures.

For recourse, BCRM receives requests presented by two or more persons (such as community of persons, an organization, association, society, or other grouping of individuals) and/or by a qualified representative of the affected persons who demonstrate that their rights or interests have been or are likely to be adversely affected by the non-compliance of the relevant Bank Group policies. The requestor(s) and any other interested persons may ask that their identities be kept confidential, and if so, the reasons for such confidentiality.

There is no specific format required to file a complaint with the IRM. A complaint can be submitted by:

- Mail, email, or SMS
- Completing an online [complaint form](#), by telephone (+225 27 20 26 29 00) or
- Any other means such as by sending a voice or video recording

Complainants can file their complaint in their local language or in either of the official languages of the Bank (English, French). In cases where the complaint is submitted in a language other than the official languages of the Bank, the IRM will do its best to translate it and inform the complainant of the estimated time needed for translation. If the complaint is submitted orally, the IRM will assist complainants in submitting it in writing.

The complaints are handled through compliance review (investigation) and/or problem-solving (mediation).

The BCRM handles requests through.

- **Compliance Review (investigation)**

The compliance review function is handled by the IRM Roster of Experts appointed by the Board of Directors. The Experts together with the Director of BCRM determine eligibility of request(s) for compliance review, and submit their eligibility report, recommending whether or not to undertake the compliance review, to the Board of Directors or to the President, as the case may be for project's status of approval.

The purpose of a Compliance Review is to examine whether the Bank Group has complied with its policies and procedures applicable to the concerned project/operation and, in cases of non-compliance, whether such non-compliance has caused or may cause harm to the Complainants and/or the environment.

- **Problem-Solving (mediation)**

In a request for problem-solving, BCRM will restore an effective dialogue between the requestors and any interested persons with an aim to resolving underlying issues without seeking to attribute blame or fault to any such party.

6.1.2 Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) for workers

In addition to the community-level grievance structures, the Irrigation project will establish a dedicated Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) for workers employed directly by the contractor during project implementation. This internal mechanism is specifically designed to address grievances related to labor conditions, occupational health and safety, discrimination, wage disputes, harassment, contract violations, or any form of unfair treatment in the workplace. Establishing a worker-specific GRM reflects the project's compliance with the African Development Bank's Operational Safeguards (particularly OS1 on labor and working conditions) and Rwanda's national labor regulations.

The Workers' Grievance Redress Committee (WGRC) will be composed of five members to ensure fair representation and trust among the workforce. These include a President, Vice President, and a Women Representative, all elected directly by the workers. Additionally, the committee includes two Advisors, one of whom should be familiar with labor laws or experienced in worker representation.

This structure allows the committee to handle a wide range of workplace concerns, promote gender inclusion, and ensure that workers are properly guided through transparent grievance procedures. The committee will function independently, with oversight from the contractor's Human Resources unit, and in coordination with the project's Environmental and Social Safeguards Officers.

The WGRC will maintain a confidential and accessible grievance submission system, which may include secure complaint boxes at the worksite, verbal submissions during designated office hours, or a dedicated phone line. Every grievance will be documented, assigned a unique reference number, and addressed within a target timeframe of 7 to 14 days. Once resolved, the decision will be formally communicated to the complainant. If the issue remains unresolved, it may be escalated to the contractor's senior management or, where appropriate, to the Rwanda Water Board's Project Implementation Unit (PIU). Strict confidentiality will be maintained throughout, and any form of retaliation against workers who submit complaints will be strictly prohibited.

To support the effective functioning of this mechanism, the project will provide specialized training to all WGRC members on grievance handling protocols, labor rights, gender sensitivity, and workplace health and safety standards. The contractor will also ensure that all workers are clearly informed about their rights and the GRM procedures during induction sessions, and through clearly displayed information materials at the worksite. By providing workers with a fair, safe, and responsive platform to raise concerns, the project aims to foster decent working conditions, reduce labor-related risks, and build trust within the workforce throughout the construction phase.

Table 6-2: Composition and Roles of the Workers' Grievance Redress Committee (WGRC)

Committee Member	Role Description	Key Responsibilities
President	Lead authority of the WGRC; chairs grievance meetings and ensures timely, impartial	-Chair all WGRC meetings - Ensure complaints are received and addressed promptly

	handling of complaints.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Oversee grievance documentation and reporting - Liaise with HR and Environmental & Social Safeguards Officers - Ensure compliance with labor standards and project policies
Vice President	Assists the President and acts as lead in their absence; maintains continuity in grievance handling.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support the President in duties - Act as lead when President is unavailable - Organize meetings - Follow up on resolution implementation - Coordinate among committee members
Women Representative	Represents female workers; promotes gender inclusion and addresses gender-specific grievances such as harassment or unequal treatment.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Represent interests and concerns of female workers - Ensure gender-related grievances are addressed - Provide safe and confidential channel for female workers to raise concerns
Advisor 1	Provides expert guidance on labor law compliance, grievance procedures, and conflict resolution.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Advise on labor law compliance - Support internal grievance procedures - Guide conflict resolution strategies, especially in complex/sensitive cases
Advisor 2	Acts as liaison between workers and contractor's management; contributes technical or legal perspectives.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Facilitate communication between workers and management - Provide technical/legal insights - Support fair and informed grievance resolution

The Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) established under the Irrigation project is a vital tool for ensuring fair, transparent, and timely resolution of worker-related complaints. By providing a structured platform that encourages inclusiveness, accountability, and confidentiality, the mechanism empowers workers to voice their concerns without fear of retaliation. The well-defined roles within the Workers' Grievance Redress Committee (WGRC) promote effective management of grievances, foster trust between labor and management, and contribute significantly to a safe, respectful, and productive work environment. Ultimately, the GRM strengthens project implementation by addressing social risks proactively and upholding workers' rights throughout the project lifecycle.

6.2 Reporting mechanism

Cell Level Reporting:

At the Cell level, the Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) is responsible for recording all grievances in a standardized grievance logbook. Each grievance entry includes the complainant's name, nature of the complaint, date received, actions taken, and resolution status. On Monthly basis during implementation the Cell GRC compiles a summary report of all received and addressed grievances. This report is shared with the Sector GRC, either through physical submission or Email. In case of unresolved complaints, the details are forwarded immediately with full documentation to the Sector level for further handling.

Sector Level Reporting:

The Sector GRC maintains its own grievance log and collects Monthly reports from the Cell GRCs. It compiles a monthly consolidated report highlighting all grievances resolved at the Sector level and those received from the Cell level. The report includes follow-up actions, outcomes, and cases pending resolution. The Sector Land Manager ensures that this report is shared with the District Land Bureau and also acts as the technical liaison. Serious or unresolved grievances are escalated promptly to the district level, along with supporting documentation and response history.

District Level Reporting:

At the District level, the GRC led by the Director of the One Stop Center—receives reports from all Sector GRCs. A monthly district grievance report is prepared, including a summary of all grievances received, resolved, and escalated. Particular emphasis is placed on cases that required inter-departmental coordination or involved infrastructure or livelihood-related complaints. The District GRC submits this report to the PIU Safeguards Team at RWB. For escalated grievances, they attach all previous reports and actions taken to ensure continuity and accurate case handling at the national level.

RWB-PIU Reporting:

The PIU Safeguards Specialist at Rwanda Water Board maintains a centralized grievance database that compiles all reports received from District GRCs. A quarterly GRM report is generated, summarizing total grievances across all levels, categorizing them (e.g., compensation, access, environmental concerns), and noting trends or recurring issues. This report is shared with relevant stakeholders, including World Bank safeguards teams and project management. The PIU also ensures follow-up on unresolved cases and provides feedback to lower levels, especially for learning and capacity-building purposes. If a case remains unresolved at this level, its referral to judicial or Ombudsman institutions is also documented.

6.3 Grievance Log

The Grievance Redress Mechanism Committee will ensure that each complaint has an individual reference number, and is appropriately recorded and tracked.

The log will contain record of the person responsible for an individual complaint received, and records dates for the following events:

1. Date of the received complaint
2. Name of the PAP complaining
3. Status of the complaint
4. Signatures of the PAP complaining
5. Signature of GRC
6. How and who addressed the complaint
7. Dates when the complaint was addressed.

In practice, grievances and disputes that are most received during the implementation of the Project include damage of assets by contractor, misidentification of assets or mistakes in

valuing them; Dispute over the ownership of a given asset (two individuals claim to be the owner of the same asset) Disagreement over the value given to the affected assets. Successions, divorces, and other family issues, resulting in disputes between heirs and other family members, over ownership or ownership shares for a given asset. Issue of PAPs with no Bank accounts. Issue of PAPs that do not live on site, impacts from construction works e.g. dust or traffic etc.

- The elected GRCs will receive different trainings by the Project on grievance redress mechanisms and trainings on social and environment safeguards policies.
- During the field mission, the team of consultant had fruitful Before closing the consultation meetings, the teams of consultant and experts from RWB asked participants to elect per Cell the Grievance Redress Committees (GRC) who will act as intermediary between the project managers and local population in solving raised complaints. Appendix IV contains the list of elected committees' members per Cell and their respective functions.

7. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS FOR THE IMPLEMENTATION OF THE SEP

7.1 Institutional Roles and Responsibilities

This chapter outlines the key government institutions and agencies involved in the Irrigation Project, highlighting their mandates and roles/responsibilities during the implementation of the project. Some of these institutions will provide regulatory oversight, technical expertise, policy guidance, and community coordination to ensure that the project is implemented in compliance with national laws and standards. Their involvement is critical in addressing environmental, social, technical, gender, and land management aspects throughout the project lifecycle.

The table below provides the various institutions with a role in the project with RAB and RWB as the key co-implementers.

Table 7-1: Institutional Roles and Responsibilities

Institution	Requirements / Mandate	Responsibilities
Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB)	Ensures sustainable water resource management; project developer.	Primary lead of project implementation; coordinates all stakeholder engagement activities, provides PIU for the project.
Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Board (RAB)	Implements agriculture/livestock policies; research and extension services.	Provide technical inputs in the irrigation design and overall will lead in the technical implementation of the irrigation project.; engages directly with farmers to ensure technical alignment such as establishment of WUAs; phytosanitary services; co-implements project with RWB.
Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning (MINECOFIN)	Oversees national budget, financing, and public investment management.	Provides financial oversight; ensures project funds, including SEP budget, are allocated and managed according to national regulations and financier requirements.
Ministry of Environment (MoE)	Oversees environmental conservation, policy development, EIA enforcement (Art. 65 of Organic Law), climate resilience.	Provides policy guidance; ensures EIA process and compliance; engages stakeholders on environmental safeguards through REMA & RDB.
Ministry of Agriculture and Animal Resources (MINAGRI)	Develops and modernizes agriculture; technical oversight on irrigation & mechanization.	Coordinates with RWB and RAB on irrigation design; participates in consultations with farmers and cooperatives.
Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA)	Oversees infrastructure (transport, energy, water, housing); supervises REG & WASAC.	Guides infrastructure standards; participates in stakeholder discussions on access roads, water, and energy needs.

Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA)	Implements environmental policies; monitors compliance and conducts audits.	Participates in ESIA reviews; engages in monitoring visits during construction period; liaises with communities on environmental protection measures.
Water and Sanitation Corporation (WASAC)	Manages water/sanitation infrastructure and services.	The project will work with WASAC to manage solid and liquid waste from construction and campsite operations, ensuring proper collection, treatment, and disposal to minimize pollution, protect public health, and comply with national waste management regulations.
Rwanda Energy Group (REG)	Provides and maintains energy infrastructure.	Engages with local stakeholders to ensure electricity access for pumps and infrastructure.
Rwanda Standards Board (RSB)	Develops and enforces national standards for products and processes.	Ensures construction materials and equipment meet standards; communicates requirements to contractors and suppliers.
National Land Authority (NLA)	Administers land use, registration, and transfer.	Engages in land re-adjustment processes; supports consultations on land acquisition and compensation.
Ministry of Gender and Family Promotion (MIGEPROF)	Coordinates national gender equality and family promotion policies.	Guides gender mainstreaming in stakeholder engagement; ensures vulnerable groups are included.
Gender Monitoring Office (GMO)	Monitors gender mainstreaming and GBV prevention.	Monitors gender-sensitive engagement processes and ensures compliance.
National Women's Council	Advocates for women's rights and participation; mobilizes women.	Mobilizes women's participation in project activities and consultations.
Rwanda Association of Professional Environmental Practitioners (RAPEP)	Licenses environmental practitioners.	Provides accredited experts for ESIA; ensures professional standards in engagement.
Rwanda Development Board (RDB)	Promotes investment; issues EIA certificates.	Reviews ESIA and participates in stakeholder validation workshops. Will issue ESIA license for the project
Nyagatare District	Implements environmental and development laws at local level.	Facilitates community consultations; supports land acquisition, conflict resolution, and local compliance monitoring.
Contractors and subcontractors	Service and supply of goods delivery	Construction services, Consultations, supervision services, and supply of goods and services
Supervision Consultant	Supervision services	Supports the PIU in supervision of the works and the contractor

Water User's Association (WUAs)	Ensure equitable and timely distribution of water among members.	Responsible for equitable water distribution, infrastructure maintenance, fee collection, conflict resolution, and promoting inclusive, sustainable water management for irrigation and livestock systems.
Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs)	Resolve complaints and concerns, especially those arising during project implementation, fairly, transparently, and efficiently.	Receiving, resolving, and documenting complaints related to project implementation, ensuring that stakeholder concerns

7.2 Proposed Organizational Structure

In this section the proposed organizational structure and management functions for the stakeholder engagement function to successfully implement the SEP are described. In accordance with the project components, Office of the prime minister through RWB will have the overall project coordination at the national level. The project will have the implementation unit at RWB/SPIU through project implementing unit jointly with RAB. The project will also engage Nyagatare District, contractors, local people, other project stakeholders and interested parties as shown in Fig. 7-1.

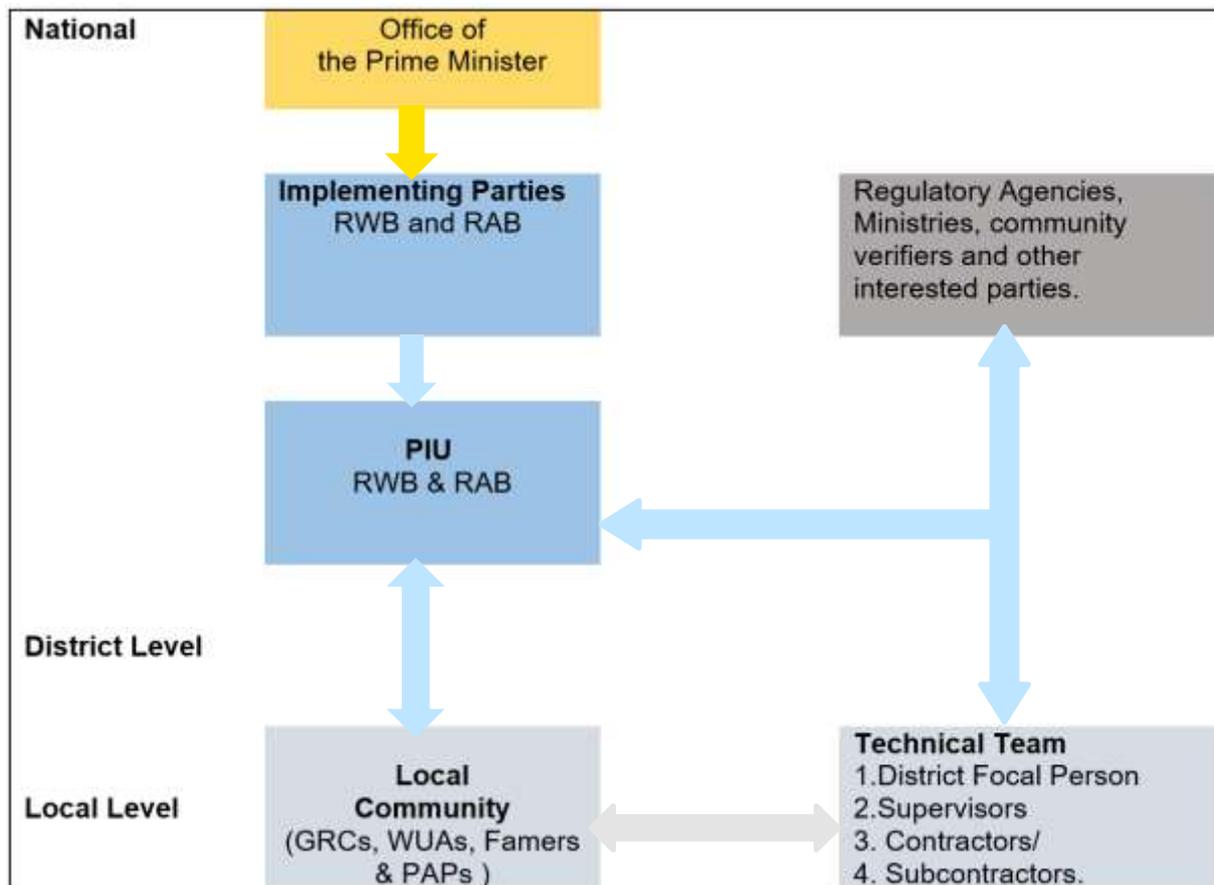


Figure 7-1: Proposed Organization Structure

7.3. Budget

The budget for the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is estimated at 173,680,000 Rwf and will be covered by the project budget, fully funded by the African Development Bank (AfDB). This allocation includes all financial requirements for implementing SEP activities, such as the establishment of the GRCs, monitoring and evaluation (M&E), capacity building through training and provision of tools and electronic GRM (e-GRM) devices, and the operationalization of the project's Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), including communication, facilitation, and compensation for stakeholders' time during engagement activities, as summarized in Table 7-2.

Table 7-2: Estimated cost to implement Stakeholders Engagement Plan

Engagement Activity	Requirements	Itemized Unit	Unit Cost (RWF)	Annual Frequency /Quantity	Total Cost per 5 Years (RWF)
Public meetings and consultations	Venue, refreshments, stationery, facilitation	Meeting	490,000	12	29,400,000
Focus group meetings	Facilitator fees, refreshments, participant transport	Meeting	840,000	6	25,200,000
Formal workshops and Capacity building	Venue, trainer fees, materials, refreshments	Workshop	2,800,000	3	42,000,000
Print media, TV/radio announcements	Newspaper, radio, TV airtime	Media slot	350,000	12	21,000,000
GRM and WUAs establishment & capacity building	Training, GRM tools, manuals, refreshments	Training session / GRM tool	840,000	5	21,000,000
Correspondence and communication	Phone, email, office communication	Month	168,000	12	10,080,000
SEP Monitoring & Evaluation (M&E)	Per diem, transport, and incidental costs for 5 staff during field visits	Five day Mission	1,000,000	5	25,000,000
Total cost in five years					173,680,000

8. MONITORING AND REPORTING

Monitoring stakeholder engagement in the irrigation project is a continuous process of collecting and analyzing data on the implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), identifying challenges, and applying corrective actions to improve project outcomes. This process ensures that engagement remains inclusive, responsive, and aligned with both AfDB Operational Safeguards and Rwanda's institutional frameworks.

Key objectives include:

- Evaluating the effectiveness of engagement activities.
- Informing adaptive management and future planning.
- Ensuring transparency and accountability in project delivery.

8.1 Core Monitoring Activities

SEP Implementation Tracking: Regular updates to the stakeholder database, documentation of engagement activities, and inclusion of newly identified stakeholders throughout the project lifecycle. The PIU which comprises of Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) and Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Board (RAB) during construction, and RAB during operation, in collaboration with local authorities and implementing partners, will maintain open communication channels with all relevant stakeholders.

Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) Monitoring: Includes dissemination of GRM procedures, logging and tracking grievances, evaluating resolution effectiveness, and reporting on grievance outcomes. GRCs at local and district levels will play a central role in ensuring timely and fair resolution of complaints.

8.2 Key Performance Indicators (KPIs)

- Number and frequency of public consultations, hearings, and forums.
- Geographic coverage and number of locations reached.
- Number of participants, including vulnerable and marginalized groups.
- Number and type of grievances received and resolved within prescribed timelines.
- Number of newly identified stakeholders and their integration into SEP activities.
- Media coverage and public dissemination of project updates.
- Frequency of public engagement activities;
- Number of locations covered by the consultation process;
- Type of grievances received; and average period of response and resolution
- Number of press materials published/broadcasted in the local, regional, and national media;

8.3 Monitoring Approaches

- **Performance Monitoring (Internal):** Performance monitoring of stakeholder engagement involves continuously tracking relationships and the effectiveness of communication strategies to ensure objectives are met and risks are managed. It includes setting engagement targets, measuring key metrics like satisfaction and

activity levels, analyzing performance, and refining engagement plans based on stakeholder feedback and changing project environments. It will be conducted by RWB and project implementation teams through monthly progress reports. These reports will assess the status of stakeholder engagement and grievance management and will be submitted to AfDB on a monthly basis as part of the broader project monitoring framework.

- **Impact Monitoring (External):** Involves continually assessing the effectiveness of stakeholder relationships and engagement strategies to ensure they are meeting objectives and contributing to successful project outcomes. It includes tracking interactions, analyzing feedback, measuring satisfaction, and observing how stakeholder input influences project decisions and goals. An independent consultant or firm will conduct annual Environmental and Social (E&S) audits, including evaluation of stakeholder engagement effectiveness. This external review will provide objective insights into the social performance of the project and inform strategic adjustments.

Table 8-1: SEP Monitoring Plan

Type of Monitoring	Topic	Indicator	Responsible Party	Frequency
Performance Monitoring (Internal)	Consultation	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of consultations against the SEP 2. Type of consultation against SEP 3. Percentage of participation men, women, youth 4. Main topic of discussion and conclusion reached 	RWB	Monthly
Performance Monitoring (Internal)	Grievances	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Number of Open Grievances step 2. Number of Open Grievances step 3. Number of Open Grievances step 4. Number of Closed Grievances <p>Breakdown of Grievances</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 5. Number of Survey Grievances 6. Number of Social Grievances 7. Number of Resettlement and Compensation <p>Grievances Breakdown of complainants</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 8. Number of Women 9. Number of Elderly 10. Number of Grievances GBV and/or SEAH 	RWB (Re and during Construction) &RAB (operation)	Monthly

Impact Monitoring External	Consultations	Impacts analysis of consultation programs on the affected community and project development Impacts analysis of stakeholder engagement	RWB/RAB	Quarterly
Impact Monitoring External	Grievances	Efficacy of grievances mechanism	Consultant	Quarterly

8.4 Reporting and Feedback Mechanisms for Stakeholder Engagement

Consistent and transparent reporting of stakeholder engagement activities is essential to ensure accountability, foster trust, and support adaptive project management. For the irrigation project, the PIU which comprises of Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) and Rwanda Agriculture and Animal Resources Board (RAB) during construction, and RAB during operation, in collaboration with implementing partners, will maintain a robust reporting framework that captures engagement outcomes, grievance trends, and stakeholder feedback throughout the project lifecycle.

8.4.1 Monthly Stakeholder Engagement Reports

RWB will prepare and submit monthly progress reports to AfDB as part of the overall project reporting. These reports will include:

- Summary of stakeholder engagement activities conducted.
- Public outreach efforts, including meetings and consultations.
- Entries and trends in the grievance register.
- Identification of new stakeholder groups.
- Emerging issues, concerns, or risks.
- Updates on stakeholder database and communication efforts.
- Evidence of the engagement (minutes, lists of attendance)

These reports will inform internal monitoring and guide timely adjustments to engagement strategies. Table 5-14 provides the stakeholder log to be provided on monthly basis.

8.4.2 Annual Environmental and Social Audit Reports

An independent consultant or firm will conduct an annual E&S audit report, which will be approved by REMA after clearance by AfDB. An annual audit report will be prepared to summarize the implementation of the SEP, including:

- Evaluation of SEP implementation and effectiveness.
- Review of grievance redress mechanisms and stakeholder feedback.
- Assessment of compliance with AfDB Operational Safeguards and national regulations.

- Recommendations for corrective actions and capacity building.
- Findings will be submitted to AfDB and shared with stakeholders through public channels.

This report will be integrated into the broader Environmental and Social (E&S) audit submitted to AfDB and shared with stakeholders through public channels.

8.4.3 Mid-Term Review

A joint mid-term review will be conducted by RWB, RAB, and AfDB to assess:

- Progress against project objectives and safeguard commitments.
- Effectiveness of stakeholder engagement and grievance management.
- Institutional performance and coordination mechanisms.
- Adjustments needed for the second phase of implementation.

This review will include field visits, stakeholder consultations, and technical assessments.

8.4.4 Project Completion Audit/Report

Upon project closure, a final audit and completion report will be prepared by:

- An external party to assess overall project performance, safeguard compliance, and stakeholder satisfaction.
- AfDB, to validate results, document lessons learned, and inform future programming.

The report will include a summary of SEP outcomes, grievance resolution statistics, and community feedback.

8.4.5 Bi-Annual AfDB Implementation Support Missions

AfDB will conduct bi-annual implementation support missions to:

- Review project progress and safeguard compliance on-site.
- Engage with stakeholders, including WUAs, GRCs, and local authorities.
- Provide technical guidance and support to RWB and RAB teams.
- Identify challenges and recommend strategic adjustments.

Mission findings will be documented and shared with project teams and stakeholders.

8.4.6 Stakeholder Feedback Collection and Reporting

Stakeholder engagement is a two-way process. The project will actively collect, analyze, and respond to feedback using inclusive and accessible methods:

8.4.6.1 Feedback Collection Tools

- **Interviews**
 - *In-depth interviews* with local leaders, government officials, and project staff.

- *Focus group discussions* with WUAs, livestock keepers, women’s groups, and vulnerable populations.
- **Suggestion Boxes**
 - *Physical boxes* placed at community centers and sector offices, as well as on site for workers
 - *Digital platforms* including the project website and social media channels.
- **Community Meetings**
 - Regular forums for open dialogue, updates, and feedback exchange.

8.4.6.2 Feedback Analysis and Integration

All feedback will be compiled into a centralized database, categorized by theme, urgency, and relevance. The analysis will inform:

1. Adjustments to project activities and timelines.
2. Refinement of stakeholder engagement strategies.
3. Prioritization of concerns raised by vulnerable or marginalized groups.

8.4.6.3 Feedback Reporting to Stakeholders

To ensure transparency and build trust, feedback will be reported back to stakeholders through:

- Community meetings and public workshops.
- Newsletters and printed bulletins.
- Digital updates via email, social media, and the project website.

Summary reports will highlight key feedback themes, actions taken, and opportunities for continued dialogue. These platforms will also serve to validate stakeholder contributions and reinforce inclusive project governance.

RWB Contact Details

Rwanda Water Resources Board (RWB) can be contacted via the following channels:

Website: <https://www.rwb.rw>

Social media platforms: <https://www.facebook.com/RwandaWaterResourcesBoard>
https://twitter.com/RWB_Rwanda

E-mail: info@rwb.rw

Postal Address: KN3 Road, P.O. Box 6213, Kigali, Rwanda

9. ANNEXES



Figure A1: Community consultation meeting held at Rukomo Sector in Rurenge cell



Figure A2: Public Consultation with local Administrative Authorities and community of Karama sector on July 3, 2025.



Figure A3: Public meeting with local Administrative Authorities and community at Rwempasha Sector, Cyenjojo cell on July 1, 2025.



Figure A4: Meeting with Farmers' Cooperative Representative at Muvumba P8