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COMPLAINT & GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM

2021

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ROYAL SOCIETY FOR PROTECTION OF NATURE

OR

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## INTRODUCTION

RSPN's Environmental and Social Safeguard Policy (ESSP) and Environmental and Social Safeguard Framework (ESSF) require the establishment of an efficient and transparent **Complaint and Grievance Redress Mechanism (CGRM)**. The CGRM forms an integral part of the RSPN and is intended to support its employees, stakeholders and implementing agencies in identifying and addressing community needs, and to successfully implement RSPN programs and projects. The main objective of a Complaint and Grievance Redress Mechanism (CGRM) is to assist resolving complaints and grievances in a timely, effective and efficient manner to the satisfaction of all concerned. It provides a transparent and trustworthy process for fair, effective and lasting results. It also builds trust and collaboration as an integral part of broader community consultations that facilitate remedial action. As RSPN carries out a variety of projects and programs, it is important that CGRM be structured as a permanent and accessible institutional arrangement for handling complaints arising from the implementation of programs and project activities.

Specifically, the CGRM will aim to achieve the following objectives:

- Provide affected people (employee/implementers/communities) with avenues for making a complaint or resolving any dispute that may arise during the course of the implementation of projects and coordinating the RSPN programs;
- Ensure that appropriate and mutually acceptable redress actions are identified and implemented to the satisfaction of complainants; and
- Avoids the need to resort to judicial proceedings.



## **1. GENERAL PROVISIONS**

### **1.1. Goal**

The goal of the RSPN CGRM is to channel grievances into an acceptable, institutionalized mechanism for timely resolving conflict that may arise from implementation of RSPN programs and project activities. The CGRM mechanism will focus on dialogue and problem solving as an intermediate way for employees, stakeholders and communities to discuss problems. Furthermore, the CGRM seeks to complement the legal system, but not replace it.

#### **1.1.1. Specific objectives of the CGRM are:**

- 1.1.1.1. To address complaints and grievances and enhance conflict resolution arising from, and during the implementation of programs and projects
- 1.1.1.2. Ensure transparency and accountability throughout the implementation of projects and programs amongst the relevant stakeholders including the project beneficiaries.
- 1.1.1.3. Resolve any emerging environmental and societal grievances in the project areas
- 1.1.1.4. To promote relations between the project implementers, executors and beneficiaries

#### **1.1.2. Scope**

- 1.1.2.1. A grievance is a concern, problem, or complaint which may be related to work, working environment, reporting relationships among the employees, etc. for protecting its own employees' rights and raising their voice.
- 1.1.2.2. This Complaint and Grievance Redress Mechanism (CGRM) intends to provide a platform through which local communities (inclusive of vulnerable groups and gender impartiality) and other stakeholders may exercise their voice concerning the impact of RSPN's programs and operations on them.
- 1.1.2.3. The RSPN CGRM will cater to redress grievance related to implementation of RSPN project activities in the project areas namely of following categories:
  - Comments, suggestions or queries related to RSPN project and programs
  - Grievances relating to non-performance of project obligations including safeguards.
  - Grievances referring to violations of law and/or corruption
  - Grievances related to project governance and implementation
  - Grievances related to fair access and benefit sharing
  - Grievance related to stakeholder engagement (including gender inclusion)
  - Grievance related to budget allocation
- 1.1.2.4. This CGRM intends to complement, not replace, formal legal channels for managing complaints or grievances. It, therefore, does not substitute for or obstruct judicial and administrative remedies, such as mediation or arbitration, which are necessary for disputes beyond the scope of any CGRMs.





1.1.2.5. This CGRM is beyond the scope for criminal or corruption complaints or grievances. At the same time, any existing rights under any other compliant mechanisms that an individual or group of individuals may otherwise have access to under national or international law or the rules and regulations of other institutions, agencies or commissions shall not be entertained under this CGRM.

1.1.3. **Principles of the CGRM:** The effectiveness of this CGRM will be guided by the following principles:

1.1.3.1. **Legitimate:** The CGRM enables trust from the stakeholder groups for whose use they are intended, and being accountable for the fair conduct of grievance processes. Accountability for ensuring that the parties to a grievance process cannot interfere with its fair conduct is typically one important factor in building stakeholder trust.

1.1.3.2. **Accessibility:** The CGRM should be accessible to everyone and at any time. It should take into consideration potential barriers such as language, literacy, awareness, cost or fear of reprisal and seek to address them.

1.1.3.3. **Predictability:** CGRM should be time-bound at each stage, and have specified time frames for the responses

1.1.3.4. **Fairness:** All the procedures therein should be widely perceived as unbiased in regards to access of information and meaningful public participation.

1.1.3.5. **Rights compatibility:** The outcomes of the mechanism should be consistent with the international and national standards. It should also not restrict access to other redress mechanisms.

1.1.3.6. **Transparency and accountability:** The entire CGRM process should be done out of public interest

1.1.3.7. **Capability:** For an effective CGRM, the system needs to be endowed the necessary resources, that is, technical, financial and human resources.

1.1.3.8. **Feedback:** It should serve as a means to channel citizen feedback to improve project outcomes for the people.

1.1.3.9. **Based on engagement and dialogue:** consulting the stakeholder groups for whose use they are intended on their design and performance, and focusing on dialogue as the means to address and resolve grievances. For an operational-level grievance mechanism, engaging regularly with affected stakeholder groups on the CGRM's design and performance can help to ensure that it meets their needs, that they will use it in practice, and that there is a shared interest in ensuring its success.

1.1.3.10. **Confidentiality:** The project CGRM will follow the principles of confidentiality to protect complainants' identity; and accept anonymous grievances from complainants who may not want to be identified.



- 1.1.3.11. **Right to appeal:** The complainants will be given explanations of and have the right to appeal against the decision made on their grievance

#### **1.1.4. Function**

The functions of this CGRM are:

- 1.1.4.1. to receive, log and track all complaints and grievances received; to provide regular status updates on complaints or grievances to claimants and other relevant stakeholders, as applicable;
- 1.1.4.2. to engage the claimants and other relevant stakeholders in the complaint or grievance resolution;
- 1.1.4.3. to process and propose solutions and ways forward related to specific complaints or grievances within a period not to exceed sixty (60) days from the receipt of the complaint or grievance;
- 1.1.4.4. to identify growing trends in complaints or grievances and recommend possible measures to avoid the same;
- 1.1.4.5. to receive and serve requests for, and suggest the use of mediation or facilitation;
- 1.1.4.6. to ensure increased awareness, accessibility, predictability, transparency, legitimacy, and credibility of the CGRM process;
- 1.1.4.7. to collaborate with partner institutions and other entity to conduct outreach initiative to increase awareness among stakeholders as to the existence of CGRM and its services can be accessed; and
- 1.1.4.8. to ensure continuing education of project officials and respective institutions about the relevant laws and policies that they will need to be aware of to participate in the development of effective resolutions of Complaints and Grievances likely to come before the CGRM.



## **2. EXPECTED GRIEVANCES AND ARRANGEMENTS FOR REDRESS**

### **2.1. Types of expected complaint and grievances**

Different types of grievances surface at different stages of a project cycle, e.g., during project design and planning, during project implementation or during project operation phase, besides the general operation of the office. Grievances may also spread over a wide range of issues, but not limited to the following:

- 2.1.1. Delay in payment or not meeting the demand and expectation of project staff at field level
- 2.1.2. Grievances regarding environmental health issues due to the construction works, like dust pollution and noise etc.
- 2.1.3. Delay in the salaries of laborers
- 2.1.4. Grievances raised by contractor
- 2.1.5. Grievance from neighboring schools, offices, petty traders/ women in the construction area for disruption of their daily activities and livelihood
- 2.1.6. Any other issue pertinent to the engineering work such as quality of work or delay in the construction work
- 2.1.7. Grievance with financial management, recruitment, procurement
- 2.1.8. Grievance arising on sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)
- 2.1.9. Grievances arising on harassment and abuse; and official misconduct
- 2.1.10. Children right, discrimination of special needs group and economic and social right
- 2.1.11. Poor performance of trainers and facilitators and poor delivery or availability of the training
- 2.1.12. Grievance on lack of information or provision of inaccurate information and lack of status update

### **2.2. Grievance Redress Arrangements**

Three level Redress mechanism is planned to address all complaints during the program and project implementation.

#### **2.2.1. Tier one - RSPN Program Level Grievance Redress Committee**

This level will be the first tier for complaint and grievance redress with the following Committee members;

- a. Chairperson: Director, Program Development Department.
- b. Member: Chief, SCD or SLD (based on the relevancy)
- c. Representative of the affected community as member (Concerned Project Officer if the grievance is related to project).
- d. Member Secretary: Administration Officer, Administration & Finance Division

The Director is the head of the Program Development Department and oversee all program and project implementation and its impact both at national and community level. The Director shall ensure top of every grievance is being reported, do follow up on the final decision made and report final decision to the complainant and the management of the organization. Besides, Director should





also bring out fair solution in redressing those grievances received. The Chief, Administration & Finance Division will receive phone calls and register complaints. Once the complaints have been categorized a CGRM focal person shall logs the details regarding the complaint into the grievance redress tracking system. This system may be manual (hard copy) or connected to the project CGRM digital system. CGRM files would be stored in a secure setting (password protected IT database and locked storage cabinet for hard copies).

If the aggrieved parties are not satisfied with the outcomes they have received from the Program Level Grievance Redress Committee, they may seek redress from the RSPN Management Level Grievance Redress Committee.

#### **2.2.2. RSPN Management Level Grievance Redress Mechanism**

A Grievance Redress Committee will be established at a Management Level; membership of the committee will be multi-tasked team. This committee will be called upon when aggrieved persons are not satisfied with the decision and feedback received from the Program Level Grievance Redress Committee. The committee will be made up of:

- a. Chairperson: Executive Director
- b. Member: Director, Program Development Department
- c. Member: Chief, Sustainable Livelihood Division
- d. Member: Chief, Species Conservation Division
- e. Member: Chief, Administration & Finance Division
- f. Representative of the affected community as member (Concerned Project Officer if the grievance is related to project).
- g. Member Secretary: Monitoring & Evaluation Officer, PDD

The functions of the grievance redress committee will be to receive, investigate and resolve issues which the complainant or aggrieved parties have appealed to. The aggrieved party or parties is/are required to channel their grievances the Grievance Administrator through any means including face to face, telephone calls, text messages, online platform and letters.

The Committee will sit as and when complaints are lodged. The grievance redress process at this level shall follow the chain below in resolving grievances, including introducing any other initiatives that could compliment the effectiveness of the process:

- a. Receive, review and supervise grievances;
- b. Acknowledgement of grievances;
- c. Verification, investigation, negotiations, and actions;
- d. Monitoring and evaluation;
- e. Provide Feedback to parties;
- f. Agreement secured, and
- g. Signing off.





Grievance will be received and transmitted on to an official form and the applicant will be duly notified within 3 days of lodging a complaint. If the grievance can be resolved by the Grievance Committee, corrective actions will be determined. After the case is evaluated and corrective action determined, the proposed solutions or preventive actions shall be discussed with the complainant and also on his/ her compensation process.

#### **2.2.3. Tie two – RSPN Board of Trustee Level Grievance Redress Mechanism**

The committee will be made up of:

- a. Chairperson: Chairperson of the Board
- b. Member(s): All Board of Directors
- c. Member Secretary: Executive Director, RSPN

If aggrieved parties are not satisfied with the outcomes of the first two processes, they may seek redress from the RSPN Board of Trustee Level Grievance Redress Mechanism.

The roles and responsibilities of the committee is as follows:

- a. Receive, review and supervise grievances;
- b. Acknowledgement of grievances;
- c. Verification, investigation, negotiations, and actions;
- d. Monitoring and evaluation;
- e. Provide Feedback to parties;
- f. Agreement secured, and
- g. Signing off.

#### **2.2.4. Tier three – The Court**

If the aggrieved party is not satisfied with the outcomes from the three tiers, the party has the right to go the law court at their own expense.



### **3. GRIEVANCE STRUCTURAL PROCEDURES**

It is important to ensure that grievance redress mechanisms are responsive, and process grievances in an efficient and timely manner. Responsive mechanisms provide information on expected timelines and actions to be undertaken when the grievance is lodged. They also provide regular and systematic information to the complainant on the progress of their case until it is resolved. Receiving, processing and resolving grievances should be a systematic process that follows clear guidelines and principles of objectivity, integrity, and respect for the rights and confidentiality of all involved stakeholders. The exact process to be followed will depend on the details of the case in question, but the core steps involved in receiving and processing grievances are as follows:

#### **3.1. The CGRM Processes**

This is where staff and associates of RSPN, local government, communities and individuals who believe they have been adversely affected by the Project may submit complaints.

The CGRM allows for questions, concerns, complaints, and grievances to be received by the team, investigated, recorded, and resolved. In its simplest form, grievance mechanisms can be broken down into the following primary components:

##### **3.1.1. Establishing accessible channels to submit grievances**

It is important to establish grievance redress mechanisms that are accessible to all stakeholders, socio-culturally appropriate, gender-sensitive and tailored to the local context. The grievance redress mechanism should be tailored to the needs and context of the potential users. For illiterates, secured channels for verbal communication of grievances (which are transcribed and reported) may be most appropriate, while written or online reporting schemes may have the greatest reach and accessibility. Depending on the context, these channels can include:

- 3.1.1.1. dedicated email address or web page
- 3.1.1.2. verbal or written feedback at a drop-in center
- 3.1.1.3. verbal communication at a meeting
- 3.1.1.4. physical feedback box at an office or in a public place
- 3.1.1.5. telephone hotline number
- 3.1.1.6. text message (e.g. SMS)
- 3.1.1.7. social media (e.g. Twitter, Facebook)

##### **3.1.2. Communicating a complaint or grievance**

- 3.1.2.1. A complaint or grievance may be made by any individual or group of individuals that believes it has been or will be harmed by the project or program of the RSPN.
- 3.1.2.2. A complaint or grievance if lodged by a different individual or organization on behalf of those said to be affected, the claimant must identify the individual and/or people on behalf of who the complaint or grievance is submitted and provide written confirmation by the individual and/or people represented that



they are giving the Claimant the authority to present the complaint or grievance on their behalf. The Committee shall take reasonable steps to verify this authority.

### 3.1.3. Receipt of complaint or grievance

- 3.1.3.1. The focal officer or committee shall receive the complaints and grievances from key stakeholders, in general and in particular from employees and the project beneficiaries, and implementers.
- 3.1.3.2. CGRM should enable aggrieved stakeholders (complainants) to communicate their grievances through a variety of channels (e.g. phone, letter, email, website, meeting, etc).
- Email:
  - Phone number:
  - Website:
- 3.1.3.3. Alternatively, aggrieved stakeholders or personnel may communicate their grievances through the Suggestion Box.
- Suggestion box shall be place at the appropriate location, accessible to all
  - The box shall be kept under lock and key, and shall be opened every month during the monthly meeting
  - Suggestions or complaints or grievances shall be read out in the meeting
  - For simple complaints or grievance or suggestions, the same meeting may deliberate and decide, however, for complex grievances, it shall be forwarded to the Tier 1 for redress
  - Record the event
- 3.1.3.4. The committee shall maintain all the complaints, grievances, and reports of conflicts received in the format given below in Table I.
- 3.1.3.5. In the case of an online system the acknowledgement shall be sent automatically.

Table-I

Date of receipt	Particular of citizen/client				Particular of the compliant/grievance			
	Name	Address	Landline / Mobile/ Email	Whether acknowledgement given at the time of receipt	Subject of the grievance	Office	Brief description	Date of acknowledgement
1	2	3	4	5 (Yes/No)	6	7	8	9

- 3.1.3.6. At the time of acknowledgement, the complainant shall be provided with the following information:
- Complaint or grievance number to facilitate monitoring and reminders by complainants;



- b. Expected time of redress [prescribe maximum time limit for completion of redress is sixty (60) days; and
  - c. If not addressed within expected time, action to be taken by complaint
- 3.1.3.7. If the complaint or grievance is not addressed within the expected time, the committee shall provide the complainant with the following information:
- a. Information on reasons for delay;
  - b. Updated expected time of redress; and
  - c. If not addressed within expected time, action to be taken by the complainant.
- 3.1.3.8. At the time of final redress, the committee shall provide the complaint with the following information:
- a. Action taken for redress; and
  - b. If not satisfied with the redress action, avenues for pursuing the matter further.
- 3.1.3.9. Each complaint or grievance file shall contain, at the minimum:
- a. the date of the request as received;
  - b. the date the written acknowledgement was sent;
  - c. the dates and nature of all other communications or meetings with the claimant and other relevant stakeholders;
  - d. any requests, offers of, or engagement of a mediator or facilitator;
  - e. the date and records related to the proposed solution/way forward;
  - f. the acceptance or objection of the claimant or stakeholders;
  - g. the proposed next steps if objection arose;
  - h. the alternative solution if renewed dialogues were pursued;
  - i. notes regarding implementation; and
  - j. any conclusion and recommendations arising from monitoring and follow up.
- 3.1.3.10. Files for each complaint or grievance shall be available for review by the claimant and other stakeholders involved in the complaint or grievance, or their authorized representative.
- 3.1.3.11. The Committee shall take appropriate steps to maintain the confidentiality of the aggrieved party if sought.

#### **3.1.4. Acknowledge, Assess and Assign**

##### **3.1.4.1. Acknowledging receipt**

- a. The staff who have received the grievance should provide a timely communication back to the complainant(s) that their grievance has been received, will be logged and reviewed for eligibility, and if eligible, will generate an initial organizational response.



- b. Initial acknowledgement should come within 3-5 days of receipt, and can be in the form of a standard letter or email, with a clearly identified point of contact in the implementing organization/agency (hereafter referred to as organization), a brief description of the process that will be followed, and a reference name or number for the complaint.
- c. Where those receiving the complaints for the organization are themselves authorized to log the complaint, they can immediately acknowledge receipt and logging of the complaint, and inform the complainant of the procedure for assessing eligibility and generating an initial response.

#### 3.1.4.2. **Assessing eligibility for the CGRM**

- a. This should be a procedural step to ensure that the issue being raised is relevant.
- b. It is often better to ensure a relatively low barrier to entry with quick turn-around rather than to prevent users having their issues considered.
- c. A decision on eligibility is only meant to trigger an initial assessment and response. It is not an admission that the organization has caused an impact, or a commitment to provide the complainant with any specific form of redress.
- d. The staff responsible for the initial response need to follow clear guidelines on what kinds of issues are eligible to be handled through the CGRM, what issues should be referred to other mechanisms (such as internal and external audit, anti-corruption offices, police, etc.), and what issues or contexts may require further clarification in order to determine eligibility.
- e. Eligibility is often determined on the basis of four broad criteria:
  - i. Does the complaint indicate that the program has caused a negative economic, social, or environmental impact on the complainant, or has the potential to cause such an impact?
  - ii. Does the complaint specify what kind of impact has occurred or may occur, and how the program has caused or may cause that impact?
  - iii. Does the complaint indicate that those filing the complaint are the ones who have been impacted, or are at risk of being impacted; or that those filing the complaint are representing the impacted or potentially impacted stakeholders at their request?
  - iv. Does the complaint provide enough information for CGRM staff to make a determination on the first three questions?

#### 3.1.4.3. **Assigning responsibility**

- a. Complaints should be referred to the most appropriate institution or individual, when multiple partners are implementing project activities.
- b. Once referred, the implementing institution or agency may redress the grievance as per their own grievance redress mechanism or alternatively, the

referred agency may use RSPN's Complaint and Grievance Redress Mechanism.

### **3.1.5. Develop a proposed response: Review and analyze the information**

Conduct an independent, objective and impartial review of the information submitted. In many cases, it may be relatively straightforward for the entity that received the grievance to identify and implement a solution. In more complex cases, further investigation and analysis may be required, involving multiple stakeholders. When dealing with serious allegations, it may be necessary to collaborate with law enforcement bodies. Systematically record all actions and findings, and send the complainant regular communications on the progress of their claim.

CGRM typically generate three primary types of response to complaints:

- Direct action to resolve the complaint
- Further assessment and engagement with the complainant and other stakeholders to determine jointly the best way to resolve the complaint
- Determination that the complaint is not eligible for the CGRM, either because it does not meet the basic eligibility criteria, or because another mechanism (within the organization or outside it) is the appropriate place for the complaint to go, or both.

#### **As part of procedures for CGRM, following may be followed:**

- Chief Administrative Officer or focal person, in his or her own capacity, may determine whether the grievance can be addressed directly through a relatively simple action agreed with the complainant.
  - i. Many complaints can be resolved through direct and relatively straightforward action on the part of the organization or program: e.g. investigating alleged damage caused by a vehicle; changing the time and location of a consultation; making public information more accessible in a community.
- In case of complex enough that it requires additional assessment and engagement with the complainant and other stakeholders to determine how best to respond, Chief Administrative Officer or focal person may forward to the 1<sup>st</sup> Tier of redress committee.
  - i. In such cases, further assessment involving multiple stakeholders and issues, and potentially an extended process of joint fact-finding, dialogue and/or negotiation, will be necessary to resolve the complaint.
  - ii. In these cases, the CGRM should propose a stakeholder assessment and engagement process to respond to the complaint.
  - iii. When dealing with serious allegations, it may be necessary to collaborate with law enforcement bodies.





Systematically record all actions and findings, and send the complainant regular communications on the progress of their claim.

#### **3.1.6. Develop a resolution and communicate to the complainant**

- Flexibility is key to ensuring effective resolution of grievances, which may have a broad scope.
- An effective grievance redress mechanism incorporates a variety of grievance resolution approaches, and the complainant should have a say in which approach is adopted.
- For relatively straightforward or common grievances, it may be possible for the team handling the case to directly develop a response that deals with the issues raised.
- For more complex cases, further assessment and engagement with the complainant and other stakeholders may be required to jointly determine the best course of action.
- Finally, there will be cases where referral to another appropriate mechanism or body, is required to effectively handle the grievance.
- Whichever course of action is deemed most suitable to the case in question, communicate the proposed response to the complainant in a timely and accessible manner.
  - i. response should normally occur within 14–21 days of receipt of the grievance.

#### **3.1.7. Complaint satisfaction**

Upon completion of the implementation steps the complainant signs a declaration that the issue has been resolved satisfactorily. This is co-signed by RSPN Program Level Redress Committee and other affected stakeholders.

#### **3.1.8. Implementing the approach**

Implement the agreed actions of the resolution within the agreed timeline and track progress in implementation.

#### **3.1.9. Pronouncing the result**

Pronouncing the final decisions from CGRC to both parties as a form of feedback wherein both parties will have an amicable understating of the process that would be fair to all.

#### **3.1.10. Close the case & Documentation management**

- In the event that the decision has been satisfactory, the CGRC at all three tiers should document the pleasing determination, in interview with the complainant.
- In cases where there have been major dangers, impacts and/or negative reputation, it may be suitable to incorporate composed documentation from the complainant showing fulfillment with the reaction.



- It'll be adequate for the CGRC to note the activity taken, affirm that the reaction was pleasing to the complainant and the organization, and record those realities.
- Collect evidence on the corrective actions taken (e.g. photos or documents, a record of resolution, an agreement with the complainant, a confirmation from the complainant)
- In more complex and abnormal grievance circumstances, it may be useful to archive key lessons learned as well

### **3.1.11. Handle appeals**

Ensure that an appeals process is in place in case complainants are not satisfied with the decision of the grievance redress mechanism. The appeals process should involve an independent panel that can objectively verify the outcome of a case. Inform complainants about their rights to appeal, as well as any alternative national legal or administrative channels that may be available to address their case

### **3.2. Alternative Redress mechanisms**

In the event, there is no agreement of the response with the complainant after the 3<sup>rd</sup> tier, steps would be taken for an impartial mediator to become involved in the process. If this mediation process does not work, legal channels would be pursued for resolution. The legal fees will be the responsibility of the complainant.



## MONITORING AND SUSTENANCE MECHANISM

### **4.1. Monitoring Cases and Grievance Redress Mechanism Effectiveness**

Careful records should be maintained within a computerized data management system of all grievances received, as well as the actions taken to respond to them. Carefully maintaining records for future analysis has two chief purposes:

- 4.1.1. to monitor the grievances that are received, in order to identify common issues and potential trends that may imply systematic capacity issues or gaps that need to be addressed on a wider scale (e.g. by altering policy design)
- 4.1.2. to evaluate the overall performance of the grievance redress mechanism and compliance with the principles of fairness, impartiality, accessibility and responsiveness. This will ensure that weaknesses in the system are identified, and will allow adjustments to be made to the processes and procedures, as necessary.

An oversight body should be established with advisory authority to monitor performance and provide strategic advice about the grievance redress mechanism.

- 4.1.3. At RSPN, the oversight body shall comprise of Monitoring and Evaluation Officer, Human Resource Officer and Communication Officer as member secretary.
- 4.1.4. As transparency is a key element of any effective review and evaluation process, the oversight body shall ensure that sensitive case-specific information is not be shared publicly.
- 4.1.5. For transparency, oversight body shall make aggregate information (e.g. on the types of grievances received and the approaches used to resolve them) publicly available to demonstrate the effectiveness of the system. This can help to build trust or, where necessary, signal cause for reform (e.g. through improved public outreach).

### **4.2. Supporting the functioning of Grievance Redress Mechanisms**

Ongoing resources, financial and otherwise, will need to be identified and made available for the functioning of grievance redress mechanisms. These include resources for receiving and processing grievances, as well as for providing redress, as appropriate.





## 5. PUBLICIZING AND PREVENTION

### 5.1. Publicizing the grievance redress mechanism

Once the scope of the mechanism has been defined and the channels through which grievances will be received have been established, it is important to publicize the mechanism widely with all stakeholders and potential users, so that they are aware of channels available and what they can expect when submitting feedback or a grievance.

Define the best means of communication and outreach to build awareness of the mechanism in the context. For example, it may be most appropriate to provide clear information on institutional websites, or via information boards or community meetings at the level of project implementation

In publicizing the mechanism, it is important to manage expectations of potential users by making explicit its scope, mandate and functions.

Information that is important to provide includes:

- 5.1.1. who can submit grievances
- 5.1.2. where, how and when grievances can be submitted
- 5.1.3. the scope of the grievance redress mechanism, including any limitations to the problems that can be dealt with and the criteria that will be used to assess whether grievances are accepted or rejected
- 5.1.4. The timelines, steps and processes for handling grievances
- 5.1.5. the types of responses and outcomes that can be expected
- 5.1.6. the institutions that will be involved in handling grievances
- 5.1.7. the possibility of submitting a grievance anonymously
- 5.1.8. the rights and protections provided for complainants
- 5.1.9. how the information in a grievance case can be shared and used?

### 5.2. Grievance Prevention

There are several ways to actively solve issues before they can be considered as a very serious grievance. RSPN as project executing entity, should be aware of the fact that grievance most times occur, that dealing and solving them is part of the work and should be incorporated into our annual work plan.

At project implementation level, following measures shall be taken to prevent grievances:

- 5.2.1. **Build capacity of staff:** Staff should be provided with adequate information on the project and program such as project design, activities, implementing schedules, and institutional arrangements as well as enhanced skills in effective communication, stakeholders and community dynamics and processes, negotiation and conflict resolution. It is also important that RSPN staff be provided with regular trainings on how to receive feedback from their program o project beneficiaries, local communities and other stakeholders,



- 5.2.2. **Provision of timely data/information to stakeholders:** many grievances arise because of lack of knowledge; delay in information, or insufficient information. A develop project plan should be communicated to stakeholders. Precise and satisfactory data about an undertaking and its exercises should be provided through the right channels and method for correspondence.
- 5.2.3. **Conduct significant local area consultations:** Project implementers should proceed with the cycle of council and discourse all through the execution of the project. Sharing data/information, covering project progress, furnishing local area individuals with a chance to communicate their interests; explaining and reacting to their issues, inspiring communities, and getting criticism on intercessions will profit the networks and the project management.

**At the organizational level, following shall be implemented:**

- 5.2.4. The Committee shall analyze why they are receiving particular types of complaints or grievances more frequently than others.
- 5.2.5. The CGRM focal person shall submit an Annual Report in this regard with suggestions for modification in policy initiatives, delivery system, organizational structure, etc. for the consideration/directions of the Committee.



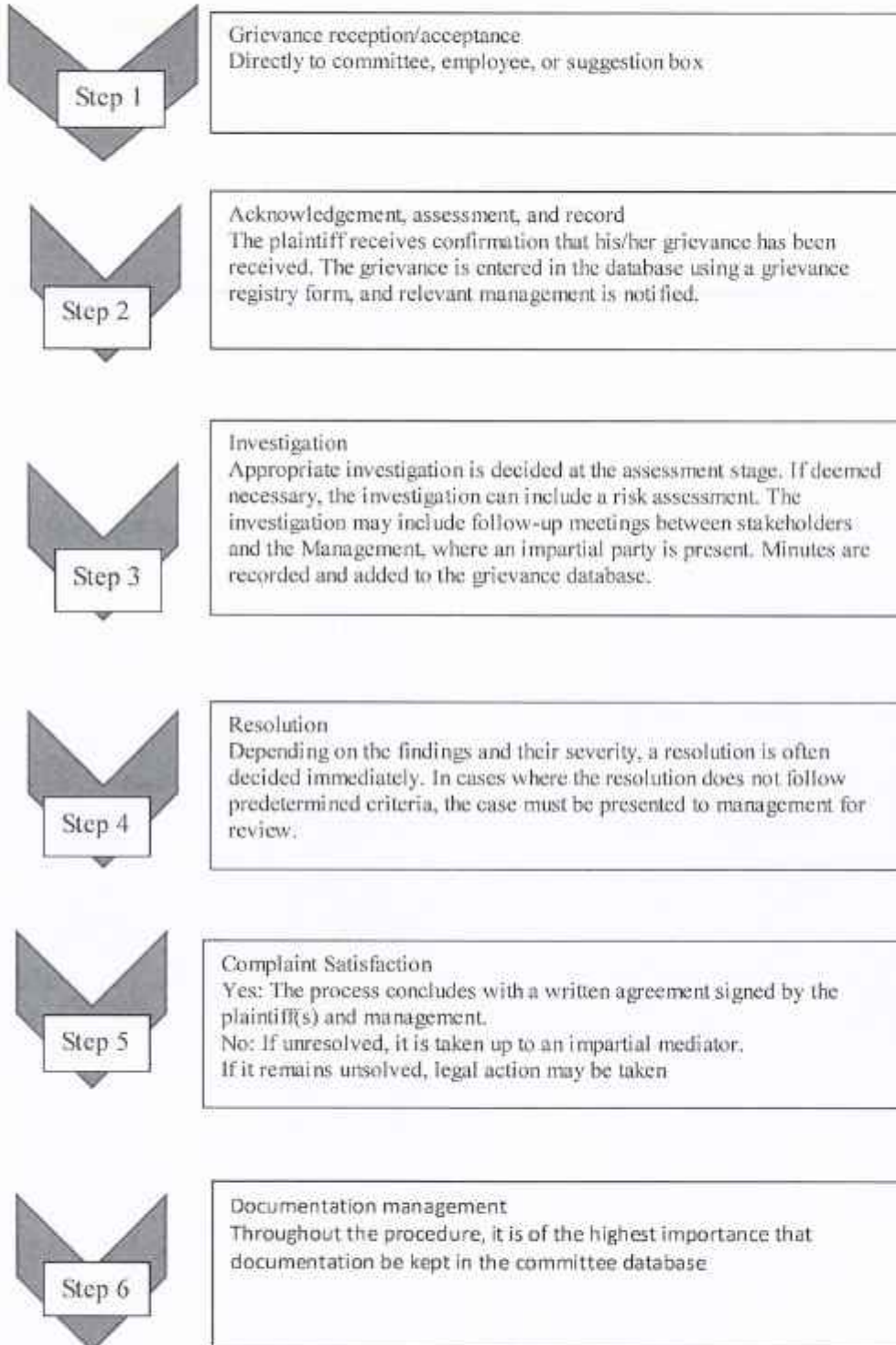
**6. MISCELLANY**

- 6.1. The “Committee” means group of employees from the RSPN Secretariat to which the Management of RSPN has Delegated its power/authority of functions.
- 6.2. A “Complaint” means anonymous reporting, and “grievance” means a reporting by an identified person.
- 6.3. For the option of independent mediation, mediators on the list of Bhutan Alternative Dispute Resolution Centre who have at least the following qualifications may be involved in the mediation:
  - 6.3.1. professional experience and expertise in impartial mediation;
  - 6.3.2. knowledge of [project type and activities] including an understanding of indigenous culture and practices;
  - 6.3.3. proficiency in that locality;
  - 6.3.4. availability in principle for assignment of upto 20 days; and
  - 6.3.5. willingness to declare all relationships and interests that may affect their ability to act as impartial mediators in particular cases.
- 6.4. The Committee may appoint a focal person for CGRM who may possess the Standard (knowledge on laws), Experience, Attitude, and Knowledge for the job.





**Annexure-1**



When of particularly high risk, a grievance can be fast tracked to ensure involvement of management at an early stage

Present resolution to management

If the case has been closed and the resolution needs further input, it should be presented to the management

**Annexure -II**

<b>Sl. No</b>	<b>Complaint/Grievance Category</b>	<b>Timeline for redress at Divisional Level/Secretariat</b>	<b>Timeline for redress at appeal level (Management/external)</b>
1	Policy related	Initial response within three working days. Substantive response within six weeks in case the issue is being addressed at present	Two weeks
2	Personnel related	Three weeks	One week
3	Schemes/programs related	One week	One week
4	Vigilance related	Initial response within three working days	Final reply within three months

