



OUÉMÉ CLIMATE RESILIENCE INITIATIVE PROJECT (OCRI)

STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION, PARTICIPATION AND ENGAGEMENT PLAN



BENIN

November, 2021

Project Background:

The environmental and social screening of the foreseen OCRI activities revealed that the overall Social and Environmental risks and impacts are foreseen to be moderate to low, mostly site specific and thus easily manageable. As such, the OCRI Project has been classified as a **Category "B"** operation and it is expected that the project activities will trigger the following Environmental and Social Safeguard Standards, namely ESS2

(Biodiversity Ecosystem and Critical Habitats), ESS3 (Plant Genetic Resources for Food and Agriculture), ESS 5 (Pest and Pesticide Management), ESS7 (Decent Work), ESS8 (Gender Equity) and ESS 9 (Indigenous Peoples and Cultural Heritage)¹. The main reason for this is the inequality in the labour market and presence of landless farmers in the project area who will be included in project activities to ensure no-one is left behind, and full inclusiveness of the project.

In a more specific manner, the triggering of ESS9 revealed that (i) from the FAO and GCF E&S Safeguards standpoint, the policy is triggered as per the criterion defined respectively in their Indigenous Peoples policy (*ESS9 & GCF policy : Chapter IV- Scope of Application : Parag. 13-20*), however, (ii) from the Government of Benin's Constitution and applicable E&S policy perspective, the policy does NOT apply as the term Indigenous Peoples is not recognized in the whole country, and all Beninese are equal before the law and they prohibit any discrimination among and towards Beninese. To bridge the two parties, and ensure the Government's Constitution and national Unity vision is safeguarded throughout the project lifespan, it has been agreed to use the "**Vulnerable Groups**" terminology recognized by all parties, in lieu and place of "**Indigenous Peoples**".

Table 1: FAO/GCF & GOB's rationale and criterion on the Indigenous Peoples Policy's triggering

No.	FAO	GCF	GOB
(a)	priority in time with respect to occupation and use of a specific territory;	Collective attachment to geographically distinct habitats, ancestral territories, or areas of seasonal use or occupation as well as to the natural resources in these areas;	Unlike in Central and Eastern Africa or Central America and East Asia and Pacific, in Benin, there is NO such a specification of belonging to a specific territory. Here, the Fulani & Peulh live altogether with the others community-members, though they focus on their herding activities (cattle farming, etc.). The focus on the Fulani and Peulh communities is assimilated to the fact that in other countries, such as Cameroon these communities have been recognized and accounted for in the National Constitutions as indigenous. Though they practice the same identifiable herder/transhumance socio-cultural habits, they do not fully meet the criteria.
(b)	the voluntary perpetuation of cultural distinctiveness (e.g. languages, laws and institutions);	A distinct language or dialect, often different from the official language or languages of the country or region in which they reside. This includes a language or dialect that has existed but does not exist now due to impacts that have made it difficult for a community or group to maintain a distinct language or dialect. Customary cultural, economic, social, or political systems that are distinct or separate from those of the mainstream society or culture;	There is no voluntary perpetuation of distinctiveness (language, laws and institution). The only, if any, distinctiveness is the seasonal transhumance taking their cattle from one area to another. This is one way to perpetuate their transhumance culture. However, it is worth noting that (i) cattle farming is not only used by Peulh & Fulani, other Beninese communities also practice cattle farming, and henceforth, (ii) the pasture Fulani and Peulh target and use are the very same that other Beninese cattle farmers target and use, and therefore there is no specifically dedicated location (cultural attachment), rather, they travel anywhere cattle can find green pasture and water sources.
(c)	self-identification;	Self-identification as members of a distinct indigenous social and cultural group and recognition of this identity by others;	The Constitution discriminate #no one as the constitution even recognize that any foreigner living in Benin generally has the same rights than any other Beninese. Besides, the Fulani and Peulh in Benin do not self-identify as indigenous people.
(d)	an experience of subjugation, marginalization, dispossession, exclusion or discrimination (whether or not these conditions persist)		The communities do not feel different from the others Beninese, and there is therefore no specific marginalization nor subjugation or dispossession, exclusion or discrimination. During the consultations, they indicated that they feel and live freely and fearlessly as any other Beninese. The Constitution prohibits any discrimination between and towards Beninese.

Source: Chemas Consulting Group, LLC, October, 2021

Overall, the cumulative project environmental and social impacts are expected to be positive, and generate series of opportunities for beneficiary communities, as the overall objective is to increase climate resiliency of the most vulnerable farmers in Benin, including vulnerable groups such as Fulani and Peulh, mostly active as herders. The project is expected to improve agricultural land and the natural resources upon which Beninese farmers' work is based, by improving the farmers' climate-resilient agricultural practices and the natural resources management in the targeted areas, specifically water management techniques. The project will take into account inequality in the

¹ - The triggering of ESS9 in the context of Benin requires some clarification: The screening of the foreseen activities of OCRI revealed that (i) from the FAO and GCF E&S Safeguards standpoint, the policy is triggered as per the criterion defined respectively in their Indigenous Peoples policy (*ESS9 & GCF policy : Chapter IV- Scope of Application : Parag. 13-20*), however, (ii) from the Government of Benin's Constitution and applicable E&S policy perspective, the policy does not apply as the term "Indigenous People"s is not recognized in the whole country, and all Beninese are equal before the law and they prohibits any discrimination among and towards Beninese. To bridge the two parties, and ensure the Government's Constitution and national Unity vision is safeguarded throughout the project lifespan, it has been agreed to use the "**Vulnerable Groups**" terminology recognized by all parties, in lieu and place of "**Indigenous Peoples**".

labour market and the presence of landless farmers in the project area; they will be included in project activities. More specifically, better functioning ecosystems, controlled transhumance practices, and greater and more collaborative stakeholder engagement and participation, will positively affect human health and well-being in the long run.

Because at this very juncture the physical footprints of proposed project activities are unknown and will so be prior to or by project appraisal, therefore, to comply with these triggered E&S safeguards policies/standards basic requirements and prerogatives, particularly ESS9 as per FAO and GCF requirements, a framework approach is adopted. The project has consequently prepared both an **environmental and social management framework (ESMF)**² and a **Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)** that each includes a detailed **Social Assessment (SA)**³ outline highlighting the importance and need for a sustainable inclusion of Vulnerable Groups in the project intervention areas, consistent with applicable standards, policies and national regulations core requirements, be it for FAO/GCF and Benin, respectively.

The below SEP, inclusive of the SA outline (See Annex 3), is therefore dedicated to comply with the above triggered policies, and most relevantly, ESS9 on Indigenous Peoples (hereafter, Vulnerable Group) policy. Just like the ESMF and the SEP, the SA will be further developed, amply consulted upon and publicly disclosed both in the Government website and FAO and GCF websites, respectively prior to the project appraisal.

1 Objective and Stakeholders Identification

BOX 1 : Statement of a woman met in Agouagon Village (Glazoué District)

C'est justement d'une même et vibrante voie que toutes les parties prenantes rencontrées (i.e. institutionnels, communautés et acteurs de la société civile) manifestent leur adhésion au projet OCRI et s'engagent comme d'un seul homme pour l'accueillir et contribuer à sa réussite. *"Nous avons entendu parler de ce projet, il nous intéresse beaucoup, et nous savons que c'est pour nous aider qu'il vient; alors, nous l'attendons avec impatience, nous espérons qu'il ne nous sera pas arraché; car nous nous engageons à faire qu'il réussisse et reste pour toujours dans la commune de Glazoué....."* s'exprimait ainsi, le sourire aux lèvres, les yeux écartelant de joie, une des femmes consultée dans le village d'Agouagon.

Source : Cheikh Sagna, International Safeguards Compliance & Sustainability Advisor, Agouagon, December, 2019

According to the FAO's E&S standards, stakeholders engagement process describes a project's strategy and program for engaging with stakeholders in a culturally appropriate manner, ensuring the timely provision of relevant and understandable information, and creating a process that provides opportunities for stakeholders to express their views and concerns, and allows the entities to consider and respond to them.

From the onset, the formulation, design, and preparation of the OCRI project is being done in a participatory, consultative, and inclusive fashion, meaningful and oriented towards consensus building. This project has thus, since its inception, benefitted from a high level of assimilation and considerable engagement with and from various stakeholders, from both the country side (i.e. government, key line ministries, central and local governments, targeted beneficiary communities, particularly the most vulnerable groups, civil society organizations, academia, individual consultants and indirect contributors), as well as from the donor community side (i.e. FAO, GCF, multilateral and regional development institutions, bilateral development cooperation agencies, and international NGOs, etc.). This comprehensive engagement stream was deemed to be crucial in order to both grasp the best of the ongoing ideas and literature; and thereafter develop a solid project that fosters **"ownership"** from the get-go and grounded on the strict and transparent application of the **Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC)** principles, so to create more **"social accountability"** which ultimately lay the ground or foundation for a **"sustainable development"** endeavour that would likely be of direct and tangible benefit to the recipient rural communities, especially the most vulnerable ones to climate change challenges, such as women, youth, elderly, landless, Peulh, Fulani and disabled persons.

Stakeholders were originally established during preliminary discussions between the National Designated Authority (NDA), the recipient ministries (MCCVDD & MAEP) and FAO, during the drafting of the concept note. These discussions helped to identify the ministries, departments and managing agencies likely to be involved. During subsequent field visits links were further established with civil society organizations (CSOs), non-governmental

² - The ESMF is being developed as a standalone document and annex 6 of the project proposal.

³ - The Full SA will be developed before board submission. A national workshop is scheduled latest by 8 November 2021 to further exchange with and present the outline SA to project stakeholders. A detailed report will be prepared and shared with GCF at workshop closure.

organizations (NGOs), multinational organizations⁴ and community-based organizations (CBOs) working in the project area at the municipal level, and mutually affected by climate change issues.

Public Consultation meetings with farmers, youth, women (*including female farmers*) and ethnic minorities and the most vulnerable groups (such as Fulani and Peulh) living and working in the project areas were held freely, fearlessly and consistently with the core FPIC principles, in each of the five (05) participating municipalities (*i.e. Copargo, Djougou, Glazoué, Zagnanado, Zagbodomey*) to better understand the respective populations, particularly the vulnerable groups' specific and different needs, priorities and key concerns, depending on gender and/or social status; but also preferred method(s) of grievance redress. Participants underwent meaningful consultations and were told about potential positive and negative impacts (*individuals and/or cumulative*) of the project, and whilst all confirmed their unconditional and collective support for and interest in the project (*i.e. which they have been waiting for*), iterative discussions will be further confirmed at village level once the project has been approved, and thereafter, throughout the project lifespan. This approach has been taken and adopted in order to avoid losing trust and engagement of the recipient communities (*e.g. promising to hold a project when their village might not be selected as a final site*).

As the full package of the OCRI project documentation is nearing submission stage, a last stakeholder's consultation, participation and engagement workshop that includes a good representation of the core OCRI intervention areas' stakeholders spectrum, including vulnerable groups such as representatives of Fulani and Peulh, was held on Thursday, November 4th, 2021 to ascertain that any last minute contribution is adequately captured and fully taken into consideration into the project proposal final design. The meeting held in Cotonou involved both a face-to-face presence of key stakeholders, and virtual participation for few others. The Face-to-face presence was in full compliance with both FAO/GCF and the Government of Benin's agreed and enforced COVID-19 protocols on "Social Distancing", namely 6-feet apart, facial mask, and hands sanitization. Both participants greatly welcomed the event that was conducted respectfully to the FPIC principles and prerogatives. Participant expressed themselves freely, fearlessly, and accordingly offering constructive contributions which essence have been well-recorded in the minutes that will feed back into the final SEP, Social Assessment report to be prepared, and the ESMF. Overall, after lengthy and constructive discussions, all participants (Face-to-face and virtual ones) expressed their happiness with the vision and determination to unconditionally support its implementation. They confirmed their adhesion to the project and their commitment to wholeheartedly support OCRI throughout its implementation lifespan.

Because stakeholders' inclusive and meaningful consultation, participation and engagement is an iterative process, these streams of FPIC-driven consultation and participation will be upheld and continuously exercised throughout the lifespan of the project. Each of these consultations will be duly recorded and appropriately filed as part of OCRI project documentation for consistency and transparency purpose, and easily accessible to the broader public.

⁴ - i.e. the World Bank Group, African Development Bank, United-Nations Development Program, bilateral development agencies such as AFD, SNV, KfW, MCC, USAID, etc.

Table 1: Main Project Partners and their Roles and Responsibilities

Project Partners	Role & Responsibilities
Food and Agriculture Organization of the United-Nations (FAO)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Accredited Entity (AE) Executing Entity (EE) Member of the Steering Committee (SC) & PIU
Green Climate Fund (GCF)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Financier
Ministry of Living Conditions and Sustainable Development (MCVDD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Designated National Authority (Central level lead) Executing Entity (EE) Member of the Steering Committee (SC) & PIU
Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEP)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Co-Designated National Authority (Local level lead) Institutional support for the project Executing Entity of its co-financingMember of the Steering Committee (SC) & PIU
Fonds National pour l'Environnement (FNEC)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Executing Entity (EE) Member of the Steering Committee (SC) & PIU
Ministry of Environment/National Directorate for the Environment (Beninese Agency for Environment - ABE)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member of the Steering Committee
Ministry of Planning and Development (MoPD)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member of the Steering Committee
Directorate-General for Climate and the Environment (DGEC)	<input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Steering Committee
Ministry for Decentralization and Local Governance (MDGL)	<input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Steering Committee
Ministry for Energy, Water and Mining (MEEM)	<input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Steering Committee
Territorial Agencies for Agricultural Development (ATDA)	<input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Steering Committee
Departmental Offices for Agriculture, Husbandry and Fisheries (DDAEP)	<input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Steering Committee
Fonds National de Développement Agricole (FNDA),	<input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Steering Committee
Fonds d'Appui au Développement des Municipalités (FADeC)	<input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Steering Committee
National Fund for the Environment and Sustainable Development (FNEDD),	<input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Steering Committee
National Water Institute (INE) of the University of Abomey-Calavi	<input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Steering Committee
Mayors' Offices of the 5 municipalities in the project area of operation	<input type="checkbox"/> Direct beneficiaries <input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Steering Committee
Producer organizations/Socio-professional organization (SPO/OSP)	<input type="checkbox"/> Direct beneficiaries <input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Steering Committee
Representatives of transhumant groups	<input type="checkbox"/> Indirect beneficiaries <input type="checkbox"/> Member of the Steering Committee
Traditional Authorities (<i>i.e. Chefferies, religious leaders, etc.</i>)	<input type="checkbox"/> Direct beneficiaries <input type="checkbox"/> Administrative/Religious and Organizational Support
Non-governmental organisations (NGOs) and/or Community-based organizations (CBOs)	<input type="checkbox"/> Indirect beneficiaries <input type="checkbox"/> Potential Service providers <input type="checkbox"/> Organizational support
Local Economic Interest Groups (EIG/GIE)	<input type="checkbox"/> Potential Service providers

As stated in *Table 1* above, and for easy processing and consistency purpose, institutional partners have been identified from the onset. Others such as NGOs and Economic Interest Groups (EIG) such as Socio-Professional Organizations (SPO/OSP) will be identified through a transparent and competitive process at the start of the project, both as potential beneficiaries and service providers. Beside some of the farmers/stakeholders met during the project design and preparation stages, additional direct beneficiaries will be identified and associated at local levels in collaboration with each of the 5 municipalities' officials.

Partners foreseen to act as service providers, such as NGOs and/or CBOs, will be identified and associated during project implementation (*i.e. prior to ground-breaking or during physical civil works*), through a competitive

national/local procurement process. Farm-field sites in each recipient municipalities will be specified, in line with recommendations set-forth during consultations phases at the district level, and in partnership with local and traditional authorities.

Furthermore, to ensure full adhesion and support from local authorities, the project will prepare a concise 2-pager summary project snapshot that will clearly describe, for each district, the following aspects:

- Name of the project, and its duration
- Key activities to be implemented in the given district
- Targeted/beneficiary community groups
- Timeline/timetable of project implementation
- First-hands and second-hand activities that will be implemented
- Foreseen constraints/challenges/bottlenecks facing the project
- Likely support that might be needed from the local authorities to boost the project to meet its sustainable development targets

This 2-pager leaflet/project screenshot will be availed/given to the local district authorities (*Prefect/sous-Prefect and Mayor*) to encourage their unconditional engagement and determination to support and contribute to the project performance and achievement of expected outcomes. This is meant to be powerful **“communication approach”** (*advertisement*) and a trustworthy pathway towards ensuring a successful project exit/phase-out strategy, because of the powerful link/relationship the project may have helped to foster throughout its lifespan. Both the **ownership** and **social accountability** built up then will ascertain the **sustainability** of the project thereafter.

2 Stakeholders’ Consultation, Participation and Engagement (SCPE)

During Project Formulation Phase

As stated above, from the onset of the OCRI project's formulation phase, an inclusive and meaningful consultation and participation process, respectful of FPIC principles and prerogatives has been put in place with the very sole purpose of encouraging more stakeholders’ engagement by (i) fostering **“ownership”**, that is expected to lead to more (ii) **“social accountability”**, which altogether are ground to more (iii) **“sustainability”**. Current sustainable development literature, beyond its three (03) internationally recognized principles (*social, environment and economic*), stipulates that, in a nutshell, the sustainability of each sustainable development operation is undoubtedly founded on these two key pillars: **Ownership** and **Social Accountability**. The ‘rule of thumb’ goes as follows: *The earliest stakeholders are associated in the design, preparation and implementation of a development investment, the more engaged/obliged they feel and are, and the greater the project outcomes will/might be.* While stakeholders’ consultation, participation and/or engagement is an iterative process and is exercisable throughout the project lifespan; the earliest it is started, the more transparent and meaningful, the greater the expected outcomes; and therefore, the more successful the project becomes.

In short, meaningful stakeholders’ consultation and participation, especially with the most vulnerable groups, has enabled an exchange of invaluable information about the OCRI project and other projects alike (*i.e. past and/or ongoing, in the project area or its surroundings*) with all identified stakeholders, who, throughout the process, were able to freely express their points of view, expectations, concerns and suggestions.

Prior to the much larger consultations with targeted beneficiary communities, series of meetings took place with officials from the key-line ministries, particularly MCVDD and MAEP, but also MoE and MoW. The project proposal was presented, as part of these meetings, and the involvement of various other ministries was requested to build a consensus and foster more ownership from them and all other partners. Thereafter a mixt of multidisciplinary and skilled team of national and international consultants was brought into play to assist with the project formulation stage. This team includes specialists in territorial management, climate change, sustainable land and water management, institutional strengthening, environmental and social safeguards, gender and social development aspects, production models, livelihoods, value-chains, ... etc.

Regardless of its source of financing, consultation with, participation and engagement of stakeholders are an important step in the lifespan of any sustainable development investment, in order to establish the views of people who may be affected and/or impacted, directly or indirectly, by development projects, or may otherwise have an interest in their outcomes; and to keep them informed of any changes that may/or not affect them down in the road, during project supervision and implementation.

Overall, public/stakeholders' consultation, participation and engagement phase was based on 3 steps:

- ✚ of basic documentation
- ✚ Field visit to the sites and/or potential project areas
- ✚ Meetings with all project key actors and beneficiaries at both central and local/district levels.

The process involved all potential project partners: officials and those in charge of key-line ministries field missions; professionals from specialist technical institutions and academia; county, district and local leaders; representatives from socio-professional organizations and women's, men's, youth and disable peoples' groups, as well as community-based associations and vulnerable groups such as Fulani and Peulh. Consultations were conducted through open or closed meetings, public sessions or smaller (focus) groups, etc. Its purpose is to devise a strategy that clearly supports stakeholder participation and monitoring of project risks, impacts and opportunities, including the sharing and dissemination of results (*good practices, missed opportunities and lessons learned, etc.*). By helping to shed lights on the rationale and development objective of the project, these stakeholders' consultations and participation workshops sessions will set the ground for the project's successful compliance and performance, as well as, the successful implementation of mitigation measures recommended by the present Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF). Both the ESMF and this SEP include a detailed Social Assessment (SA) outline that will ascertain that tangible measures are being taken to properly oversee the peaceful and fearless mitigation of likely project risks and impacts.

The targeted objectives were: (i) *freely and foremost inform beneficiaries, those affected and/or impacted, either directly or indirectly, by the project and its planned activities*; (ii) *allow people and all stakeholders, particularly the most vulnerable groups on the ground, such as the Fulani and Peulh, to freely, fearlessly and meaningfully express themselves and give their opinions on the project, respectfully of FPIC principles and prerogatives*; and (iii) *identify and gather beneficiary communities as well as other project actors' concerns, fears, happiness, suggestions and recommendations*.

Moreover, stakeholders' consultation and participation sessions, conducted simultaneously with ministerial department officials and specialist institutions and, at the district level, with city-hall representatives, elected officials, and experts, could be summarized as follows:

- a) Consultation with officials from MCVDD (including the FNEC following its accreditation) and MAEP in Cotonou, and in the field (*county and district levels*), from the very first project formulation phase in **April 2017**, followed by regular and continuous updates till the sharing of the Concept Note in **October 2018**; which has since been ongoing, followed by the sharing of the first draft of the financing proposal, and throughout the elaboration of this ESMF.
- b) Identification of the five participating municipalities, namely *Copargo, Djougou, Glazoué⁵, Zagnanado and Zobodomey*, and planning of field consultations (*i.e. national consultants' mission in October 2017; field mission with the first international environmental consultant in November 2017*).
- c) Municipal consultations (*August, November and December 2017, and August and September 2018*),
- d) Consultations with specialist institutions and organizations (*INA, INSAE, IFAD*),
- e) Ratification of a first draft of the project's operation framework with a national workshop involving the participation of all stakeholders (*i.e. Workshop 23 and 24 in Bohicon*).
- f) Public consultations and participation in February and August 2017 (*April & August 2017 missions reports*).
- g) Further public consultations and participation at the municipal level in August 2018 to consider the beneficiaries' concerns more effectively (*see Annexes 1 & 2 below*);
- h) Another national Consultant held series of meetings during the preparation process in November 2019 immediately followed by another International Social and Environmental Safeguards Consultant in December 2019 for a short one-week field mission both in Cotonou and in the Glazoué district.
- i) Several virtual meaningful consultation and participation meetings, aligned with FPIC core principles, have been organized by and with the FAO offices, financing proposal team, and are still ongoing to better firm up the project formulation,

⁵ - The initial district, *Dassa-Zoumé* that underwent all the initial rounds of stakeholders consultations and participations was later replaced by *Glazoué* due to the fact that the district was being served by another UNDP-led project, hence de facto disqualifying Dassa-Zoumé, and also allowing a fair share of investment opportunities to many municipalities in the county. The choice of Glazoué was factually rationalized by its prominence in the county and its suitability to receive such project.

j) As an iterative process, the meaningful public/stakeholders' consultation and participation process has been kept alive during this very period of project preparation, and will so be for the remainder of project lifespan,

Institutional meetings were organized throughout the engagement process to identify where institutional backstopping was needed, to confirm the information and data collected, and consider possible synergies with current, ongoing projects and programmes.

Furthermore, at this very advanced stage of the project preparation, a last stakeholders' consultation, participation and engagement was held in Cotonou and virtually on 11/4/2021⁶. The meeting involved a strong family focus with a special look at issues of vulnerability (vulnerable groups such as Fulani, Peulh, but also climate affected persons (Flash-flood, natural resources scarcity, etc.) and the need to strengthen the sensitization campaign as awareness raising. The venue enabled participant to better grasp the project rationale and development vision and henceforth unanimously expressed their unconditional support to the project, by furthering their ownership of the propose project activities and fostering greater social accountability mechanism that will altogether sustain project achievements.

In a nutshell, throughout the preparation process, all key stakeholders, particularly the most vulnerable groups such as the Peulh and Fulani, were consistently invited, during institutional and/or public consultations and participation fora, to identify the project's potential environmental and social risks, impacts and/or opportunities whether for the communities or the environment itself. A summary of these public consultations and participations events is provided in **Annex 2** while **Annexes 1** et **Table 22** provide a list of people met. **Annex 3** provides few images/pictures of the involvement of local actors in the consultation and participation process.

Table 2: List of Stakeholders Consultations and Participations in the ORB areas

Date	Place	Type	Comments
28 August 2017	Cotonou	National workshop	☐ Ratification and sharing of the operation framework with the participation of ministry officials at both local and centralized levels, in addition to local politicians, NGOs and OSPs
23 November 2017 27 December 2017	Zagnanado	Institutional consultation Public consultation	• Mayor & municipality staff involved • 2 participants (<i>producers/farmers/herders, OSP, local technicians</i>)
24 November 2017 28 December 2017 28 December 2017	Zogbodomey	Institutional consultation Public consultation	• Mayor & 7 members of municipality staff involved • 7 participants (<i>producers/farmers/herders, OSP, local technicians</i>)
24 November 2017 29 December 2017 29 December 2017	Dassa-Zoumè	Public consultation Public consultation	• 7 smallholders from a lowland area involved • 43 participants (<i>producers/farmers/herders, OSP & local technicians</i>)
25 November 2017	Djougou	Institutional consultation	☐ Involving the District's General Secretary and staff
25 November 2017	Copargo	Institutional consultation	☐ Involving the District's General Secretary and technical staff from the district.
23-24 May 2018	Bohicon	Stakeholders workshop	☐ Two-day workshop with the participation of officials from centralized and decentralized administrative offices, local politicians and representatives from OSPs and NGOs

⁶ - A separate document (minutes of the consultation meeting) is being prepared and once finalized internally, it will be added into this SEP final report to serve its purpose.

14 August 2018	Zogbodomey	Institutional and public consultation and participation	☐ Mayor and District staff involved, along with producers/ <i>farmers/herders</i> , local technicians and OSP representatives
16 August 2018	Djougou	Institutional and public consultation and participation	☐ Mayor and District staff involved, local politicians, producers/ <i>farmers/herders</i> and local OSP representatives
17 August 2018	Copargo	Institutional and public consultation and participation	☐ Mayor and District staff involved, local politicians, producers/ <i>farmers/herders</i> and local OSP representatives
November 2019	Glazoué	Institutional and public consultation and participation	☐ Series of workshops as part of the preparation of district profile involving district officials, OSPs, NGOs, producers/ <i>farmers/herders</i> and traditional leaders
23-24 Dec. 2019 25-27 Dec. 2019	Cotonou & Glazoué/Aguagou	Institutional and public consultation and participation	☐ Series of workshops as part of the preparation of the ESMF in both Cotonou (institutional) and in the field (<i>Dassa & Glazoué</i>) involving district officials, OSPs, NGOs, producers/ <i>farmers/herders</i> and traditional leaders.
04 November 2021	Cotonou	Institutional and public consultation and participation	☐ National workshop as part of the preparation of the ESMF in both Cotonou involving line ministries and representatives of the five municipalities.
01-17 December 2021	Glazoué, Copargo, Djougou, Zogbodomey, Zagnanado	Institutional and public consultation and participation	☐ Series of workshops as part of the preparation of the Social Assessment involving district officials, OSPs, NGOs, producers/ <i>farmers/herders</i> and traditional leaders.

Table 3: District-levels consultations summary in the participating 5 Municipalities (August 2017 thru December 2021)

Elements for discussion	How is the project perceived?	Fears & Concerns	Suggestions & Recommendations
Actors involved: municipal authorities, representatives of women and youth associations, opinion leaders, farmers, herders, fishermen, crafts-makers and others, etc.			
<p>Establishment of Ouémé multiparty governance platform to streamline the application and institutionalization of climate change mitigation and adaptation measures in the whole basin.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Establishment and operation of multiparty governance platform - Establishment and consolidation of public-private partnerships (PPP) - Consideration of municipal development plans and integration of practices and measures promoting climate change resilience and the sustainable management of water, soil and land. - Capacity assessment and building of platform's actors to ease the integration of policy instruments and practices; lead on the 	Zogbodomey & Zagnanado Municipalities		
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - We agree to the project because it will greatly contribute to resolving our current problems, providing the promises can be kept within the given timeframe. 	<p>We are very often victims of (i) flash flooding, (ii) damage resulting from bush fires (<i>a traditional practice of slash and burn to fertilize our soils</i>). At this trend, there is an urgent need to raise awareness among the population to curve this trend. Lack of monitoring and evaluation of impacts of reforestation activities of several projects, (iii) transhumance and the damage it causes, (iv) access to water and reservoirs in lowland areas that are often on private property, (v) distribution of water in the whole district. (vi) choice of species to be used in reforestation (<i>bamboo, Bambusa vulgaris</i>) that can withstand flooding, erosion of riverbanks, and at certain extremes wildfires.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Reforestation sites to be chosen in consultation with technical officials from the ministries involved and municipal leaders (<i>e.g. Cana-Kpokissa Road</i>). - Plan for monitoring measures following reforestation activities. - OCRI Project is not meant to tackling the problem of transhumance directly; however, the activities implemented should indirectly contribute to reducing its effects, especially on local communities' food security - Land tenure governance and water problems could be addressed through the platform. - Project will seek to promote plants of interest that are adapted to the environment (<i>i.e. Ahowé etc.</i>) - Train local nursery women and youth.
Djougou District			

<p>implementation and support the dissemination of knowledge component;</p> <p>- Research and development on native plants varieties that are resistant to climate change, as well as intelligent climate practices and technologies</p> <p>Implementation of land, soil and water management practices that are climate-resilient in order to strengthen food and water security; increase productivity of agricultural ecosystems and diversify livelihoods that are climate change-resilient</p> <p>- Training and technical assistance to farmer associations and community leaders on integrated, climate-resistant water and soil management,</p> <p>- Set farmer field schools as well as savings and credit associations,</p>	<p>This project is a major opportunity for us all, and for the following reasons:</p> <p>i-First of all, we are primarily agricultural producers; 70% of the population makes their living from farming, hence our desire to take farming concerns that are connected to climate change into account.</p> <p>ii- Secondly, women appear to be actively involved in this project</p> <p>iii- Thirdly, Djougou is deeply affected by climate change.</p>	<p>- Problems accessing land and water resources in lowland areas.</p> <p>- Soils are less and less fertile (<i>land degradation</i>).</p> <p>- Nomadic/shifting yam planting is destroying our forests. When the soil becomes infertile, people move on/shift to other lands. Can agriculture technics not be found to grow on the same land?</p> <p>- Problems with the outflow of by-products (<i>e.g. Gari</i>). Will the project ensure the necessary outlets for the sale of products?</p> <p>- Conflict between livestock farmers and crop farmers as a result of transhumance.</p> <p>- Problems accessing credit</p>	<p>- OCRI project does not specifically address land tenure governance; however, gender issues may be resolved through the platform to be set up;</p> <p>- OCRI Project is not meant to tackling the problem of transhumance directly; however, activities implemented should indirectly contribute to reducing its effects, especially on local communities' food security</p> <p>- Training of beneficiaries in SLD and IWRM technics and capitalization of good practices</p> <p>- Integrate energy sources and their alternatives into the project, in order to reduce forest degradation.</p> <p>- Provide farmers with technical training for major crops such as yam.</p>
Copargo District			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Implementation of low-emission/climate-resilient farming practices. - Implementation of integrated water-saving and management practices, - Purchase and distribution of storage and treatment facilities for women's groups for vegetables, cashew nuts/dried fruits, maize and soya-based products, - Sustainable forest management, encourage the use of forest and non-wood products to protect the land and water sources/water provision; - Reforestation and planting of trees upstream and around critical water sources and degraded farmland. - Knowledge management, upscaling and dissemination of resilient climate change measures, - Identification, documentation, capitalization and dissemination of lessons learned, and good practices and approaches, - Encourage exchange meetings and the transfer of knowledge 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Accept the project as a sound initiative that was expected. - Delighted that the project tackles the effects of climate change, which are severely felt in the municipality (<i>a number of rivers have disappeared and several small tributaries of the Ouémé no longer exist</i>) 	<p>Significant decrease in yield. Decrease in land dedicated to shea, which was the basis of the wealth of many households.</p> <p>Problems linked to tying the cultivation of cotton with shea: cotton is against shea; the two do not go together,</p> <p>Need to introduce plants of medical and economic interest (African mahogany <i>Khaya Senegalensis</i>, which is also a medicinal plant useful not only for humans but also important for animals such as cattle.) It can withstand drought and flash-flooding, as well as bush fires.</p> <p>Major water availability problem for market gardening</p> <p>Problem of transhumance</p> <p>Problem of accessing land</p> <p>Urgent need to contribute to the protection of the Ouémé River source.</p> <p>The forest is currently being severely degraded and it is vital to protect the forest located nearby the River source.</p> <p>Need to monitor and evaluate the reforestation activities (<i>i.e. achievements of past projects have not been viable in the long term</i>). For example, GIZ worked extensively in the area, but following their departure everything stopped. There was no sustainable exit strategy.</p> <p>Bush fires are a problem. Provide solutions for the bush fire issues.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Involve all partners in the platform - Bear in mind the successes of other projects such as the PMASN, which works on food security. - Identify the major (free flowing) rivers in order to conduct reforestation activities for gallery forests. - Lessons learned from previous projects to ensure OCRI project's achievements last way beyond its official duration. - Encourage the village land management systems to take part in the platform - Land governance and water problems could be addressed through the platform. - Encourage agroforestry in private plantations. - Protect the source with the activities included in the action plan. - OCRI Project is not meant to directly tackling the problem of transhumance; however, the activities implemented should indirectly contribute to reducing its effects, especially on local communities' food security.
Glazoué District			

relating to the sustainable management of soils, water and land, Use of rural consultation services that integrate appropriate communication tools.	<p>We highly welcome the project as we have been awaiting it for a while. We see it as an opportunity to support us in better coping with impacts of climate change. For these reasons, we gladly agree to the project and thankful of it choosing to involve our district that is so central to the Oueme River basin. This is a great opportunity for us; we are all into it and looking forward to enjoying its tangible benefits soon. We hope this promise will be kept.</p>	<p>Our main fear may have to do with waiting in vain and see these promises vain or slip again. We trust this won't be the case this time as we so dearly need this project and look forward to welcoming it in our district. We are all farmers, and heavily depend on our scarce natural resources, particularly the Oueme River. Although we have been recurrently impacted by flash flooding that often were very destructive, they however do contribute to increasing productivity for our vegetable production along the river banks, due to the rich nutrients such flush flooding carry along and deposit on the river bank when waters retract.</p> <p>Our key concerns are threefold:</p> <p>A- Natural Resources Depletion: Our extensive agriculture habits coupled with slash shifting and the abusive illegal loggings with slash and burn techniques as well as wildfire have somewhat contributed to further depleting our ecosystem resources. This situation is made worse with the effects of climate change that have been very impactful on our livelihood sustainability.</p> <p><u>1. Gradual soil infertility:</u> Bushfires, slash and burn, heavy Harmattan winds, droughts, flash flood associated with the extensive usage of pesticides have further impoverished our agriculture soils. As such, we have increased our deforestation footprint by opening of new farm-fields, very far away from the villages (2-3h walking distance); making it unsafe to travel that far.</p> <p><u>2. Water scarcity and salinization:</u> The recurrent flash flooding and landslides due to heavy rains on the uncovered hills, the droughts and the use of pesticides mostly on clay soil have been negatively impacting the quality of water, that has become more rare and of poor quality (salty) and thus unfit for agriculture and households consumption. Lack of controlled</p>	<p><i>Have a borehole/water pump in each village to ease women and youth burdens in water fetching for household, animal and gardening consumption; and reduce risks of gender-based violence and sexual exploitation and abuses, as well as deadly accidents (i.e. crocodile and/or hippopotamus attacks).</i></p> <p><i>Train local communities in rain waters harvesting for both household consumption and agriculture purpose via more efficient and sustainable small-scale irrigation schemes.</i></p> <p><i>Train communities in protecting water points and the quality of water for safe usage and consumption.</i></p> <p><i>Train fishermen to adopt efficient fish farming and conservation methods (i.e. systematic fishing ban period for fish population expansion, etc.).</i></p> <p><i>Train farmers, through established farmer-field schools, in modern agriculture practices grounded on the principle: "invest less efforts and yield big revenues".</i></p> <p><i>Provide farmers with improved seedlings and biofertilizers that are safer and better cope with climate change</i></p>
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	<p>water quality due to climate change is seriously hindering our development perspectives. Besides, women and young girls, as well as cattle, have to travel 12km of walk to fetch water. Likewise, fishermen business is being seriously hindered, hence the development of overfishing habits</p> <p>B- Inadequate agriculture materials Variability of seasons (i.e. belated rainy season) has somehow impacted heavily on our agricultural calendar and yields (i.e. uncontrolled quality of seeds which is most often inadapted to dry season [i.e. Nerica rice, Maize, Tomato, Piment, Occra, etc. used as counter-season crops]; inadequate traditional irrigation system, dryer clay soil makes it difficult to cultivate/plough manually, hence the needs to adopt modernized material/machines to better cope with climate change impacts, especially on the poorest farmers households [i.e. yield drop from 1T/h to now 100 kg/ha of maize]. Farmers work hard but get less yields, way insufficient to assure or sustain their household's food security throughout the year.</p> <p>C- Transhumance-Driven Conflicts: Another burden that has been increasing over the past years with unbearable socioeconomic consequences, especially for families. Though Government has established a strict law/regulation, and a transhumance calendar and corridor, the recent shifting of seasons led to the much earlier arrivals of herders in the ORB region, mostly coming from the upper north of Benin and from the neighbouring countries (i.e. Burkina Faso, Niger, Nigeria, etc.). Thus, the early arrival of herders in the region before the harvest season coupled with cattle/animal divagation obviously leads to increase devastation that often culminate to bloody conflicts between herders and farmers with</p>	<p>variability (seasonal shifting) and improve agricultural productivity, yields and income earnings for farmers</p> <p>Needs for adaptable transportation means and services: i.e. use of "Cloboto" or "Uhuru", as a tricycle to ease such field works, and create income generation.</p> <p>Though OCRI is not meant to specifically resolve transhumance issues, it could however assist the GoB in looking at the issue by: Further enforcing the Transhumance law/regulation and the corridor through : - Supporting Public Information, Education and Communication workshops, both in Benin and in departing countries; - Reinforcing the infrastructure dispositive (water points, dedicated grazing areas, especially in protected forests/buffer zones and medical checkpoints to control likely pandemics that could decimate the cattle and productivity, etc.) - Enabling designated committees to support the transhumance schedule by safeguarding the passages of these herder groups during the period. - Etc.</p>
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		handful of human losses/deaths. These unfortunate situations are to be attributed to the tangible impacts of climate change (<i>i.e. grazing areas and water scarcity, etc.</i>) on local farmers and administration.	
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During Project Implementation

As an iterative process, all follow up consultations to be conducted during the implementation phase of the activities will serve both to confirm the conclusions and commitments of those previously held during the formulation and preparation phases, as well as to involve the beneficiaries in a more direct manner at the local level. Moreover, these consultations should provide confirmation that the activities implemented remain in line with the commitments made and still benefit from the involvement of the concerned parties.

As such, the ESMF action plan outlines series of 03 (three) consultations and participations to be conducted at the beginning or the end of each year, until the end of the project. The following consultations will therefore be carried out each year:

1) **Meaningful Consultations and participation at the municipal level:** During the formulation phase, the institutional and public consultations and participation with municipalities were strongly grounded on the FPIC principles and prerogatives, and had therefore allowed a first definition of foreseen project activities at district levels, as well as the targeted communities, particularly the most vulnerable groups such as the Fulani and Peulh, etc. The project's operational axes had been faced with the beneficiaries' concerns and those related to their ecosystems; their views and concerns were fully taken into account in the final stages of project documentation.

Before the effective beginning of project activities, the same type of consultation is planned, but this time with more specific details on activities and areas of operations at the most local level, to ascertain support and engagement of municipal leaders and the OSP.

2) **Local-level consultations and participations:** once project starts, activities on the ground and areas of operation will be subject to local-level consultations that are meaningful and consistent with FPIC principles and prerogatives. Based on the government's national priorities, the municipal-level PDCs and beneficiaries' concerns at local level (*areas of operations*), consultations will be conducted with communities that are directly affected. This will enable their expectations to be met and their opinions and suggestions taken into account while reaffirming their commitment to supporting OCRI.

3) **Consultations with women and youth groups:** These specific and targeted consultations and participation sessions held to be conducted at both local and municipal levels (*area of operation*) through focus groups, are planned to ensure youth and women's concerns, including those of the most vulnerable groups such as the Fulani and Peulh, are meaningfully and consistently taken into account.

4) **Consultations with national Government parties (MCVDD & MAEP):** As indicated in the ESMF monitoring and evaluation plan, results of all consultations and participation sessions, partners' commitments and project annual workplan will be publicly shared during a national endorsement workshop to be held in Cotonou or in one of the participating municipalities for greater transparency and public endorsement. The heads of the executing entities (institutional support, implementing organizations) and representative of local beneficiaries in the participating 5 municipalities will be present at this workshop for testimony and endorsement.

3 Minutes of consultations

Municipality of Zogbodomey

- Location: Zogbodomey Town Hall
- Duration: 10:15–11:05

- Languages used: French
- Participants: 7 (*see list below*)
- Consultants: Gaston AKOUEHOU, George AYENI, Idelbert D. BEHANZIN and Espérance BIDOUZO

a. Consultation objective

The overall objective of this institutional consultation is to ensure the effective participation of civil society organizations, local authorities, local actors and other stakeholders in the project's development and implementation process. More specifically, these meaningful and constructive consultations aim to: *(i) provide information to the beneficiaries and/or those affected by the project and its planned activities; (ii) allow peoples and actors at the grassroots level, especially the most vulnerable groups such as the Fulani and Peulh, to freely and fearlessly express their opinions on the project; and, (iii) identify and collate the fears and concerns of local communities as well as other project actors, together with their suggestions and recommendations.*

The proposed agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Introduction/Presentation of the team of consultants to the audience
2. Presentation of the mission's objectives,
3. Project overview (*i.e. including components/activities to be conducted and potential risks, impacts and opportunities*)
4. Acknowledgement of recipient communities' perceptions of proposed project development objectives,
5. Gathering of beneficiary communities' expectations and suggestions for project implementation
6. Is the project acceptable?

b. Actors/Stakeholders met

The list of people who participated in the consultation is herewith attached.

c. How is the project perceived?

The perceptions of those consulted can be summarized with the following comments:

- Project is welcomed and fully accepted,
- Zogbodomey City-Hall is available to work with and support the project.

d. Concerns and fears surrounding the project

The actors consulted are concerned about:

- The desire to make Zogbodomey a centre for the development of tree nurseries led by women;
- There was no follow-up on the maintenance of plants;
- The need to make the population aware of good agricultural practices and the sustainable management of natural resources;
- The lack of motivation and backstopping when supporting grassroots communities;
- The need for facilities along transhumance routes;
- The need to roughly avail about 2000 hectares of fodder crop in *Kpokissa* area; with the end objective to help reduce transhumance-related conflicts.

e. Questions

- *How can the mitigation measures contained in the Municipal Development Plans (PDCs) be implemented?*
- *Why have reforestation initiatives not succeeded?*

- *In which localities could the project be implemented in our municipality?*
- *What environmental and social impacts does the project anticipate?*
- *How long is the project expected to last?*
- *There is already a national platform for risk management; how will the project platform be implemented?*

f. Answers provided by the consultants

- We cannot give you the overall amount to be allocated to activities in the municipality while sites are still being determined at the municipal level;
- A monitoring framework for the project's activities will be set up, including a steering committee;
- The likely targeted localities are: *Kpokissa, Domè, Avlamè, Massi, Zadogagbé*;
- The problem of access to land will have to be addressed at the platform level;
- The planned project length is **five (05) years**. *But we are still in the preparatory phase, this is why it is important to gather the opinions of beneficiaries and take them into account during the project formulation phase.*
- Studies have shown that the Ouémé River Basin is extremely vulnerable to climate change; indeed, it is one of the government's priority areas of operation. Development programmes support the Government in achieving its aims. The OCRI project is mainly focused on the Ouémé basin areas.
- The project plans to establish a platform to connect the different beneficiaries of the five participating municipalities in which the project will be implemented. This innovative platform will be a place of knowledge and technology exchanges, whereby local knowledge in the management of climate change risks and/or impacts will be considered,

g. Suggestions and recommendations

- Strengthen the capacity of local actors to adapt to the effects of climate change, and adopt new technologies to better cope with it,
- Support and financial backstopping for actors on the ground, as well as the city hall, to monitor project activities and their implementation on the ground,
- Envision sanctions for those municipalities that do not support projects to implement activities,
- Define the roles and responsibilities of each actor when performing different tasks,
- Support from town halls to put together a three-year plan to implement the PDCs and the assimilation of gender actions.

Date: 28/12/2017
 Lieu: Bureau SG (Zogbodomey)
 Cible: Maire Zogbodomey

Noms / Prénoms	Institutions	Contacts	Signatures
1. ASSASSO M. Rosalie	SG	664559 92	
2. KOUW Emmanuel	PFRC-ACC/Zogbodomey	96858310	
3. KOTO Constant	W/ADDE / Zogbodomey	95487667	
4. AKOUESSO S. Gustave	consultant FAD	95323538	
5. BEHAMEIN D. Isidore	consultant FAD	92269900	
6. AYENI Georges	consultant	97014501	
7. BIZOUZO S. Egnation	consultant / FAD	96110253	

Date: 27/12/2017
 Lieu: Béné
 Cible: Population locale

Noms / Prénoms	Institutions / Associations	Contacts	Signatures
1. DEGUENON Etienne	Enseignant à Kpindikpo	64 15 32 22	
2. BOCODAHO Georges	Ancien chef village	95 48 62 31	
3. TONDOUNNON Jeanne	Cultivatrice	64 15 32 61	
4. HONDZO Julien	Cultivateur	34-14-70-53	
5. HINVI Hawické	"	64-15-35-63	
6. DEGUENON Robert	"	65-37-52-81	
7. KEMAYO Langbénon	"	64 44 21 80	
8. BONOU Antonin	"	64 44 21 80	
9. DEGUENON Eleanore	Agriculteur	64 15 32 61	
10. KPEDZO Richard	Cultivateur	64 15 32 14	
11. AMOUSSOU Yvonne	"	63-04 68 15	
12. ANOUANSSINOU Justin	"	65-66-78-45	
13.	"		

Municipality of Zogbodomey

- Zogbodomey Town Hall
- Duration: 11:15–12:05
- Language: Fon
- Participants: 8 (*see list below*)
- Consultants: Gaston AKOUEHOU, George AYENI, Idelbert D. BEHANZIN and Espérance BIDOUZO

a. Consultation Objective

The overall objective of this institutional consultation is to ensure the effective participation of civil society organizations, local authorities, local actors and other stakeholders in the project's development and implementation process. More specifically, these meaningful and constructive consultations aim to: *(i) provide information to the beneficiaries and/or those affected by the project and its planned activities; (ii) allow peoples and actors at the grassroots level, especially the most vulnerable groups such as the Fulani and Peulh, to freely and fearlessly express their opinions on the project; and, (iii) identify and collate the fears and concerns of local communities as well as other project actors, together with their suggestions and recommendations.*

The proposed agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Introduction/Presentation of the team of consultants to the audience
2. Presentation of the mission's objectives,
3. Project overview (*i.e. including components/activities to be conducted and potential risks, impacts and opportunities*)
4. Acknowledgement of recipient communities' perceptions of proposed project development objectives,
5. Gathering of beneficiary communities' expectations and suggestions for project implementation
6. Is the project acceptable?

b. Actors met

A list of people who participated in the consultation is attached.

c. How the project is perceived

- We appreciate the project coming here and are grateful to its initiators, ... very kind of you to think of us.

d. Concerns and fears surrounding the project

- Rain is more and more irregular. When the rain comes late, communities sow late, and then before there is time to harvest the crops, the floods destroy everything there is;
- To prevent transhumant groups from coming through and destroying the few crops that remain, farmers are forced to resort to guarding, which involves more work;
- There is a resurgence of conflicts between crop farmers and livestock farmers over water;
- Transhumance routes are needed to avoid cattle destroying crops;
- Transhumance routes are needed with water along the way;
- Projects have planted hectares of seedlings, but there is no money for the care and maintenance and cattle just destroy them;

- To adapt to the loss and destruction of their crops communities have borrowed money to feed their families, but at high interest rates. Others send their children to Nigeria to work as domestic servants. Young people go into town to work as "zémidjans" (*motorbike taxi drivers*) when they cannot keep up with their loan payments, some migrate to Nigeria seeking in a better life;
- Plant varieties with short life-cycles are also needed, so that crops can be picked before the floods come.

e. Questions

The consultants asked few questions.

- What are the main crops you grow in the municipality? Which do women grow?
- Do women have access to land in the local area?
- What impact do you think these activities will have on the environment?

The stakeholders consulted answered as follows.

f. Answers provided

- We grow a wide range of crops: maize, rice, peanut plants, cassava and green beans, as well as vegetable gardening and tree farming.
- Yes, women do have access to land and own their own fields;
- There is nothing bad about what you are offering us; planting will stop the flooding, which is a good thing. We need water reserves in order to be able to grow counter season as well.

g. Suggestions and recommendations

The stakeholders consulted recommended the following:

- Community backstopping to access farming microcredit;
- Identify foraging sites with water reservoirs for transhumant groups.

Date: 28/12/2017
Lieu: Salle de réunion (Mairie de Gbadoumay)
Cible: Population locale

Nom / Prénom	Institutions	Contact	Signature
1 VOBOUNOU Ruffin	Agriculteurs	9771 58 13	
2 SOHOUANBO Philomène	Secrétaire ADV Gbadoumay	3705 60 03	
3 WINOU Hubert	R. C	36 53 45 21	
4 SOSSI Séraphin	Représentant des jeunes cultivateurs	62 43 39 66	
5 ATJARA Maria	Présidente ADV	97 92 54 88	
6 ABILLONE Mathieu	Cultivateur	67 15 88 42	
7 BOSSOU Maxim	Cultivateur	66 08 65 57	
8 BOTI Alice	Membre	61 39 04	

Municipality of Zagnanado

- Location: Bamè Honto, AGONLIN HOUÉGBÔ district
- Length: 14:20–16:05
- Language: Fon
- Participants: 12
- Consultants: Gaston AKOUEHOU, George AYENI, Mr Idelbert D. BEHANZIN & Espérance BIDOUZO

a. Consultation objective

The overall objective of this institutional consultation is to ensure the effective participation of civil society organizations, local authorities, local actors and other stakeholders in the project's development and implementation process. More specifically, the consultation aims to: *(i) provide information to the beneficiaries and/or those affected by the project and its planned activities; (ii) allow people and actors at the grassroots level to express their opinions on the project; and, (iii) identify and collate the fears and concerns of local communities as well as other project actors, together with their suggestions and recommendations.*

The proposed agenda for the meeting is as follows:

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- Acknowledgement of recipient communities' perceptions of proposed project development objectives,
- Gathering of beneficiary communities' expectations and suggestions for project implementation
- Is the project acceptable?

b. Actors met

The list of people who participated in the consultation is attached.

c. Elements for discussion

Overview of the project, its aim and activities

d. How is the project perceived?

The stakeholders consulted felt that:

The project is a good initiative and is valid provided that the proposed activities are implemented;

-It is a good thing to ask for their opinion on the project.

e. Concerns and fears surrounding the project

-There has been no rain since September; all our crops have been lost, rice, peanuts, etc. It normally rains until October. Rain is becoming more and more rare and scattered.

-The facilities that have been built have no water. We have no control over water.

-PAIA-VO didn't solve the problem; the facilities provided are basic. Some facilities have been put in place, but we have lost tons of rice because of lack of water. There is no water; the rice farmers are at home doing

nothing. Rather than providing basic facilities here and there and wasting money, it would be better to focus efforts on more effective and specific action on facilities for water management.

- If the idea is to provide facilities without water, the municipality isn't interested
- Everyone dislikes farming because there is no support available, even though there are enormous amounts of lowlands. This might encourage and attract more people into the industry: the more motivated people there are growing food, the more food security can be guaranteed.
- Transhumance leads to the cultivation of cassava being abandoned. There are several transhumance problems in the local area. Conflicts between crop farmers and livestock farmers have never stopped. Cattle are attracted to water sources. Given that the crops are in the lowland areas, when the cattle come through they destroy everything. Last year more than 100 m of water channels and pipes were cut by transhumant livestock farmers, which led to conflicts between crop farmers and livestock farmers.
- As for tree planting, cows graze in the nurseries or on young seedlings, which contributes to the loss of plants.
- Crop yields are very low.

f. Questions

- How can we manage water or stock water for farming?
- How far below ground can water be found in the target localities?
- What are the main crops in the localities?
- Do women have access to land?
- What are the outflow markets for products?
- You raised the issue of transhumance which you believe is connected to water; our project plans to create water reservoirs. How do you think the water-access conflicts linked to transhumance can be resolved or prevented?
- In which localities can the project operate?
- In the event of seasonal delays or a lack of rainfall, how do you adapt? What strategies do you adopt?
- Which plant species can be planted that the community itself could look after?
- What do you do to fight soil depletion and increase your yields?
- What do you think are the environmental impacts of the facilities in your local area?

g. Answers provided

- As is the case in Malanville, similar facilities with water reservoirs could be built upstream in order to pump the water downstream to lowland areas during periods of water scarcity;
- The depth of the groundwater table varies from 8 to 10 m.
- The project will support the planting of rice, maize, soya, and peanuts for the purposes of market gardening;
- The transhumance problem should be resolved through the setting up of transhumance routes;

- Women have the same access to land as men. The lands are our ancestors' and there are enough available.
They are freely accessible to children whether male or female;
- Traders come from Zagnanado, Covè and Bohicon markets to buy our crops;
- Transhumance is everywhere and creates problems. But what needs to be done to put crop farmers at ease has not been done yet. The PAIA-VO project supported the city hall to put up a certain amount of Watling enclosures, but not in the areas where transhumant groups come through. Watling should be placed on uncultivated land, away from fields, and there must be certainty that transhumant are respecting the route, with grazing areas and water reserves along these channels;
- Zagnanado has over 200 hectares of lowland areas at Bamè, of which 16 hectares have been developed by the Chinese since 1976. Some work in advance could guide the project's implementation and thus ensure that similar mistakes are avoided;
- In the event of drought we use motor pumps, but only about 1 percent of the population own one;
- We need tractors, tillers, motor pumps, and other equipment that can help us;
- The project could revive the Hinvi forest, which covers over 1000 hectares. But tree species that are beneficial for everyone should be planted, such as the Afoun, Kêwi, Hounsséfè, Aklou and Outouklou;
- Our soil is more and more depleted; will the project put in place the technology to restore the soils and thus increase the yields?
- To install farming facilities, trees need to be uprooted: this leads to deforestation. However, care should be taken not to uproot the "*Baobab, Iroko*" varieties.

h. Suggestions and recommendations

The actors consulted recommend:

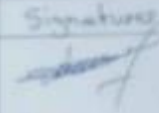





- The participation and involvement of local population in the decision-making process regarding the implementation of the project in their community;
- Trees should be planted, but existing plants should also be maintained and cared for.

Suggestions:

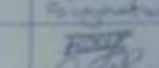
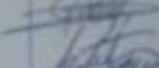
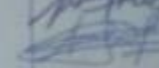
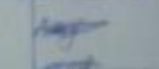



- Support farmers with equipment (motorised pumps) and working capital,
- Offer farming microcredit at attractive rates.

List of participants from institutional and public consultations (December 2018)

Date: 28/12/2017
Lieu: Bureau SG (Zogbedomey)
Cible: Maire Zogbedomey

Noms / Prénoms	Institutions	Contact	Signature
1. PROFESSEUR M. ROBERT	SG	66455798	
2. KOUIN Emmanuel	DFRC - RCC / Zogbedomey	96858970	
3. KOTO Constant	C/SAGE / Zogbedomey	95487667 9528334	
4. AUGUSTIN S. GASTON	Consultant FRC	92269700	
5. BERNARD D. I. I. I.	Consultant	97044504	
6. AYEN Georges	Consultant / FRC	96115523	
7. BINGBO E. E.			

Date: 30/12/2017
Lieu: Bureau du Maire de Bessou
Cible: Maire de Bessou

Noms / Prénoms	Institutions	Contact / email	Signature
KOUATONOU Justine	CA / Prougnant	66345134	
GBANI André	SG Maire de Bessou	95866654 andregbani@gmail.fr	
FAGNON Ketchami Nicaise	Maire Commune de Bessou	96333353	
HONORÉ OGOMBE	C/SPBL (Mairie de Bessou)	94299055	
AZANLIN Nollie	Coll / C/SPBL Maire	65275833	
AHOPOSSI A. OSCAR	Coll / SPBL Maire	95523427	
A GBANI Sylvain	C/SABEU - RFU	95767171	

Date: 27/12/2017
 Lieu: Beni
 Cible: Population locale

Noms / Prénoms	Institutions / Activités	Contact	Signature
1. DEGUENON Elenna	Enseignant à Kpindépo	64 15 32 22	
2. BOCODAHIO Georges	Ancien chef village	95 47 42 31	
3. TOVODOUNNON Jeanne	Cultivatrice	64 15 32 61	
4. HONDJO Julien	Cultivateur	94-14-70-53	
5. HINVI Naoude	"	64-15-33-63	
6. DEGUENON Robert	"	65-37-52-81	
7. KEMAYO Langlénon	"	64 44 21 80	
8. BONOU Antonin	"	64 44 21 80	
9. DEGUENON Elémence	Agriculteur	64 15 32 - 61	
10. KPEBIO Richard	Cultivateur	64 15 32 14	
11. AMOUSSOU Yvonne	"	63-04 68 15	
12. AMOUSSOU Justin	"	65-66-78-65	
13.	"		

Date: 28/12/2017
 Lieu: Salle de réunion (Mairie Koussékouy)
 Cible: Population locale

Noms / Prénoms	Institutions	Contact	Signature
1. TOBOUNOU Ruffin	Agriculteur	97 71 58 13	
2. DOHOUANBO Philomène	Secrétaire ADV Gidini	37 05 60 09	
3. WINSOU Hubert	R C	36 53 45 21	
4. SOSSI Séraphin	Représentant au conseil - cultivateur	62 43 39 66	
5. AYABA Maria	Présidente ADV	97 92 54 88	
6. ABILLONE Mathieu	Cultivateur	67 15 88 42	
7. BOSSOU Maxim	Cultivateur	66 08 65 57	
8. BOTI Alice	Membre	21 39 04	

Date: 20/12/2017

Lieu: Loulé 1 (Bassin-Estuaire)

Cité: Population locale

Noms Personnes	Institutions	Contacte/Coord	Signature
Bridge Scaphrin	C V Loulé	45164-130	
CHEKPO Maceline	Membre		
CHECHANANYAN PHAM	Membre		
OTA MACELINO	Membre		
AWE Zane	Membre		
Dossou Elisabeth	Membre		
BOKOLAN Maria	Membre	35-13-55-05	
ONIGDSE Egeni	Membre		
OGOUNGUE Wilfrid	Membre		
CHEKPO Idilayane	Membre	35-37-08-11	
ASSONKPO Naganith	Membre	44-83-88-57	
ASSOGBA Eli	Membre	65-50-08-88	
AYEDJA Achille	Membre	35-02-66-04	
Kolipka Theodor	Membre		
KARIKA Raine	Membre		
KOLIPKA Tola	Treasury (Ajawefitché)	65-57-60-47	
AWE Scaphrin	Membre		
APKO Colette	Membre	65-27-31-84	
AWE Maceline	Membre		

KIPKO Ledant	Membre		
ENSA Naganith	Membre		
ENSA Achille	Membre		
ASSOGBA Eli	Président (Cfai d'Etat)	34-11-16-54	
BABA Maceline	Présidente (Cfai d'Etat)	35-08-66-73	
ORE Pauline	Membre	65-02-62-81	
DOCKE Léona	Membre	34-25-16-35	
ASSOGBA Scaphrin	Membre		
ASSOGBA Christine	Membre		
DOCKE Scaphrin	Membre		
BABA Phloa	Membre		
BEROU Amnah	Membre		
ATEKOU Colette	Membre	37-73-66-33	
MADESE Anne-Marie	Membre	34-73-51-70	
APKO Achille	Membre		
KOBA Sueth	Membre	35-76-33-36	
BABA Robert	Membre	35-14-73-11	
BATIKOLE Felicie	Membre		
EDWA Kofi	Membre		
KOLIPKA Nafina	Membre	35-55-63-24	
KOLIPKA Ben	Président (D'Etat / KPA)		
MADESE Marie Madeleine	Membre	64-14-13-18	
ASSOGBA Pauline	Membre		
APKO Agnes	Membre		

Municipality of Glazouè

- Agouagon, Glazoué district
- Duration: 9:15–10:45
- Language: Fon
- Consultants: *Cheikh SAGNA and Yves QUENUM*

a. Stakeholders consulted

A meaningful participatory stakeholders public consultation and participation meeting was held on that very day in the kingdom of Agouagon, about 7 miles from Glazoué downtown session with local people (*village leader, growers/smallholders, representatives from local young peoples' associations, women and experts*) was held in Loulé, in the DASSA I district, as part of the development of the "Ouémé climate resilience initiative" / Initiative de résilience climatique dans l'Ouémé (OCRI). This consultation was led by part of the team of consultants entrusted with the realisation of technical studies on the aforementioned project.

b. Consultation objective

The overall objective of this institutional consultation is to ensure the effective participation of civil society organizations, local authorities, local actors and other stakeholders in the project's development and implementation process. More specifically, these meaningful and constructive consultations aim to: *(i) provide information to the beneficiaries and/or those affected by the project and its planned activities; (ii) allow people and actors at the grassroots level, especially the most vulnerable groups such as the Fulani and Peulh, to freely and fearlessly express their opinions on the project; and, (iii) identify and collate the fears and concerns of local communities as well as other project actors, together with their suggestions and recommendations.*

The proposed agenda for the meeting is as follows:

1. Introduction/Presentation of the team of consultants to the audience
2. Presentation of the mission's objectives,
3. Project overview (*i.e. including components/activities to be conducted and potential risks, impacts and opportunities*)
4. Acknowledgement of recipient communities' perceptions of proposed project development objectives,
5. Gathering of beneficiary communities' expectations and suggestions for project implementation
Is the project acceptable?

c. Actors met

The list of people who participated in the consultation is attached.

d. Topics discussed

Project overview, its aims and activities.

e. How is the project perceived?

- We appreciate the project coming here and are indeed grateful to those who initiated it. It's very good of you to think of us. You have brought us something good.

f. Concerns and fears surrounding the project

The stakeholders' concerns can be summarized as follows:

- There has been a water shortage since September; it has stopped raining;
- The availability and management of water is our main priority.
- The other problem is that posed by transhumant groups. Cattle looking for water and foraging overrun lowland areas and fields. There is a resurgence of conflicts between crop farmers and transhumant livestock farmers over water.
- We have already lost crops as a result of water shortages and transhumant practices.
- Because of the cattle we had to reduce, if not stop planting more cassava. We normally grow rice, a bit of cassava, maize... and sell them at the Dassa market;
- The price of a kilo of rice varies from 350 to 450 FCFA; sometimes there are sharp drops in price;
- In the event of drought, we take out loans from neighbours, commercials/traders to somewhat provide for our families;
- We use wood from the forest and charcoal to cook and process the rice. Some people came once to talk to us about better homes: we are and were interested, but they never came back.

g. Suggestions and recommendations

The stakeholders consulted recommend the following:

- Support local communities with farming equipment (rice shellers, steamers and drying racks);
- Support communities in accessing farming microcredits;
- Identify foraging sites with water reserves for transhumant groups.

Mardi
12/24/19

Commune de Glazoué (Agouagon)

Lieu: Agouagon
Arrondissement: THIO
Commune: Glazoué

Au
Marché du
Village.

N°	Nom / Prénoms	Profession	Contact
1	FEKOTANI Armand	Maraîcher	97087237
2	AGOWA Seraphine	Maraîchère	66891465
3	DOSSOU Luc	Producteur maïs	9094 68 61
4	ALOMAKPE dieu tonne	Maraîchère	9688 41 64
5	GANNAN Thomas	Producteur maïs	97302917
6	ALYKO Christian	Maraîchère	
7	DOULEFFO Théodore	Producteur maïs	61271516
8	ALUMAKPE Alphose	Producteur maïs	
9	MAIJI Reine	Maraîchère	
10	GANDAHU Casimir	Maraîchère	66438048
11	GANDE Félicienne	Producteur maïs	
12	HOUNGBLA Thérèse	Producteur maïs	
13	HINDE Eliane	Producteur maïs	95202920
14	AKOBOSSI Alphonsine	Producteur riz	69064984
15	HINDE Clemente	Producteur maïs	
16	ATIMAKAN Isaac	Maraîchère	90706697
17	AGOWA Romualde		
18	AGOWA Alitounou	Producteur maïs	
19	HOUNGBEGNON Rosalie	Producteur Soudja	66676403
20	OROU Viviane	Maraîchère	
21	ATIMAKAN Agnès		67684266

22	HOUNDOLO	Lucas	Producteur manioc	96 50 69 12
23	HOUNDOLO	Gérard	Marchandière (apiculture)	
24	MEKPOAI	Joyin	Producteur manioc	
25				

Contacts Cles.

FÉKOTAN Armand; 970 87 237

Agoua Seraphine; 66 89 14 65

Mardi
12/24/19

11h45
13h30

Glazoue Commune

Cooperatives de Transformation de Riz.
et de Maraichage. Plaine Commune

<u>Prénoms</u>	<u>Noms</u>	<u>Fonctions</u>
1 Aïkoïchaye	Agate	Productrice / Trans
2 Valerie	Kouitchamou.	Transformation
3 Iyette	DAKPO	Transformation
4 Eulanie	DAGNINOU.	Transformation
5 Pauline	SOSSA	Transformation
6 Iyette	AÏDA	Éleveuse Riz
7 Angèle	GADIDÉ	Productrice / Pigeon
8 Leucadie	DAGAN	Productrice / Éleveuse
9 Céline	HOUNTON.	Éleveuse
10 Jeannette	ATOUKOU	Transformation
11 Brigitte	OGA	Éleveuse
12 OROUNGA	Pascaline	Maraichère
13 Pierrette	HOUNTON	Maraichère
14 Léontine	OGA	Productrice
15 Nathalie	OGA	Productrice / Pigeon
16 Eloïse	EDSO	Productrice / Éleveuse
17 Bernise	OKANBA	Productrice / Éleveuse
18 Blandine	ODOLO	
19 Léontine	ATOME	
20 Wistone	BOSSA	
21 Josephine	Aïkoïchaye	
22 Supprune	BOSSON	Productrice Maraichère
23 Solange	BOSSA	/ Éleveuse
24 Angèle	AÏPO	Éleveuse
25 Louise	FAGLA	Product / Éleveuse

26	Elisabeth	Egounjiyi	Productrice / Etuveuse
27	Rose	Kpebe	
28	FADEGARD David	C/DSFIB-OPA (DDAED)	
29	Prisca	Houndolo	
30	Leocadie	Sogbotohossou	Productrice - Etuveuse
31	Marie-Laure	GAAESS	Etuveuse
32	Carine	ATINSEYO	Productrice
33	Solange	BITOGNON	Productrice Etuveuse
34	Albertine	ETCHOYO	Marchandise
35	Marie	Houmison	Etuveuse
36	Mireille	Araye	Etuveuse
37	Bernadette	OGBODO	Etuveuse
38	Gesele	AKPO	Marchandise

Contact client

Hossou Cyprienne : 9636 3357

Sossou Pauline : 9404 1088

Dangninou Eulame : 9636 0173

Houé Houe Dierrette 9512 4311

Hossou Solange 9547 5667

Annex 1: Pictures of series of Stakeholders' Consultation & Participation in the 5 Municipalities

Dango Village (*lower valley region*) first phase of the project (April 2017)



Zogbodomey City-Hall



Zagnanado/Ouémé Plateau City-Hall



Zogbodomey City-Hall



Djouougou City-Hall



Glazoué District/ Agouagon Village (12/24/2019)



Glazoué City-Hall (12/24/2019)



Annex 2: Minutes of the national consultation workshop, Cotonou, 04 November 2021

The project "Initiative for climate resilience in the Ouémé basin"⁷ is in its final formulation phase before its last submission to the Green Climate Fund (GCF / GCF) Board scheduled for February 2022.

Aware of the importance of the participation and ownership of project activities by the various stakeholders that are on the one hand, the 5 project intervention communes (Copargo, Djougou, Glazoué, Zagnanado, Zogbodomey), and on the other hand, the sectoral ministries involved as well as the actors of civil society and the private sector, FAO has initiated an additional phase of consultation and stakeholder engagement which is intended to be an interactive process and which will continue throughout the life cycle of the project. The purpose of this stakeholder consultation and engagement session is to ensure that the project vision is in line with the expectations and aspirations of the Government and beneficiary communities.

This exchange session with stakeholders took place both face-to-face and virtual, and in strict compliance with and respect for the COVID-19 protocols as recommended by the FAO / CGF but also by the Government of Benin. While virtually, everyone intervened from home, the face-to-face demanded strict compliance with barrier measures: social distancing, the wearing of face masks, and systematic hand washing.

This report takes stock of the rich exchanges between the stakeholders of the OCRI project during the consultation and engagement workshop held yesterday (Thursday, November 04, 2021) at Bird Song in Cotonou. The workshop saw the strong participation of government, municipal, producers' associations, civil society associations and the FAO team. The full list of participants is appended to this report.

1. Agenda and communications

The workshop started at 9:30 am and following the established and adopted program, as presented in the annex part of the report below.

After a tour de table for the presentation of the participants, the discussions then focused on: (i) the presentation of the OCRI project and (ii) the potential risks, impacts and opportunities of the OCRI project.

1.1. Presentation of the OCRI project

The OCRI project was presented by starting with the contextual elements of natural, bioecological and human systems, the climatic logics which justified the need for this project to be formulated. The presentation then led to the overall intervention strategy related to the elements of the theory of change, namely: objectives, components, products, activities, , expected impact and sustainable development goals expected at the end of this project.

The targeted municipalities (Copargo, Djougou, Glazoué, Zagnanado and Zogbodomey); the duration of the project which is six (06) years as well as the total budget (GCF, FAO and IFAD co-financing and the Government of Benin) of 35 million US dollars were specified by the communicator.

1.2. Presentation of Risks, Impacts and Opportunities / potentials of the OCRI project

The presentation addressed in a comprehensive manner the elements relating to the environmental and social compliance of the project, the related safeguard instruments and consultation and engagement of stakeholders, in particular vulnerable groups including the Peulhs and Fulani.

In fact, participants were made aware of the fact that the pre-selection process for OCRI project activities revealed that the project would present environmental and social risks and would generate impacts generally considered to be moderate. As such, the OCRI project is then classified as a category "B" project. Indeed, these risks are individually

⁷ Ouémé Basin Climate-Resilience Initiative (OCRI) Benin.

and / or cumulatively few in number, generally localizable, site-specific, largely reversible, and easily treatable by mitigation measures which are already provided for in the two safeguard instruments recommended and prepared by the project, namely (i) the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and Social Assessment (ES) taking into account the social, economic and environmental inclusion of local populations, notably the Fulani and the Peulhs. The environmental and social compliance of the project was measured according to an assessment of the following five (05) relevant environmental and social (SES) policies / standards: SES2, SES3, SES7, SES8 and SES9. The results on the assessment of environmental and social risks and impacts were presented as well as the opportunities that this project aims to bring to the beneficiaries.

2. Discussions and recommendations

2.1. Discussions

At the end of the various presentations comments, concerns and expectations were raised by the participants. In sum, these concerns relate to the following points:

- **vulnerable groups:** a participant urged not to limit oneself only to the Fulani and Peulh peoples and proposes instead to extend the vulnerability to the peoples who face constraints of access to factors of production such as access to land and water. Thus, for example for soil restoration actions planned by OCRI, the farming Lopa people located in the upper Ouémé and the Holli people in the Moyen Ouémé, both tributaries of the Ouémé basin, should be eligible and therefore considered as vulnerable. Clarifications were provided and confirmed the inclusion of these communities in the project.
- **a cartographic and ecological monitoring system for all the results and impacts of the project:** one participant said he had not heard of the project setting up such a system and therefore wanted the project to include it in its results. In the light of the answers provided by the communicators, it appears that cartographic monitoring is well taken into account in the OCRI project.
- **agroforestry:** a participant mentioned that in addition to Shea which is planned by OCRI it will also be useful to promote *Pentadesma butyracea* which is a species that grows very quickly and gives the same product (butter), if not even better than Shea. Not only is this species very productive, it is also very resistant to climate change. This action must be carried out at the forest gallery level;
- **on what theme does the project plan to draw up regional and community / local development plans?** A participant suggested to see, more closely, the activities of the Energy Services Improvement Project (PASE) which develops territorial / community development plans, and which is interested in the Ouémé valley for a synergy of actions;
- **on the issue of synergy of the OCRI project with existing projects:** the answer was given that the achievements of existing projects were valued and capitalized during the formulation of the OCRI project, and that they will be more throughout its implementation of the project;
- **land tenure security:** Given that the project provides for the promotion of certain agricultural products, a participant drew attention to the need to integrate land tenure security to ensure the achievement of OCRI results in relation to the promotion of agricultural products. In response to this concern, communicators said the project plans to align with the state's land tenure security mechanisms. Better still, the project will intervene on lands belonging to the communities and not new lands. That is to say, lands free from any conflict;
- **transhumance:** a participant drew attention to the need to make transhumance a concern of the project in order to secure the planned investments. As part of the answer to this query it was said that this important question has been taken into account since the beginning of the design of the project. Precisely, the project pays

particular attention to this issue which particularly affects vulnerable groups, namely the Peulhs, the Foulani and any other local people practicing livestock farming as their main subsistence activity; but also agriculture and market gardening. A source of social conflict, this phenomenon is the subject of special attention by the Government. Of course, the OCRI project does not intend to exacerbate these conflicts, on the contrary,

- **resilient seeds:** one participant observed that it is important to consider this issue if the project is to promote climate resilient agriculture. He continued his intervention by stressing that the seed sector faces many problems both at the level of pre-basic and basic seeds produced by the National Institute of Agricultural Research of Benin (INRAB) and commercial seeds produced by private individuals. . He therefore hopes that the project will plan to build the capacities of these state and private actors. The communicators underlined that the issue of seeds resilience is taken into account in the activities of the OCRI project (Component 2).
- **employability of young people:** a participant urges to integrate the promotion of youth employment especially in the municipality of Djougou which experiences a high rate of rural exodus of young people where 80% of the Beninese immigrant returnees from Europe come from there. The presenters stressed that the OCRI project will not only generate new jobs for young people but also improve the income of farmers as well as the living conditions of the recipient communities.
- **durability:** to this question of sustainability raised, the answer is given that the OCRI platform represents a means of perpetuating achievements. Indeed, the efforts that the project will influence will help to establish a certain degree of ownership of the activities and the vision of the project by the various stakeholders and instill a certain social responsibility which are the two pillars to ensure the sustainability of the infrastructures that the project will be implemented during its life cycle in the participating municipalities;
- **the institutional / steering mechanism of the project:** FAO, the Ministry of the Living Environment and Sustainable Development (MCVDD), the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock and Fisheries (MAEP), the beneficiary municipalities and then a national coordination are an integral part of the institutional framework implementation of the project. In terms of safeguard compliance, it was recalled that the planned monitoring scheme for this issue will be organized as follows: a central unit located in Cotonou at FAO headquarters will host an E&S Safeguards Specialist with a good understanding of gender issues. and vulnerability. This will be assisted, at the regional level of OCRI execution, by two groups of experts 1 Social, 1 Environmentalist and 1 GV Specialty who will work in tandem with their counterparts from each of the 2 implementation regions of the OCRI project. Thereby,

It emerges from this interaction and exchange workshop, during which the participants learned about the content of the social assessment with a focus on vulnerable groups, that there was a fairly good representation of the different socio-layers. -economic benefits of beneficiary communities, in particular representatives of vulnerable groups, who were consulted according to the basic principles of FPIC (Free, Prior and Informed Consent). Thus, through these representatives, these vulnerable groups responded and participated freely and without embarrassment or constraint and were able to express themselves freely in a constructive and clear spirit.

At the end, the Assembly of participants are unanimously adopted the activities of the OCRI project.

2.2. Recommendations

At the end of the discussions, the points presented in the following table were retained as recommendations.

No.	Points retained
01	Take into account the Lopa and Holli ethnic groups in the constituency of vulnerable groups

02	Integrate a cartographic and ecological monitoring system for the results and impacts of the project
03	Promote <i>Pentadesma butyracea</i> in gallery forests alongside shea cultivation
04	Take into account the security of land in the implementation of the project
05	Promote the employability of young people, especially in the municipality of Djougou which is experiencing a high rate of rural exodus of young people
06	Take into account the activities of the PASE project for more synergy
07	Integrate agricultural product processing activities for the creation of added value and better consideration of women
08	Avoid linking vulnerability to ethnicity to prevent stigmatization, but rather by taking into account modes of existence or means of existence
09	Advocacy to integrate, if still possible, activities related to livestock and transhumance management in the implementation of the project
10	Take into account the districts of Kpédékpo and Dovi (in the Municipality of Zagnanado) which are often the victim of flooding by the Ouémé river
11	Establish an inclusive institutional framework that takes into account all stakeholders
12	Install a system for the sustainability of the project's infrastructures and achievements
13	Provide for the production of local seeds that are resilient to climate change, in particular in market gardening

Conclusion

The workshop ended on a note of satisfaction from all the participants who wish to see the project succeed and to start its activities as soon as possible for the well-being of the target populations.

Annex 3: List of People met during the Consultation & Participation (8/2017 – 12/2021)

N°	Surname , First Name	Occupation/Remit	Organization/Institution	Telephone	E-mail
1	Dr YO Tiémoko	FAO Representative	FAO Benin	21314245	Tiemoko.Yo@fao.org
2	ADANGUIDI Jean	Assistant to the FAO Representative (Prog)	FAO Benin		
3	GOMEZ Christian	Assistant to the FAO Representative (Admin)	FAO Benin		
4	BIOYERIMA Mouhaman	Programme Assistant	FAO Benin		

5	ZOGLOGBOSSOU Roland Justin	Agricultural Engineer– Research Director	MAEP/DPV	95956561	rolandzr@yahoo.fr
6	AGOSSOU BODE Julien G.	(Master of Arts) Second Deputy to the Mayor		61188717	
7	AWO Sourou Malikiyou	Agro-environmentalist, Geographer	MAEP/environm ental cell	95289415 97330058	souroumalik@gmail.com
8	BLALOGOE Parfait	Executive Director Environmental Science		97488784	blalogoe@yahoo.fr
9	MEDEOU K. Fidèle	Technical Director Bioclimatologie		95533386	kmedeouf@yahoo.fr
10	LAWANI Chakirou	Plant protection expert		97081436	chakiroulawani@yahoo.fr
11	BOURAIMA Yacoubou	Plant protection expert		97177662 95964113	Bouraimayacoubou54@yahoo.fr
12	BOKONON-GANTA B. Eustache	University of Parakou National Consultant		97056711	bbkganta@yahoo.com
13	AKINOCHO Patrick	DGR		96493900 95425950	akinf@yahoo.fr
14	GBAGUIDI Félix	DAH /DGR		96322075 95358195	gbaf327@yahoo.fr
15	SAGBO Prospère	C /SAME /DGR		95060912 97420320	p.sagbo@yahoo.fr
16	Aimé H. Boqokonon-ganta	Entomologist/DPV	Faculty of Agricultural Sciences	95563123	aimehbg@gmail.com
17	GANDONOU Basile Marius	Agro-economical Engineer (CTN Project)	Preparatory project for Benin to access FVC	67612888	gandounoumarious@yahoo.fr
18	DEGLA Marius	Programme manager	IDID-ONG	97121446	hugdegla@gmail.com
19	Hectar KPANGON	National programme manager	CTB Benin	21305937	www.ctb-benin.org
20	Yves Quantum	Consultant			
21	Wilma Frouke BASS	Co-Director of Support Project for the Agricultural Sector	CTB Bénin	66877310	www.ctb-benin.org
22	AMONLE Jean	CA /Hounviguè		97768355	
23	HOUKPEDODJI HOUEMAKOU ADETOUNDJI TODEGBE KO HOLOU AGAGNON III	King of Dangbo/SG section Ouémé plateau	Dangbo	97179874	
24	KOUWANOU Mathias	Mayor of Dango		97929922	
25	AFOHOUNHAJulien	Geographer–Mayor Developer		97872696	
26	DANSOU A. Aléandre	Teacher and Second Deputy to the Mayor		97039458	
27	HOUESSIOKLOUNON Dossa	Farmer		97340137	

28	WENON HOUNTESSOMON Daniel	Smallholder		97523569	
29	WENON Marc	CV / Houviguè		97590923	
30	HUIDJO Elie	Farmer		97498124	
31	HOUNONGAN HOSSOU Aydji	Traditional healer		97224607	
32	LALY H. Eléonore	Health worker		97038663	
33	HOUNOUGNON Honorie	Housewife		97784909	
34	Dah GODOKLONOU HOUNNONGAN Ahifon	Traditional healer		97230121	
35	HOUESSIOKLOUNON Zinhoue	Trader		61721550	
36	WEGOUNNOU Madélène	Housewife			
37	AHISSOU Marie	Trader		96518804	
38	ATAKOUIN Augustine	Trader		66251949	
39	BODJINOU Emilienne	Trader		97841391	
40	ADJAKA Ephrasie	Trader		96062596	
41	AKPITI Marie	Housewife		61927415	
42	FAGNIHOUN Christine	Housewife			
43	KOUNNOUMIN Colette	Trader			
44	DJOSSOU Zekiyatou	Trader		66829484	
45	ADINON Albert	Grower			
46	DOGNON Justine	Housewife		96744665	
47	KOUDOSSODJI Sandrine	Seamstress		67553828	
48	SODJO Boyèmè	Housewife		96414080	
49	DANSOU Bossè	Housewife			
50	VODINON Florence	Trader			
51	DEGBEGNI Akouemaho	Housewife			
52	HOUESSIOKLOUNON Alice	Trader			
53	HOUSIOKLOUNON Finangnon	Traditional healer		97798370	
54	SOSSOU Denis	Farmer		97044145	
55	VOGOZIN Placide	C /SDLP Marie		97765262	Vogplac1@yahoo.fr
56	HOUNKANRIN H.Firmin	CA / Hozin		96086901	
57	AGOSSOU BODE Julien	DAM	Dangbo Municipality	61188717	
58	ADIGBE Virgile	Fish farmer		66284201	

59	TOHOU Laurant	Fish farmer		95248020	
60	VODONNOU Assanny	Fish farmer			
61	VODONNOU Auguste	Fish farmer		97704681	
62	KPAKOLO Y. Ambroise	Farmer		96949776	
63	DOSSOU S. Hilaire	Farmer		66053726	
64	DJIDONOU Bernard	Fish farmer		97489715	
65	ADANDE Augustin	producer		97689039	
66	AHOUANJINOUE Odette	Shopkeeper/farmer		63036712	
67	KEKERE Julien	Farmer		97277289	
68	NOUTIN Janvier	Farmer		97277765	
69	HOUANSOU Emile	Farmer		96065104	
70	KPATINVO Barthélémy	Farmer		67902009	
71	KINI Etienne	Farmer		96331433	
72	ABISSOU-BODE Honoré	Farmer		61201966	
73	ZINSOU Daniel	Farmer		96895926	
74	ADOMAVO Constant	Farmer		96242197	
75	BONOU Christophe	Farmer			
76	ZANNOU Florent	Farmer		66815360	
77	HOUNKANRIN Isaïe	Farmer		66058945	
78	SENOU Jénis	Farmer			
79	HOUMBOSSANON Martin	Farmer		96568775	
80	SAH Latif	Farmer		97313272	
81	GNAHO Cheou	Farmer		62190502	
82	TOGNON Louis	Farmer		97734066	
83	ADOMAVO Richard	Farmer		96428124	
84	SOTON Claude	Farmer		96881576	
85	KOUTON Diane	Farmer		96058135	
86	FASSINOUE Hélène	Farmer		67934278	
87	BONI Paul	Agriculture Director DDAEP	Hills County (Dassa-Glazoué)		95 71 73 76
88	ALLOUKOUTUI Olivier	General Secretary	Mairie de Glazoué		95098984 97090929
89	OTCHOUN Léon	CST	Mairie Glazoué		97 41 05 13
90	DOSSA Guillaume	Planning Officer	Mairie Glazoué		96 17 03 22
91	MAHOUTONDJI Albert	Rural Sector Technician	Dassa/Glazoué		95 35 75 03
92	RAHAMATOU Yacoubou Hamidou	Gender Coordinator	MAEP		96 96 00 38
93	AWO Sourou Malick	Head of Environment Unit	MAEP		95289415

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17		Town Hall of the Municipality of Glazoué	Secretary General of the Mayor	Glazoué
18		Town Hall of the Municipality of Zagnanado	Secretary General of the Mayor	Zagnanado
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Annex 4: Social Assessment Outline for Vulnerable Groups

Acronyms & Abbreviations

Introduction

This section will provide us with some relevant background information that would enable to pin down both the overall and specific contexts of OCRI formulation and implementation roadmap. This preview will set out the rationale of the undertaking (*i.e. why the SA, what for, and for high outcomes, etc.*) by showcasing the particular case of these vulnerable groups within the OCRI intervention areas, the likelihood of risks and impacts that may generate from project foreseen activities, and meanwhile propose some constructive strategies and assessment tools as to how to reach this very end objective of properly mitigating these impacts in a way that will rather improve their living conditions.

- General Context
- Objective of the Assessment
- Methodology and Assessment Tools and Results

Legal and Institutional Framework

This section will unveil both the legal and institutional framework under which the OCRI project is being prepared and under which it will be implemented, both at the central and local levels. More specifically, it will highlight the very rationale of the specific attention given to the issues of vulnerable groups, particularly the *Fulani* and *Peulh*, let alone other groups, such as the *Holli* and *Lopa*, as well as the climate-affected communities. The section will make an attempt to show how the project will also rely on local customs and cultures to ascertain a peaceful handling and treatment of issues related to this specific vulnerable group without singling them out and/or fragilizing/exposing them; henceforth instead of constructing, end up rendering their living conditions instead difficult to bear.

General Objective and Project Description

The very purpose of this section is to pin down the OCRI overall development perspective, within a well-defined context, and activities tailored to sustain such a development objective. A specific focus will be given to the project intended objective to constructively involve vulnerable groups, namely Fulani and Peulh, let alone other climate-induced/triggered vulnerables. A specific focus will describe the gradual vulnerability of these groups in each of the 5 participating project districts.

Project Development Context

- General Geographical and social contexts
- Project Activities

Overview of the OCRI Intervention Area

- Copargo
- Djogou
- Glazoue
- *Zogbodoméy*
- *Zagnanado*

Conflict Sensitivity Analysis (Vulnerable Groups)

Benin is known as one of the leading political and social democracy in Western Africa. Its legacy has been very inspiring to many of its nearby neighbors. Nevertheless, given the global and factual climate change risks and impacts on local communities, particularly the landless and agriculture-dependent communities, such as those in the OCRI project intervention areas, and more specifically on the Fulani and Peulh; this section will attempt to highlight some of the likely sources of conflicts impacting these communities; understand its seriousness, its incremental risks towards OCRI's implementation roadmap, and propose some community-driven solutions to either offset them, at least to properly mitigate them in a way that they won't hinder OCRI development perspective.

Stakeholder Consultation, Participation and Engagement, & Analysis and Social Baseline Data

As an important aspect of any development perspective, the stakeholder consultation, participation and engagement process enable to both encourage “**ownership**” building and to foster “**social accountability**” throughout the lifespan of a given project. In the specific case of OCRI, this section will strengthen this particular aspect, emphasising its relevance within the specific parameters of the FPIC process, built on fearlessness and non-reprisal bearing. It will also help establish an invaluable baseline database to serve the project in properly mainstreaming the addressing of vulnerable groups dimensions in the OCRI targeted five districts.

Expected Social Impacts and Social Risk Matrix

Alternative and Project Design Measures

Key Recommendations

This section will build upon the very above and suggest likely ways forward to lessen the risks and adverse impacts while maximizing/building better on the positive impacts of the project. This will be explored via each of the 2 components to ensure a well-routed and targeted outreach to the Vulnerable Groups.

- Component 1:
- Component 2:

Social Mitigation Measures

The Social Assessment will portray some factual measures to be used and accounted for to properly mitigate the foreseen risks and impacts. Overall, while it explores best ways forward, it also ensures that issues related to Fulani and Peulh, most particularly, let alone to other extend-vulnerable groups such as Lupa, Holli, Fishermen, and seasonally affected flash-flood communities along the Oueme river stream are well-looked up to and will greatly contribute to making the project socially sound. To that extend, a strong focus will be put on building these beneficiary communities to ensure project sustainability, well beyond its closure.

Capacity Building and Strengthening

Vulnerable Groups Action Plan

Building on the constructive footprints of the measures described here above, the VGAP will be rather more focused on the Peulh and Fulani to ensure that specific attention is given to them and that appropriate measure, alongside a budget and criterion to properly monitor these measures. The VCAP will be inclusive enough and will participate in fostering a more enabling environment to brige the social gaps and encourage peace and sustainability.

Grievance Redress Mechanism

As in any sustainable development project, there are always risks and ways of igniting a problem. The ignition of such problems, if not well-managed, early enough, could result and lead to detrimental situations for the project. Henceforth, a GRM is prepared as an anticipative way to offer implementable solutions and reinstate the very human rights of OCRI stakeholders, regardless of he/her origin. Henceforth, the abovementioned GRM will offer amicable mens, tools and ways to solve projects and avoid hindrance of such missed opportunities on the overall project performance.

Monitoring and Assessment Mechanism

Lastly, but not least, after setting up and following up on all the above-mentioned building blocks, one can likely believe that there will be no risks of all or if so, at least very minimal ones and thus easily mitigable, as per category B operations. Therefore, a suitable monitoring and evaluation mechanism will be developed to look at these issues and ensure that efforts being explored by the Government of Benin, altogether with its international investment

partners as in the case of the OCRI project will be implemented in due course to meet OCRI development objective.

Conclusion

Annex 4: COVID-19 : WHO Technical Guidance Note on Public Consultation & Stakeholder Engagement

WHO has recently disclosed technical directives to be followed in the case of COVID-19 Pandemic, namely (i) preparation and answer to the technical guidance note on Public Consultations and Stakeholder Engagement (PCSE); (ii) Communication Kit on COVID-19 risks for health services; (iii) preparing your workplace to COVID-19, and (iv) a guide to prevent and combat COVID-19 related social stigmatization. All information and COVID-19 related documents are being disclosed and available on the following WHO website: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance>.

(Practical Example being used by the World Bank Group)

Technical Note: Public Consultations and Stakeholder Engagement in WB-supported operations when there are constraints on conducting public meetings March 20, 2020

With the outbreak and spread of COVID-19, people have been advised, or may be mandated by national or local law, to exercise social distancing, and specifically to avoid public gatherings to prevent and reduce the risk of the virus transmission. Countries have taken various restrictive measures, some imposing strict restrictions on public gatherings, meetings and people's movement, and others advising against public group events. At the same time, the general public has become increasingly aware and concerned about the risks of transmission, particularly through social interactions at large gatherings.

These restrictions have implications for World Bank-supported operations. In particular, they will affect Bank requirements for public consultation and stakeholder engagement in projects, both under implementation and preparation. WHO has issued technical guidance in dealing with COVID-19, including: (i) Risk Communication and Community Engagement (RCCE) Action Plan Guidance Preparedness and Response; (ii) Risk Communication and Community engagement (RCCE) readiness and response; (iii) COVID-19 risk communication package for healthcare facilities; (iv) Getting your workplace ready for COVID-19; and (v) a guide to preventing and addressing social stigma associated with COVID-19. All these documents are available on the WHO website through the following link: <https://www.who.int/emergencies/diseases/novel-coronavirus-2019/technical-guidance>.

This Note offers suggestions to World Bank task teams for advising counterpart agencies on managing public consultation and stakeholder engagement in their projects, with the recognition that the situation is developing rapidly and careful regard needs to be given to national requirements and any updated guidance issued by WHO. It is important that the alternative ways of managing consultation and stakeholder engagement discussed with clients are in accordance with the local applicable laws and policies, especially those related to media and communication. The suggestions set out below are subject to confirmation that they are in accordance with existing laws and regulations applying to the project.

Investment projects under implementation. All projects under implementation are likely to have public consultation and stakeholder engagement activities planned and committed as part of project design. These activities may be described in different project documents and will involve a variety of stakeholders. Commonly planned avenues of such engagement are public hearings, community meetings, focus group discussions, field surveys and individual interviews. With growing concern about the risk of virus spread, there is an urgent need to adjust the approach and methodology for continuing stakeholder consultation and engagement. Taking into account the importance of confirming compliance with national law requirements, below are some suggestions for task teams' consideration while advising their clients:

Task teams will need to review their project, jointly with the PMUs, and should:

- Identify and review planned activities under the project requiring stakeholder engagement and public consultations.
- Assess the level of proposed direct engagement with stakeholders, including location and size of proposed gatherings, frequency of engagement, categories of stakeholders (international, national, local) etc.

- Assess the level of risks of the virus transmission for these engagements, and how restrictions that are in effect in the country / project area would affect these engagements.
- Identify project activities for which consultation/engagement is critical and cannot be postponed without having significant impact on project timelines. For example, selection of resettlement options by affected people during project implementation. Reflecting the specific activity, consider viable means of achieving the necessary input from stakeholders (see further below).
- Assess the level of ICT penetration among key stakeholder groups, to identify the type of communication channels that can be effectively used in the project context.

Based on the above, task teams should discuss and agree with PMUs the specific channels of communication that should be used while conducting stakeholder consultation and engagement activities. The following are some considerations while selecting channels of communication, in light of the current COVID-19 situation:

- Avoid public gatherings (taking into account national restrictions), including public hearings, workshops and community meetings;
- If smaller meetings are permitted, conduct consultations in small-group sessions, such as focus group meetings. If not permitted, make all reasonable efforts to conduct meetings through online channels, including webex, zoom and skype;
- Diversify means of communication and rely more on social media and online channels. Where possible and appropriate, create dedicated online platforms and chatgroups appropriate for the purpose, based on the type and category of stakeholders;
- Employ traditional channels of communications (TV, newspaper, radio, dedicated phone-lines, and mail) when stakeholders do not have access to online channels or do not use them frequently. Traditional channels can also be highly effective in conveying relevant information to stakeholders, and allow them to provide their feedback and suggestions;
- Where direct engagement with project affected people or beneficiaries is necessary, such as would be the case for Resettlement Action Plans or Indigenous Peoples Plans preparation and implementation, identify channels for direct communication with each affected household via a context specific combination of email messages, mail, online platforms, dedicated phone lines with knowledgeable operators;
- Each of the proposed channels of engagement should clearly specify how feedback and suggestions can be provided by stakeholders;
- An appropriate approach to conducting stakeholder engagement can be developed in most contexts and situations. However, in situations where none of the above means of communication are considered adequate for required consultations with stakeholders, the team should discuss with the PMU whether the project activity can be rescheduled to a later time, when meaningful stakeholder engagement is possible. Where it is not possible to postpone the activity (such as in the case of ongoing resettlement) or where the postponement is likely to be for more than a few weeks, the task team should consult with the OESRC to obtain advice and guidance.

Investment projects under preparation. Where projects are under preparation and stakeholder engagement is about to commence or is ongoing, such as in the project E&S planning process, stakeholder consultation and engagement activities should not be deferred, but rather designed to be fit for purpose to ensure effective and meaningful consultations to meet project and stakeholder needs. Some suggestions for advising clients on stakeholder engagement in such situations are given below. These suggestions are subject to the coronavirus situation in country, and restrictions put in place by governments. The task team and the PMU should:

- Review the country COVID-19 spread situation in the project area, and the restrictions put in place by the government to contain virus spread;
- Review the draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP, if it exists) or other agreed stakeholder engagement arrangements, particularly the approach, methods and forms of engagement proposed, and assess the associated potential risks of virus transmission in conducting various engagement activities;
- Be sure that all task team and PIU members articulate and express their understandings on social behavior and good hygiene practices, and that any stakeholder engagement events be preceded with the procedure of articulating such hygienic practices.
- Avoid public gatherings (taking into account national restrictions), including public hearings, workshops and community meetings, and minimize direct interaction between project agencies and beneficiaries / affected people;
- If smaller meetings are permitted, conduct consultations in small-group sessions, such as focus group meetings. If not permitted, make all reasonable efforts to conduct meetings through online channels, including webex, zoom and skype meetings;
- Diversify means of communication and rely more on social media and online channels. Where possible and appropriate, create dedicated online platforms and chatgroups appropriate for the purpose, based on the type and category of stakeholders;
- Employ traditional channels of communications (TV, newspaper, radio, dedicated phone-lines, public announcements and mail) when stakeholders do not have access to online channels or do not use them frequently. Such channels can also be highly effective in conveying relevant information to stakeholders, and allow them to provide their feedback and suggestions;
- Employ online communication tools to design virtual workshops in situations where large meetings and workshops are essential, given the preparatory stage of the project. Webex, Skype, and in low ICT capacity situations, audio meetings, can be effective tools to design virtual workshops. The format of such workshops could include the following steps:
 - o *Virtual registration of participants*: Participants can register online through a dedicated platform.
 - o *Distribution of workshop materials to participants, including agenda, project documents, presentations, questionnaires and discussion topics*: These can be distributed online to participants.
 - o *Review of distributed information materials*: Participants are given a scheduled duration for this, prior to scheduling a discussion on the information provided.
 - o *Discussion, feedback collection and sharing*: ☐ Participants can be organized and assigned to different topic groups, teams or virtual “tables” provided they agree to this.
 - ☑ Group, team and table discussions can be organized through social media means, such as webex, skype or zoom, or through written feedback in the form of an electronic questionnaire or feedback forms that can be emailed back.
 - o *Conclusion and summary*: The chair of the workshop will summarize the virtual workshop discussion, formulate conclusions and share electronically with all participants.
- In situations where online interaction is challenging, information can be disseminated through digital platform (where available) like Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp groups, Project weblinks/ websites, and traditional means of communications (TV, newspaper, radio, phone calls and mails with clear description of mechanisms for providing feedback via mail and / or dedicated telephone lines. All channels of communication need to clearly specify how stakeholders can provide their feedback and suggestions.

- *Engagement with direct stakeholders for household surveys:* There may be planning activities that require direct stakeholder engagement, particularly in the field. One example is resettlement planning where surveys need to be conducted to ascertain socioeconomic status of affected people, take inventory of their affected assets, and facilitate discussions related to relocation and livelihood planning. Such survey activities require active participation of local stakeholders, particularly the potentially adversely affected communities. However, there may be situations involving indigenous communities, or other communities that may not have access to the digital platforms or means of communication, teams should develop specially tailored stakeholder engagement approaches that will be appropriate in the specific setting. The teams should reach out to the regional PMs for ENB and Social Development or to the ESSA for the respective region, in case they need additional support to develop such tailored approaches.

- In situations where it is determined that meaningful consultations that are critical to the conduct of a specific project activity cannot be conducted in spite of all reasonable efforts on the part of the client supported by the Bank, the task team should discuss with the client whether the proposed project activities can be postponed by a few weeks in view of the virus spread risks. This would depend on the COVID-19 situation in the country, and the government policy requirements to contain the virus spread. Where it is not possible to postpone the activity (such as in the case of ongoing resettlement) or where the postponement is likely to be for more than a few weeks, the task team should consult with the OESRC to obtain advice and guidance.