

Gender Action Plan

FP303: Climate Resilient Water Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) and Disaster Management services for vulnerable children in the Central African Republic (CRDM-CAR)

Central African Republic | UNICEF | B.45/02/Add.04

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UNFPA	- Inclusion of menstrual hygiene products in Minimum Initial Service Packages (MISP). - Support for dignity-preserving WASH access in maternity and health units. - Collaboration with WASH actors for gender-sensitive distribution of hygiene kits in conflict zones.	UNFPA CAR Humanitarian Reports (2022–2023); UNFPA (2021)
Action Contre la Faim (ACF)	- Women-led WASH awareness campaigns. - Engagement of women in infrastructure maintenance, including pumps and community toilets. - Participatory gender mapping in WASH needs assessments.	ACF Reports on CAR (2021–2023)
Norwegian Refugee Council (NRC)	- Gender-segregated WASH facilities in IDP camps. - Design of WASH programs integrating protection indicators (safe access, SEA/SH prevention).	NRC (2023); OCHA CAR Humanitarian Response Plan (2023)
Oxfam	- Women's leadership in water user associations. - Training on gender, water governance and protection risks. - Community-based conflict resolution on WASH resource use.	Oxfam WASH and Gender Briefs (2022)
CAR Humanitarian Country Team	- Gender-sensitive indicators in multi-sectoral needs assessments (MSNA). - Inter-cluster collaboration on WASH, GBV, and Protection. - Support for integrated WASH-protection planning.	OCHA HCT CAR Strategy (2023); HNO/HRP CAR (2023–2024)
National Adaptation Plan (NAP) – CAR (in development)	- NAP process underway with Readiness support; gender integration not yet formalized. - Opportunity to include gender-disaggregated vulnerability assessments in water and sanitation. - Inclusion of gender-responsive planning units and indicators strongly recommended.	Green Climate Fund Readiness Project Profile – CAR NAP; UNFCCC NAP Central Database (2024).

6. Gender Action Plan

The Gender Action Plan (GAP) is designed as a direct response to the structural and situational inequalities identified in the National and Project Area assessments. Specifically, the severe time poverty and safety risks documented during female consultations—where women bear the primary burden of off-site water collection—are addressed through the strategic placement of climate-resilient water systems near households and the installation of solar-lighted, gender-segregated facilities. Furthermore, the identified exclusion of women from WASH governance is countered by mandatory 35% to 50%

female representation targets in local committees and their active leadership in co-designing community resilience plans. By aligning these specific socio-economic barriers with targeted technical and institutional actions, the GAP ensures that climate adaptation outcomes are both equitable and transformative for the most vulnerable populations in CAR.

Impact Statement

The project's long-term gender transformative impact is to enhance WASH-related equity and safety for girls in climate-vulnerable communities. By integrating climate-resilient, gender-responsive WASH facilities and hygiene education in schools, the project will directly address critical barriers (including the time burden of water collection, inadequate menstrual hygiene management (MHM), and the pervasive risk of gender-based violence) that affect women and girls' safety, security, well-being, and empowerment, and force girls out of school. This project will foster safer, more inclusive living and learning environments, leading to improved gender equality, and contributing to a generational shift in women and girls' empowerment, health, and community leadership.

Outcome-Level Framework

The Gender Action Plan can be divided into four outcome-level categories: Participation and Agency, Equitable Access, Safety, and Empowerment. The plan to achieve these outcomes is detailed below.

Outcome 1: Enhanced Participation and Agency of Women in Climate-Resilient WASH and DRR Governance

This outcome focuses on ensuring women are not just consulted but are active participants and decision-makers in planning and managing climate-resilient WASH and DRR solutions.

- **Influencing National Policy:** Women and female experts will be actively involved in the revision of key national WASH and DRR policies to ensure their needs and strategic priorities are reflected. (from Activity 1.1.1)
- **Participatory Planning and Design:** The project will promote female representation in water user associations, local sanitation committees, and CR-WASH, WRM and DRR planning meetings (typically 50% or more), while keeping membership and participation voluntary. Women will be engaged to co-design community-led resilience plans/interventions, ensuring their local and traditional knowledge on water management is integrated into adaptation solutions. (from Activities 1.2.1, 2.1.2, 2.1.4, 2.3.1.1, 2.3.1, 2.3.2, 2.3.3)
- **Monitoring and Feedback:** Women and girls will participate in biannual sustainability and resilience checks through gender-specific focus group discussions, providing direct feedback on the safety, functionality and inclusivity of CR-WASH infrastructure and services. (from Activity 1.2.2.2)
- **Knowledge Sharing:** A dedicated Community of Practice will serve as a platform to elevate the voices of women, gather and disseminate their specific experience and feedback, allowing them to share their needs and successful adaptation strategies with a wider audience. (from Activity 1.2.2.4)

Outcome 2: Improved and Equitable Access for Women and Girls to Climate-Resilient WASH Services and Information

This outcome focuses on ensuring that the infrastructure, services, and information provided by the project are physically, socially, and culturally accessible to women and girls.

- **Gender-Responsive Infrastructure:** All new and rehabilitated sanitation facilities in schools and healthcare centres will be gender-separated and equipped with features to support Menstrual Hygiene Management (MHM), such as private shower blocks and safe disposal mechanisms. This directly addresses a key barrier to females' hygiene, school attendance, privacy, and well-being.
- **Community-Led Sanitation (CLTS) and Awareness:** Using Social and Behaviour Change (SBC) and Accountability to Affected Populations (AAP) approaches, it will work with communities and girls to generate demand, ensure safe access, and address social norms and cultural taboos through a community-wide, community-led approach, thereby enhancing girls' agency over their own health and education. (from Activity 2.1.2)
- **Access to Early Warning Information:** The project will co-design gender-responsive communication strategies, messages, and materials with women's groups to ensure that early warning messages for floods and droughts are relevant, timely, and delivered through channels accessible to women and girls. (from Activity 1.2.3)

Outcome 3: Increased Safety and Reduced Risk of GBV for Women and Girls in Climate-Affected WASH Contexts

This outcome focuses on mitigating the risks of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Sexual Exploitation, and Harassment (SEA/SH) that are often exacerbated in insecure WASH environments and during climate-related disasters.

- **Safe Infrastructure Design:** Water systems will be located as close to houses as possible. Defecation in open areas around communities will be eradicated through the CLTS approach, making sanitation accessible and safe. WASH facilities in schools and healthcare centres will be strategically designed and located to enhance safety. Features will include solar lighting, internal locks, and secure access paths, reducing the risk of harassment and assault. (from Activity 2.1.3.3 & 2.1.3.4)
- **GBV Risk Mitigation in Disaster Planning:** Disaster preparedness plans and simulation exercises will explicitly integrate measures to mitigate GBV risks. This includes establishing protocols for safe evacuation routes and secure shelters, and mapping referral pathways for GBV survivors in disaster contexts. (from Activity 1.2.3)

Outcome 4: Strengthened Capacity and Empowerment of Women and Girls to Lead Climate Adaptation

This outcome focuses on building the skills, knowledge, and confidence of women and girls, and on shifting social norms to support their leadership in climate action.

- **Targeted Capacity Building:** The project will ensure that women are provided with equal opportunities and access to in WASH and climate adaptation trainings and support. It will also identify and address the specific social and logistical barriers that prevent women from participating in such training and monitor women participation. (from Activities 1.3.1, 2.1.4, 2.3.1, and 2.3.2)
- **Promoting Women's Leadership:** The project will promote women in leadership or decision-making roles and their transition from participants to leaders. (from Activity 1.3.1)
- **Engaging Men and Boys:** Training programs will include modules on men's positive engagement in gender equality and climate action. This transformative approach aims to address harmful gender norms that limit women's empowerment and community resilience. (from Activity 2.3.1.1)

Activity-Level Framework

This project's Gender Action Plan is tailored to all activities where gender-related risks were identified, and the activity-level breakdown of risk mitigation measures is detailed in the table below. Note that under the indicators, targets, and timeline column, all indicator baselines are 0 unless otherwise specified.

Project Activity	Potential Risks	Gender/SEA/SH-specific mitigation actions/measures	Indicators, Targets and Timeline	Responsible	Budget
Project Management and Governance		PMU includes Gender, IPP and Social Inclusion Officer to implement and monitor GAP and coordinate gender mainstreaming across project activities. The specialist will also act as the SEA/SH prevention focal point, and will be hired to design the project's Code of Conduct, oversee the GRM, and be responsible for SEA/SH awareness raising across.	Target: 1 Gender, IPP, and Social Inclusion Officer hired as part of the PMU with demonstrable experience in gender and social inclusion.	Lead: PMU and Gender, IPP, and Social Inclusion Officer. Collaboration of all project entities.	Included in PMU
SEA/SH prevention and mitigation across components	SEA/SH specific risks are detailed in the project's ESS assessments and ESMP and include: Exploitation by Personnel and Contractors Harassment of Female Workers WASH Infrastructure-Related Exacerbation of SEA/SH risks in Displacement Settings	The UN SEA Code of Conduct (applies for personnel of all UN entities and all implementing partners/ sub-contractors) is socialized with all project related stakeholders and implemented across activities. SEA/SH-specific trainings for internal team and project affiliated staff will be developed, including the SEA Code of Conduct, SEA/SH prevention and attention protocols, and project's GRM. All project-related procurement mechanisms will include a SEA/SH zero-tolerance clause in accordance with UNICEF's	A) 1 UN SEA code of conduct for the project staff, implementing partners, and sub-contractors and beneficiaries socialized, and implemented across activities. b) 1 annual SEA/SH specific training for project staff c) 100% of project procurement instruments integrate zero-tolerance SEA/SH clauses.	Gender, IPP, and Social Inclusion Officer	Included in PMU

		policy. A GRM is in place and socialized with all project relevant stakeholders, including specific channels for SEA/SH attention. At the sub-project level, SEA/SH risks will be systematically assessed and managed through dedicated safeguarding procedures aligned with UNICEF policies. Relevant prevention and response measures will be applied in accordance with UNICEF safeguarding procedures..	d) 1 GRM in place and socialized e) 100% of sub-projects undergo SEA/SH risk screening and apply relevant prevention and response measures in accordance with UNICEF safeguarding procedures.		
1.1.1 Update/develop key national policies, strategies, technical standards and regulations to better integrate climate adaptation, WASH, WRM, and DRR	Policies may remain gender-blind, failing to address the specific needs and vulnerabilities of women and girls. Women's groups may be excluded from consultation processes, leading to policies that do not reflect their lived realities.	Ensure policies explicitly address menstrual hygiene management (MHM), gender-equitable access to water, and safety for women/girls, with consultations involving women's and girls' groups. Ensure female groups / representatives and consultants are actively involved in the revision processes, and that their inputs are reflected in the final drafts of the new WASH Norms and Guidelines, the CLTS Practical Guide, and WASH in healthcare facilities sector strategies.	3 policies revised with MHM and gender-equitable provisions by Year 3.	UNICEF (along with respective governmental institutions and other stakeholders)	USD 60000of dedicated budget, integrated to Activity 1.1.1.
1.2.2.2 Carrying out biannual resilience and sustainability checks for the WASH sector	Data collection may not be sex-disaggregated, masking critical issues faced by women regarding access, safety, and functionality. Checks may focus on technical	Ensure data collection for the biannual checks includes sex-disaggregated data on service usage and women satisfaction.	A) 3 sustainability checks with gender-specific indicators, findings, and	Ministry of Energy Development and Hydraulic Resources,	USD 60000of dedicated budget, integrated to

	aspects and overlook social risks like GBV at water points.	Conduct gender-specific focus group discussions with women and girls to gather their unique perspectives on the resilience and safety of WASH infrastructure.	recommendations by project end. b) Improved safety of WASH infrastructure as confirmed by a summary report of women's perceptions during focus group discussions.	UNICEF, Consultants	Activity 1.2.2.
1.2.2.4 Generating, sharing, and using knowledge for sector-wide and intersectoral learning and improved adaptation effectiveness	Knowledge-sharing platforms may be dominated by male voices, and case studies may overlook the contributions and innovations of women in climate-resilient WASH.	Seek out and promote case studies, best practices and lessons learned from women-led initiatives and about women and girls specific needs and feedback on climate-resilient WASH. Ensure that the Community of Practice and its website serve as a platform for women to share their experiences and contribute to collective learning	A) At least 3 case studies published by project end addressing gender, women initiatives, needs, and voices. B) Increased awareness of women's traditional water management expertise, as confirmed by Community of Practice Reports	Ministry of Energy Development and Hydraulic Resources, Ministry of Environment and national Climate Coordination Committee, NGOs and Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), UNICEF	USD 60000of dedicated budget, integrated to Activity 1.2.2.
1.2.1 Support the government to strengthen climate-resilient DRR and water planning through disaster preparedness plans and integrated WRM plans	Risk assessments may fail to identify the differentiated impacts of climate change on women and girls. Planning committees may be male dominated, resulting in plans that do not address women's needs or heightened GBV risks during disasters.	Facilitate gender-sensitive climate risk assessments and vulnerability mapping at national and regional levels to ensure plans adequately address the specific issues of and differentiated impacts on women/girls and other vulnerable groups. (e.g., safe evacuation routes, protection measures, back-up solutions for fetching water and defecation), Ensure the assessment and planning processes for	Gender-sensitive DRR and WRM plans developed for the three prefectures by end of Year 4.	UNICEF, IPs	USD 60000of dedicated budget, integrated to Activity 1.2.1.

		WRM, DRR, and WASH planning includes women and women's organizations.			
1.2.3. Improve hydrological data systems and impact scenarios for flood and drought risks to inform early warning systems and adaptive planning in the three prefectures of Ouham, Bamingui-Bangoran, and Vakaga	Early warning messages may not reach women due to inaccessible communication channels. Disaster plans may not account for women's limited mobility due to caregiving roles or the increased risk of SEA/SH in evacuation shelters.	Co-design a gender-responsive communication strategy and materials with women representatives to ensure messages are relevant to women's needs and vulnerabilities. Ensure EW and early action and disaster simulation exercises explicitly include women and measures to mitigate the specific risks they face in disaster and emergency contexts.	Awareness raising, information campaign, contingency planning, and preparedness measures are designed and rolled out with specific considerations for females by project end.	General directorates of Meteorology, Civil Protection, Humanitarian Action, Environment, Water Resources, and Health, UNICEF, Women's Associations	USD 60000of dedicated budget, integrated to Activity 1.2.3.
1.3.1 Strengthen national institutional capacities on climate across the WASH and adjacent sectors	Training opportunities may favour male staff, reinforcing gender imbalances in technical and decision-making roles (there are few women in the WASH sector in CAR). Women who are trained may not be given opportunities for leadership or influence on decision-making.	Develop and deliver training modules ensuring appropriate female participation at the adequate hierarchical level. Promote equal opportunities for women's participation and leadership in training.	Baseline: Existing sector staffing (approx. <10%) Target: Women participation in all trainings is promoted, aiming for 20% or more.	UNICEF, Ministry of Energy and Hydraulic Resource, other participating institutions	USD 20,000 of dedicated budget, integrated to Activity 1.3.1.
2.1.2 Promote CR-WASH and sanitation through climate-adapted community-led total sanitation (CLTS) and nationwide awareness-raising	Campaigns may not address women's and girls' specific needs (e.g., MHM). CLTS processes may be dominated by men, leading to sanitation solutions that are unsafe or impractical for women and girls.	Design campaigns addressing women's and girls' needs (e.g., safe and accessible water supplies, hygiene) and involve women/girls in community-led total sanitation (CLTS) activities.	70,000 women/girls reached by CLTS interventions by project end.	Ministry of Health, Ministry of Women Empowerment , NGOs/CSOs, UNICEF	USD 30,000 of dedicated budget, integrated to Output 2.1 budget, includes CLTS demand-creation.

2.1.3. Constructing, rehabilitating, and adapting climate-resilient sanitation in 100 climate-affected primary schools and 100 healthcare facilities	Construction can increase SEA/SH risks. Facilities may lack critical features for women and girls (e.g., privacy, lighting, MHM disposal). Social norms may prevent girls from participating in hygiene clubs.	Build gender-separated facilities with MHM-specific features (e.g., shower blocks, safe access) in schools and health centres, prioritizing women's and girls' safety.	a) 100% of target schools equipped WASH infrastructure with MHM-specific features by project end. B) 100% water systems built or rehabilitated taking females' specific needs into consideration	UNICEF, Awarded Private Companies, Ministry of Energy and Hydraulic Resource, Ministry of Education, Ministry of Health, Local NGOs, UNICEF	USD 30,000 of dedicated budget, integrated to Output 2.1.
2.1.4 Develop capacities of local governments, communities, water operators, and the private sector to design, operate, maintain, and monitor CR-WASH services	Social norms, time, poverty, and lack of confidence may prevent women from participating in capacity-building activities, reinforcing their exclusion from technical and management roles.	Ensure gender-balanced participation in trainings Maintain adequate female representation in local WASH committees and school clubs Include MHM education to empower girls in facility utilization and maintenance.	A) Women participation in all local sanitation committees, water user associations, and school clubs is promoted, with the aim to achieve 35% (50% in school clubs) representation or more. B) School clubs and healthcare personnel in 100 schools and 100 healthcare facilities trained on MHM and CR-WASH by project end.	UNICEF, IPs, Private Sector	USD 10,000 of dedicated budget, integrated to Output 2.1.
2.3.1. Engage and train local stakeholders in climate risk assessment, conflict-sensitive resilience	Women and their traditional knowledge may be excluded from the assessment process, their specific experience and needs not	Actively involve women, girls, and women-led organizations in the assessment, training, and solution finding and implementation processes,	a) 100% of plans and implemented solutions reflecting gender-	Ministry of Environment, UNICEF, IPs, community groups and	USD 90,000 of dedicated budget, integrated to Output 2.3.

planning, and disaster preparedness 2.3.3. Support community-led design and implementation of WRM and DRR solutions	considered in decisions-making, planning, and implementation. Discussing harmful gender norms and the specific conditions and needs of females could be met with cultural resistance if not managed sensitively. Men may dominate decision-making, leading to solutions that do not meet women's needs. Women may be relegated to supportive roles (e.g., cooking) rather than active implementation and leadership.	recognizing their critical role in household water management and their unique perspectives on water scarcity and flood impacts. Co-designing local solutions to reflect their needs and traditional knowledge. Encourage/provide platforms for women to share their traditional and local knowledge related to water management and climate resilience Address harmful gender norms in training modules.	specific needs by project end. b) Increased women influence in decision-making, measured by the percentage of community-led WRM/DRR solutions that were proposed or significantly modified by women members.	CSOs, MEDHR	
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7. Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)

A grievance is a concern or complaint raised by beneficiaries, affected communities, or stakeholders related to the perceived or actual impacts of the project activities. The objectives of establishing an effective GRM are to:

- Provide stakeholders with a clear and accessible process for raising grievances and concerns, including the option to do so anonymously;
- Structure and manage the handling of comments, responses, and grievances in a timely, fair, and transparent manner, in accordance with local and national regulations;
- Ensure that grievances are addressed in a way that strengthens accountability to project beneficiaries and upholds human rights principles.

To operationalize these objectives, the GRM is based on the following principles:

- **Legitimacy:** Trusted by stakeholders and accountable for fair grievance processing.
- **Accessibility and Cultural Appropriateness:** Widely known and easy to use, with adequate support for stakeholders facing barriers such as language or mobility constraints. The mechanism is gender- and age-inclusive, ensuring protection for marginalized groups and persons with disabilities. It is also publicized in local languages through culturally relevant means.
- **Anonymity and Protection from Retaliation:** The mechanism provides dedicated channels for stakeholders to submit grievances anonymously. To protect against retaliation, UNICEF and its partners will ensure that the identity of the complainant is kept confidential throughout the process, particularly in instances where the complainant expresses fear of reprisal.
- **Predictability:** Provides clear procedures, indicative timeframes for resolution, and transparency on process outcomes.
- **Equitability:** Ensures equal access to grievance processes, providing information, advice, and support so all stakeholders can engage fairly.
- **Transparency:** Maintains open communication channels, keeps complainants informed, and records all grievance responses.
- **Rights-compatibility:** Aligns with internationally recognized human rights and does not prevent access to judicial or administrative remedies. When necessary, it supplements existing formal or informal mechanisms to ensure human rights compliance.
- **Continuous Learning:** Identifies lessons to enhance the mechanism, prevent future grievances, and improve project implementation.
- **Confidentiality:** Prioritizes complainant safety during reporting and investigation. The mechanism incorporates secure, confidential reporting channels and data storage, particularly for cases involving gender-based violence (GBV) or abuse.

By adhering to these principles, the GRM ensures that grievances are handled fairly, efficiently, and in alignment with international best practices, ultimately strengthening trust and engagement with project stakeholders.

The GRM will function as a critical feedback loop to inform project implementation, enhance performance, and identify risks early—particularly in relation to environmental and social safeguards. In situations where movement restrictions or insecurity are present, UNICEF will ensure that staff responsible for managing grievances have remote access to necessary systems, allowing processes to remain operational.

7.1 Project Grievance Redress Mechanisms

This project will operate a single project-level grievance redress mechanism implemented through UNICEF’s Complaints and Feedback Management approach. Other mechanisms that may also be available to stakeholders, including existing inter-agency humanitarian feedback channels and the GCF’s Independent Redress Mechanism, are described below for information only and do not replace the project grievance mechanism.

7.2 UNICEF’s Complaints and Feedback Management (CFM) Procedure

This project will apply UNICEF’s Procedure on Complaints and Feedback Management as its project-level grievance redress mechanism. The mechanism is designed to receive and manage complaints and feedback from programme stakeholders in a timely, safe and confidential manner, while protecting personal data and supporting programme effectiveness and risk management.

Framework and Categorization

The Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) is structured to receive, record, act upon, and analyse all complaints and feedback in a timely and confidential manner. To ensure a consistent and appropriate response, all submissions are classified into one of four standard categories:

- Category 1: Requests, Observations, and Grievances: Includes requests for information or assistance, suggestions, and general expressions of dissatisfaction.
- Category 2: Concerns: Pertains to potential contraventions of UNICEF’s safeguarding or environmental and social standards that pose a risk of harm.
- Category 3: Incidents: Refers to confirmed occurrences or events that have resulted in safeguarding, environmental, or social harm.
- Category 4: Fraud and Corruption, and Aid Diversion: Encompasses fraudulent or corrupt practices as well as the misappropriation of aid resources by external actors.

Procedural Workflow and Timelines

The procedure outlines a clear, multi-stage process for managing complaints, with strict timelines to ensure swift action, particularly for high-risk issues.

Acknowledgement and Closure Timelines

Category	Acknowledgement	Closure
1. Requests, Observations, & Grievances	Within 2 working days	Within 31 days (or 90 days for Data Subject Requests)
2. Concerns	Within 2 working days	Within 15 days
3. Incidents	Within 12 hours	Within 48 hours

4. Fraud & Corruption, and Aid Diversion

Within 2 working days

Within 31 days

Assignment and Initial Follow-up

Each recorded complaint is assigned to a designated focal point based on its category:

- Requests, Observations and Grievances and Concerns records are assigned to the relevant Programme Focal Point(s). More serious Incident records are assigned to the relevant Chief of Programme Section, while records of Fraud and Corruption, and Aid Diversion are assigned to the Head of Operations.
- For serious cases (Incidents and Fraud/Corruption), an initial follow-up is conducted to confirm necessary information and ensure immediate support, such as victim/survivor assistance, is initiated. This process is not an investigation and must not interfere with one.

Review and Decision-Making

If a complainant is not satisfied with the resolution proposed by the Country Office the mechanism does not prevent access to judicial or administrative remedies available under the laws of the Central African Republic

The final decision on the recommended course of action for these cases rests with the Representative. A record is formally closed upon resolution, implementation of an agreed course of action, or referral to OIAI.

If a complainant is not satisfied with the resolution proposed by the Country Office Representative, the mechanism does not prevent access to judicial or administrative remedies available under the laws of the Central African Republic

Management of Outstanding Records

The procedure includes a clear escalation pathway for records that are not closed within their specified timelines or where the complainant is not satisfied. Outstanding requests or concerns are transferred to the Chief of the Programme Section for resolution and can be escalated to the Deputy Representative if needed. More serious outstanding incidents or fraud and corruption records are immediately escalated to the Representative, who convenes senior staff to determine a final course of action.

Management of Anonymous Grievances

The project grievance mechanism will allow anonymous submissions through available feedback channels, where feasible. Anonymous complaints will be reviewed and acted upon to the extent possible based on the information provided. To appeal anonymously, a Unique Tracking ID will be used to assign a code to the grievance and communicate its resolution anonymously through established channels Stakeholders will be informed that anonymous submissions may limit UNICEF's ability to seek clarification, provide direct feedback, or undertake a full follow-up where essential information is missing. Any information received will be handled with due regard to confidentiality, safety, security and personal data protection.

Accountability and Oversight

Clear lines of responsibility ensure accountability at all levels.

- Country Office: The Representative is ultimately responsible and accountable for the effective implementation and strategic oversight of the procedure. Programme and Operations Focal Points manage the day-to-day handling of records, while Specialized Focal Points provide technical guidance.

- Oversight: Cases involving potential misconduct by UNICEF personnel or partners, such as sexual exploitation and abuse or significant fraud, are promptly referred to the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations (OIAI), which is the independent office authorized to conduct such investigations.
- Analysis and Learning: Complaints and feedback data are regularly analysed to identify systemic trends, risks, and issues, which are then used to inform and improve programme effectiveness and strengthen risk management.

Requirements for Implementing Partners

Implementing partners and vendors involved in the project will be required to promote the project grievance channels and ensure that communities are informed about how to use them. Complaints and feedback received through their own channels in relation to project activities will be reported to UNICEF in line with agreed reporting arrangements. Any concern, incident, or allegation of fraud and corruption will be referred to UNICEF immediately and confidentially for handling under the applicable process.

7.3 The CAR Standard Operating Procedures for Collective Feedback Mechanisms

In some project areas, communities may also use existing inter-agency humanitarian feedback channels, including community information and feedback structures and mobile feedback arrangements where these are operational. These channels are not the project grievance mechanism, but they may serve as entry points for project-related feedback and grievances. Where project-related matters are received through such channels, they will be referred to UNICEF for handling through the project grievance mechanism, subject to appropriate confidentiality and data protection safeguards.

10.1.3 The GCF's Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM)

Paragraph 69 of the GCF's Governing Instrument mandates the establishment of an IRM, which reports directly to the GCF Board. The IRM is tasked with:

- Reviewing requests for reconsideration of projects or programmes denied funding by the GCF Board;
- Addressing complaints or grievances from persons or communities who may be adversely affected by GCF-funded activities through problem solving and/or compliance review;
- Initiating investigations independently where warranted;
- Monitoring implementation of Board decisions and agreements reached through the grievance process;
- Recommending policy or procedural changes to the Board based on observed trends or international best practices;
- Supporting capacity-building for grievance mechanisms of Direct Access Entities (DAEs); and
- Providing education and outreach on grievance redress to GCF stakeholders and the public.

Requests may be submitted to the IRM in any of the six official UN languages via: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/case-register/file-complaint>. For CAR, the French version of the request will take precedence in case of any discrepancy.

Stakeholders do not need to exhaust the project-level GRM or UNICEF's CFM before contacting the GCF IRM. Information on how to access the IRM will be clearly communicated during all stakeholder engagement sessions and through simplified brochures distributed in Fulani communities.

Terms of disclosure and access to the IRM are to be negotiated with the GCF.

IRM Contact Information:

Green Climate Fund

175, Art center-daero, Yeonsu-gu, Incheon 22004, Republic of Korea

Email: irm@gcfund.org

Website: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund>

7.4 Grievances Related to Safeguarding, inclusive of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Sexual Harassment (SH)

In line with UNICEF's zero-tolerance policy, all allegations of Gender-Based Violence (GBV), Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Sexual Harassment (SH) will be handled with the utmost seriousness, urgency, and confidentiality. Such allegations are classified as Category 3: Incidents under the UNICEF CFM Procedure and are managed through a specialized, fast-tracked process separate from the general GRM to ensure the safety and dignity of the survivor. The project will follow a strict survivor-centred approach, adhering to both the humanitarian procedures in CAR and the official UNICEF CFM Procedure.

Core Principles

The handling of all Incident records is guided by the following principles:

- **Safety and Do-No-Harm:** The survivor's physical and psychological safety is the highest priority. Measures will be taken to prevent re-traumatization and mitigate risks of retaliation.
- **Confidentiality and Privacy:** Case details will only be disclosed with the survivor's informed consent and on a strict need-to-know basis to protect them from further harm.
- **Respect and Non-discrimination:** Survivors will be treated with dignity, respect, and empathy, without blame or prejudice.
- **Choice and Agency:** Survivors have the right to determine how they wish to proceed and can withdraw consent at any point. The goal is to empower them in the reporting and response process.
- **Access to Services:** The project will facilitate timely access to comprehensive, survivor-centred assistance, including medical, psychosocial, legal, and safety support.
- **No Investigations:** Project staff will not investigate allegations. Their role is strictly to receive the report safely and make a confidential referral to the appropriate internal channels or designated investigation bodies.

Roles and Contacts

UNICEF will rely on the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations (OIAI) Hotline (Integrity1@unicef.org) for reports of wrongdoing and/or misconduct.

For issues not falling under OIAI's remit, the relevant reporting channel will be provided at the proposal stage.

Process and Timelines (for Managing Incident Records Category 3)

1. Confidential Intake and Acknowledgement (0-12 hours)

Any project staff or partner who receives an allegation will listen with empathy, ensure the survivor's immediate safety, and inform them of their rights and available support options. They will not ask for details beyond what is necessary to obtain informed consent for a referral. An acknowledgement of the complaint will be provided to the survivor within 12 hours of UNICEF becoming aware of the record.

2. Assignment and Initial Follow-up (within 12 hours)

Once recorded, the complaint is assigned to the relevant Chief of Programme Section. A designated Programme Focal Point, working in coordination with a Specialized (PSEA/Safeguarding) Focal Point, immediately conducts an Initial Follow-up. This is not an investigation; its purpose is to ensure a survivor-centred response is activated, including timely referral for medical, psychosocial, legal, and other assistance based on the survivor's needs and wishes.

3. Review, Referral, and Decision (within 24 hours)

A decision on the course of action is made swiftly:

If the allegation involves a UNICEF staff member, affiliate personnel, implementing partner, , or vendor, it falls under the mandate of the Office of Internal Audit and Investigations (OIAI). The UNICEF Representative must refer the matter to OIAI within 24 hours of being notified.

If the matter does not fall under OIAI's mandate, the Incident Review Team (IRT) is convened to review the case and recommend a course of action to the Representative for a final decision.

4. Record Closure and Parallel Case Management (Closure within 48 hours)

The official CFM record for the incident is formally closed within 48 hours of UNICEF becoming aware of it, once the matter has been referred to OIAI or a course of action has been decided by the Representative. It is critical to note that this procedural closure does not mean that support for the survivor ends. Survivor-centred case management is a parallel process that continues in coordination with specialized GBV partners for as long as needed, always respecting the survivor's wishes and consent.

Data Protection

All information is handled on a strict need-to-know basis. Survivors decide what information may be shared. The following rules apply:

- Data Collection: Collect the minimum data needed for a safe referral. Do not record graphic details.
- Consent: Record if the survivor/complainant consented to referral and to anonymized reporting.
- Storage: Keep records in an encrypted file with role-based access. Retain for 24 months, then delete securely (unless there is a legal hold).
- Reporting: Only anonymized data appear on dashboards or routine reports.

Community Information & GRM Interface

Safe reporting options (including hotlines and named focal points) will be clearly posted in project areas in French and local languages. Incident records involving SEA/SH/GBV bypass the standard GRM steps and are managed directly through this specialized procedure. The main GRM log will only contain an anonymized entry confirming a referral was completed to maintain confidentiality.

Monitoring

The PMU will report the following anonymized metrics quarterly:

- Number of reports received
- Percentage of cases referred within 24 hours
- Percentage of survivors accessing services within 72 hours
- Average case-closure time
- Optional survivor-satisfaction feedback (with consent)

7.5 Fulani-Specific Measures

Consultations with Fulani communities in different project locations highlighted context-specific preferences for how project-related complaints and feedback can be raised safely and effectively. The project will therefore apply additional culturally appropriate access measures and Traditional Dispute Resolution Systems (TDR) to ensure that Fulani communities can use the overall project grievance mechanism in ways that reflect local communication practices and trusted entry points. Depending on the local context, these measures may include engagement through recognized community or religious leaders, direct contact with designated UNICEF or partner staff, and communication in relevant local languages. These arrangements will serve as entry points to the overall project grievance mechanism and will not replace it. Confidentiality, safety, and voluntary use of available channels will be maintained, including for anonymous submissions where feasible.

7.5.1 Fulani-Specific Grievance Channels and Resolution Pathways

Based on the consultations, the following entry points and TDRs structures are formally recognized for this project and will be publicized for Fulani communities:

- **Bangui (Traditional/Religious Leadership):** In Bangui, grievances will be channelled through traditional leadership structures, specifically clan chiefs or religious leaders (imams), and may be resolved through mediation led by them. The project PMU will document the outcomes of these traditional sessions to ensure alignment with GCF human rights standards.
- **In Bossangoa,** the community can raise concerns via a direct phone call or via mobile community feedback and complaint collectors .
- **In Ndélé,** a hierarchical channel is preferred, where the community informs their customary chief, who then escalates the issue to the Sultan Mayor of the town of Ndélé. Concerns reported to the Sultan Mayor may be resolved through the Sultanate's customary court. UNICEF will maintain a liaison role to ensure the process remains inclusive of women and youth. Same mechanism will apply for Vakaga Prefecture.
- In all locations, the project will maintain an alternative confidential route that can be used directly by women, adolescent girls, young people and others who may face barriers to raising concerns through traditional leadership structures. This is important to ensure that culturally appropriate engagement does not unintentionally exclude some voices
- **Agreement on Usage:** Complainants have the right to choose between the TDR or the standard UNICEF CFM at any time. If a person wants anonymity, they must use the UNICEF channel rather than the TDR channel. In cases where an anonymous grievance alleges corruption or SEAH, the investigation will be led by the UNICEF Office of Internal Audit and Investigations (OIAI).

Annex A: References

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