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**MINISTRY OF EDUCATION AND TRAINING (MoET)
&
MINISTRY OF SOCIAL DEVELOPMENT (MoSD)**

**BASIC EDUCATION STRENGTHENING PROJECT (BESP)
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Volume 2: The SEP

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN (SEP)

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Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

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OTHER REPORTS IN THIS SERIES

The Lesotho Basic Education Strengthening Project (BESP) Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) forms part of a series which is intended to provide complete documentation for the requirements of a holistic Environmental and Social Safeguards management system for the project. This Report contains the findings of a study conducted for the Education sector of the Kingdom of Lesotho and the instrument has been developed based on the local conditions and findings.

The following documents form the series:

1. Volume 1: The ESMF
BASIC EDUCATION STRENGTHENING PROJECT (BESP)
ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK
2. Volume 2: The SEP
BASIC EDUCATION STRENGTHENING PROJECT (BESP)
STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN (SEP)
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BASIC EDUCATION STRENGTHENING PROJECT (BESP)
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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

CRC	Convention on the Rights of the Child
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
DEO	District Environmental Officer
DoP	Department of Planning
DPS	Deputy Principal Secretary
EA	Environmental Assessment
E&S	Environment and Social
ECD	Early Childhood Development
EAP	Emergency Action Plan
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EIS	Environmental Impact Study
ESCP	Environmental and Social Commitment Plan
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESS	Environmental and Social Standards
ECCD	Early Childhood Care and Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECoL	Examinations Council of Lesotho
EGRA	Early Grade Reading Assessments
EGR	Early Grade Reading
EMIS	Education Management and Information System
ESA	Education Sector Analysis
ESSP	Education Sector Strategic Plan
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GER	Gross Enrolment Ratio
GIIP	Good International Industry Practice
GoL	Government of Lesotho
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
GPE	Global Partnership for Education
HCI	Human Capital Index
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Virus
IECCD	Integrated Early Childhood Care and Development
ICT	Information and Communication Technology
KRA	key result areas
LBEIP	Lesotho Basic Education Improvement Project

LCE	Lesotho College of Education
LEG	Local Education Group
LEQEP	Lesotho Education Quality Enhancement Project
LMIC	Lower Middle-Income Country
LMP	Labour Management Procedure
ILO	International Labour Organization
MCST	Ministry of Communication, Science and Technology
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDP	Ministry of Development Planning
MELQO	Measurement of Early Learning and Quality Outcomes
MFDP	Ministry of Finance and Development Planning
MICS	Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey
MoET	Ministry of Education and Training
MoF	Ministry of Finance
MoSD	Ministry of Social Development
MTEC	Ministry of Tourism, Environment and Culture.
NCDC	National Curriculum and Development Centre
NEP	National Environmental Policy
NES	National Environmental Secretariat
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NIP	National Implementation Plan
NSDP	National Development Strategic Plan
NISSA	National Information System for Social Assistance
NJCTL	New Jersey Centre for Teaching and Learning
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
OVC	Orphans and Vulnerable Children
PDO	Programme Development Objective
PEP	Post-Exposure Prophylaxis
PFU	Project Facilitation Unit
PS	Principal Secretary
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SP	Social Protection
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund

1. INTRODUCTION/PROJECT DESCRIPTION

1.1 BACKGROUND INFORMATION ON THE OVERALL PROJECT

The Project Development Objective (PDO) of the proposed project is to “to improve student retention and teacher quality in targeted junior secondary schools and pilot specific interventions to strengthen ECCD service delivery.” To achieve the first two parts of the development objective (i.e., improve student retention and quality of teaching in math and science subjects in junior secondary schools), BESP will support several demand and supply side interventions at the junior secondary level including cash transfer for poor households, supporting adolescents through youth clubs and improving math and science teachers capacity through online teacher training. In addition, the project will provide system strengthening support to put in place key building blocks that are needed to improving access and quality of ECCD service delivery in Lesotho, including through the piloting and evaluation of the revised ECCD curriculum and through mapping of service providers in the sub-sector. The specific components and sub-components of the project are listed below:

Table 1-1 Proposed project Components and Sub-Components

Component 1: Improving the retention of students in junior secondary education.	1.1: Expand the cash transfer scheme to students from poor households
	1.2: Scaling up implementation of support groups/clubs for girls and boys
	1.3. Strengthening online training models in Mathematics and Science for junior secondary school teachers
Component 2: System strengthening to improve ECCD service delivery	2.1. Piloting and evaluating the new curriculum in reception classes and ECCD centres
	2.2. Mapping of ECCD service providers and strengthening monitoring and support systems
Component 3: Project management, capacity building and technical assistance	Project management, capacity building and technical assistance in selected areas

The Project will apply the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (approved in 2018). The following E&S Standards are deemed relevant to the Project:

Environmental and Social Standards Relevance Given its Context at the Time of Appraisal

E & S Standards	Relevance
Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts	Relevant
Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure	Relevant
Labor and Working Conditions	Relevant
Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management	Not relevant
Community Health and Safety	Not relevant
Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement	Not relevant
Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources	Not relevant
Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities	Not relevant
Cultural Heritage	Not relevant
Financial Intermediaries	Not relevant

2. REGULATION AND REQUIREMENTS

The BESP SEP takes into account the existing institutional and regulatory framework within the context of Lesotho and international laws. These applicable laws and international good practices are discussed below:

2.1 RELEVANT NATIONAL LEGISLATION

The following is a summary of the relevant national legislation for the BESP project.

Table 2-1 Summary of Legislation and Guidelines

	Legislation	Purpose
1.	The Constitution of Lesotho	Section 36 of the Constitution of Lesotho lays the foundation for environmental and social legislation and stipulates that Lesotho will adopt policies designed to protect and enhance the natural and cultural environment of Lesotho for the benefit of both present and future generations and shall endeavour to ensure for all citizens, a sound and safe environment adequate for their health and well-being.
2.	National Environmental Policy (1998)	Was crafted to protect the environment in the face of all developmental activities that may be undertaken in Lesotho. Its mission is "to promote and ensure that the present and future development of Lesotho is socio-economically and

Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

		environmentally sustainable”, while its goal is to protect and conserve the environmental with a view to achieving sustainable development for Lesotho.
4.	Local Government Act 1997	<p>The Local Government has decentralized community service delivery through the Community Councils. The District Council being the overseer of the Council’s activities or development in the Councils.</p> <p>To this end, Community Councils have the power to make by-laws in the education sector.</p>
5.	The Labour Code Order 1992	Sets out that every employer shall, so far as is reasonably practicable, ensure the safety health and welfare at work of all of his or her employees, by providing and maintaining plant, systems of work, and a working environment for his or her employees that is clean, safe, without risks to health and adequate as regards sanitation facilities and arrangements for their welfare at work; and making arrangements for ensuring, safety and absence of risks to health in connection with the use, handling, storage and transportation of articles and substances.
6.	National Health Policy (2011)	<p>Commits the Government to equitable access to a standard quality of health services for all. This will be implemented through the District Health Package which provides Essential Health Services package components free of charge or highly subsidized to all citizens.</p> <p>The vision of the policy is to have a healthy nation, living a quality and productive life. Its mission is to enhance a system that will deliver quality health services efficiently, effectively and equitably to all Basotho.</p>
10.	Education Act 2010	Governs and regulates the administration of schools, teachers and all other matters relating to education in Lesotho. It is pursuant to the principle of provision of education of the people of Lesotho, and in particular, ensuring that amongst others (a) every child is provided with opportunities and facilities to enable him to develop physically, mentally, morally, spiritually and socially in a healthy, normal manner and in conditions of freedom and dignity.
11.	<p>National Strategic Development Plan (NSDP) 2012/13-2016/17</p> <p>Istanbul Programme of Action (IPoA)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Human and Social Development 	<p>The main objectives are to: Reduce infant and child morbidity and mortality rates, Malnutrition and maternal mortality rate; improve quality, quantity and retain skilled health professionals/personnel, procurement and dispensing systems for pharmaceuticals and essential supplies; Improve quality and access to laboratory services; Increase coverage and access to education services; Strengthen the management and accountability of education facilities and systems, partnerships with the private sector, NGOs, churches and development partners.</p> <p>Social Protection:</p> <p>The main objective is to consolidate and improve efficiency of social protection systems and enhance coverage of selected interventions; Increase capacity of able-bodied persons to deal with vulnerability; Improve work safety and</p>

		ease job search and Increase capacity for disaster risk management at household, community and national level.
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2.2 WORLD BANK ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARDS

The proposed project is being developed with the support of the World Bank. In developing this SEP all environmental and social assessments carried out under this assignment are in accordance with World Bank Environmental and Social Standards (ESS).

The operations of the World Bank (WB) are guided by a comprehensive set of policies and procedures, dealing with the Bank's development objectives and goals, the instruments for pursuing them, and specific requirements for Bank-financed operations. The core of this guidance lies in the Bank's ESS, which are critical to ensuring that potentially adverse environmental/social consequences are identified, minimised and mitigated so as to prevent "undue harm to people and their environment in the development process". The ESS of relevance to the project for consideration are:

- **ESS 1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts**
ESS 1 sets out the Borrower's responsibilities for assessing, managing and monitoring environmental and social risks and impacts associated with each stage of a project supported by the Bank through Investment Project Financing, in order to achieve environmental and social outcomes consistent with the Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs),
- **ESS 2: Labour and Working Conditions**
ESS 2 recognises the importance of employment creation and income generation in the pursuit of poverty reduction and inclusive economic growth. Borrowers can promote sound worker-management relationships and enhance the development benefits of a project by treating workers in the project fairly and providing safe and healthy working conditions,
- **ESS 3: Resources Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management**
ESS 3 recognizes that economic activity and urbanization often generate pollution to air, water, and land, and consume finite resources that may threaten people, ecosystem services and the environment at the local, regional, and global levels. The current and projected atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gases (GHG) threatens the welfare of current and future generations. At the same time, more efficient and effective resources use, pollution prevention and GHG emission avoidance, and mitigation technologies and practices have become more accessible and achievable.
- **ESS 4: Community Health and Safety**
ESS 4 recognizes that project activities, equipment and infrastructure can increase community exposure to risks and impacts. In addition, communities that are already subjected to impacts from climate change may also experience an acceleration or intensification of impacts due to project activities.
- **ESS 6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources**
ESS 6 recognizes that protecting and conserving biodiversity and sustainably managing living natural resources are fundamental to sustainable development. Biodiversity is defined as the variability among living organisms from all sources including, inter alia, terrestrial, marine and other aquatic ecosystems and the ecological complexes of which they are a part; this includes

diversity within species, between species, and of ecosystems. Biodiversity often underpins ecosystems valued by humans. Impacts on biodiversity can therefore often adversely affect the delivery of ecosystem services.

- **ESS 10: Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure**

ESS 10 recognizes the importance of open and transparent engagement between the Borrower and the project stakeholders as an essential element of good international practice. Effective stakeholder engagement can improve the environmental and social sustainability of projects, enhance project acceptance, and make a significant contribution to successful project design and implementation.

3. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

The purpose of the present Stakeholder Engagement Plan is, among others, to provide information on how Stakeholder Engagement will be practiced throughout the course of the project and which methods will be used as part of the process; as well as to outline the responsibilities of the Ministry of Education and Training (MoET) and Ministry of Social Development (MoSD). While the project is not expected to cause any serious or substantial environmental and/or social risks, the Project will apply the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), and as such, will particularly ensure that requirements of ESS10 on Stakeholder Engagement are followed throughout the project implementation. As part of stakeholder engagement in preparing this project, the MoET and MoSD will work closely with the Local Education Group and other relevant ministries and agencies in Lesotho. The Local Education Group is comprised of Key Role players in the Education Sector in Lesotho, and MoET and MoSD will have to therefore work closely with them to improve outcomes of the Basic Education Strengthening Project (BESP). As part of consultations during preparation of BESP, the MoET and MoSD are engaged in ongoing dialogue with all stakeholders within the Local Education Group, as well as in coordination with each other. They have informed the main stakeholders on the Project design, indicated its openness for feedback on the Project design, and informed them on the applicability of the WB's ESF to BESP. MoET and MoSD has also stressed the importance of stakeholder engagement with primary beneficiaries of the project – boys and girls (and their parents, legal guardians, etc.) attending junior secondary education in target constituencies (communities with low poverty rate and low school retention rate). The initial, remote consultations took in December 2020, and its main purpose was to introduce the project and gather stakeholders' views and perceptions on the proposed project. The Project will conduct more in-depth stakeholder engagement before appraisal of the Project (by April 2021), and will continue to do so throughout Project implementation. Currently due to ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, the public health situation does not enable for in-person consultations and hence any engagement so far has been conducted remotely through phone call and video calls. The SEP will be disclosed both on MoET and MoSD's websites and re-disclosed as needed with necessary updates before appraisal. Meaningful stakeholder engagement will be particularly important in the context of Component 1, which among others, supports cash transfer programs for low-income beneficiaries. Moreover, the project will finance community mobilization activities that will involve consultations, communication campaign and outreach activities, with the goal to role of School Based Management Committees in holding schools accountable to ensure that beneficiaries stay in school as well as strengthen the school-community relationship to improve student retention.

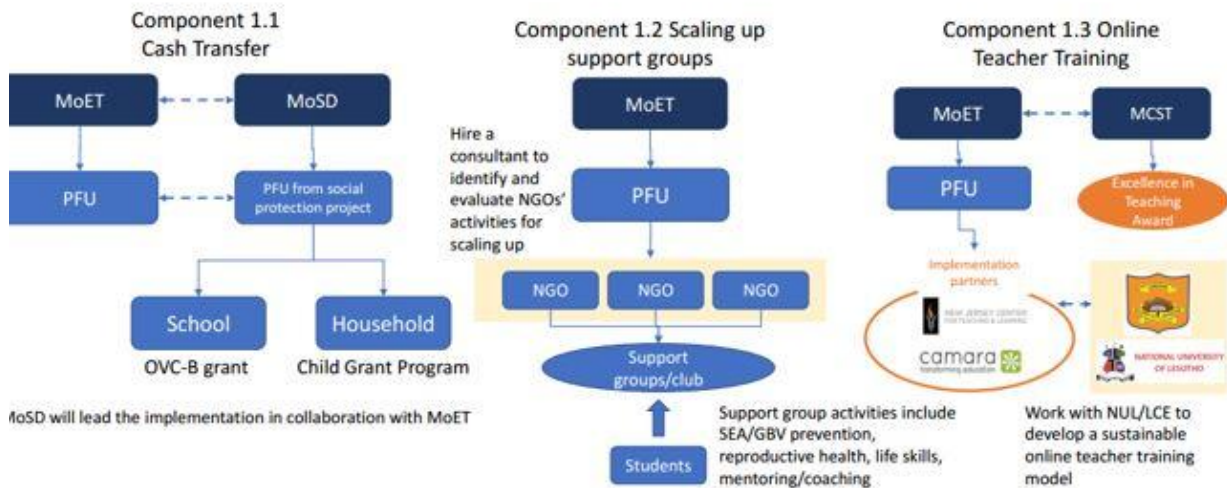
4. STAKEHOLDER IDENTIFICATION AND ANALYSIS

The Project's environmental risks are low to minimal, while social risks are moderate. This SEP was prepared to reflect and address those risks proportionately through stakeholder engagement. Based on the project strategy, the identification of key stakeholders will be informed and consulted about the project, including individuals, groups, or communities was informed by the figures presented below which outlines the implementation arrangements which underpin the links between key role-players in the implementation of the proposed project activities. The Figures have shown the key role players by

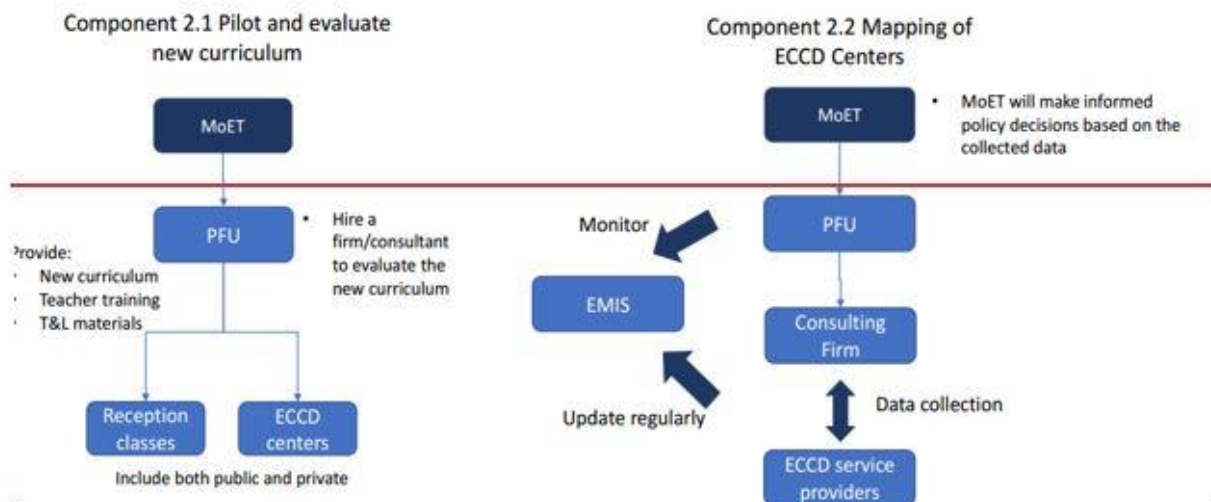
Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

component across the 3 project components.

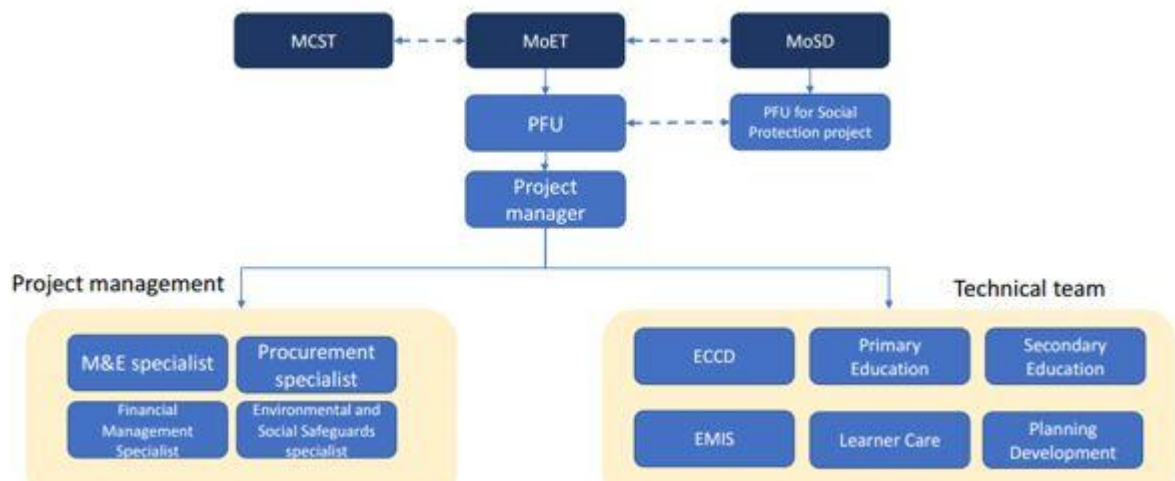
Component 1 Stakeholders and Implementation Arrangements



Component 2 Stakeholders and Implementation Arrangements



Component 3 Stakeholders and Implementation Arrangements



In addition to the offices seen on figures 1,2 and 3 it is worth mentioning that other role-players by virtue of their inherent existence in the Education Sector will be included. These will include amongst others, representatives of proprietors i.e., churches, communities and government, Development partners such as LCN and UNICEF, Teacher Training Institutions such as The National University of Lesotho and the Lesotho College of Education.

The ultimate beneficiaries of the Project will be boys and girls attending junior secondary education in target constituencies, which have high poverty rate and low student retention rate. Student are expected to directly benefit from the OVC-B and CGP grants through the project's Component 1.1. In addition, students enrolled in junior secondary grades will benefit from improved classroom instruction in mathematics and science as the result of the online teacher training intervention and the youth club interventions that will be scaled up. Direct project beneficiaries will also include 1,607 math and science teachers that will be trained as well as project staff at the MOET and MOSD. The exact schools which will benefit from this intervention will be identified and consulted on by appraisal. This SEP will be updated and re-disclosed accordingly to reflect that information.

4.1 AFFECTED PARTIES

The project is expected to benefit ECCD level children in select schools and their caregivers, learners from primary schools and their teachers as well as secondary level learners and their teachers. The grants will be coordinated through the Ministry of Social Development whereas the Ministry of Communication, Science and Technology on the online training models. Ministry of Communication, Science and Technology is not an implementing entity, but will collaborate with MoET and MoSD on this activity. The list of schools will be appended in due course before appraisal by April 2021.

The project activities do not pose significant environmental or social risks, and thus, the scope of the project's stakeholder engagement will mostly focus on project beneficiaries given the project's overall positive impacts. Potential groups that may be deemed as adversely affected parties could be vulnerable or disadvantaged groups that were not properly consulted, included, or had other challenges in accessing project benefits or information about the project. To address these issues, the Project will set up Project-level grievance redress mechanism (GRM) as described below. Said GRM will build upon experiences in from other two ongoing education projects supported by the World Bank in Lesotho.

4.2 DISADVANTAGED / VULNERABLE INDIVIDUALS OR GROUPS

It is particularly important to understand project impacts and whether they may disproportionately fall on disadvantaged or vulnerable individuals or groups, who often do not have a voice to express their concerns or understand the impacts of a project. The following can help outline an approach to understand the viewpoints of these groups:

- The grants activity is particularly based on need as will be postulated by the implementing departments with counsel and criteria review from knowledgeable institutions such as the Ministry of social development. The likely beneficiaries may need to be sensitized and made aware of the criteria for selection. The manner in which the information is shared as most of the mainstream modalities for information dissemination may be through channels that are not accessible to vulnerable people. Examples of simple yet unattainable channels may include newspapers and TV adverts and in some instances radio relative to community level Pitsos.
- In Lesotho there are a few minority groups which include most notably a sector of the Phuthi Tribe found mostly in the Quthing and Qacha's nek. If the benefits of the projects will accrue to schools in these districts care has to be made to ensure that the language barrier does not impede knowledge of any likely benefits at the community level.
- The best approach for dissemination of information to be explored are National radio, community radio's, National Television, Newspapers, Schools level public notice boards, Community level Pitsos, sms based information sharing and electronic media through sharing platforms and the government websites.
- Funding will be needed to pay for all these services in order to attain desired results. (Examples are providing translation into Sephuthi language; selecting accessible venues for events; providing transportation for people in remote areas to the nearest meeting; having small, focused meetings where vulnerable stakeholders are more comfortable asking questions or raising concerns etc.)
- As a result of the ongoing MoET programmes in Lesotho, the project will adopt the ongoing approach for continued engagement with vulnerable stakeholders and their representatives.

Below table is a preliminary snapshot of stakeholder engagement needs:

Table 4-1 Stakeholder Engagement Needs.

Community	Stakeholder group	Key characteristics	Language needs	Preferred notification means (e-mail, phone, radio, letter)	Specific needs (accessibility, large print, child care, daytime meetings)
	Parents with young 3–5-year-olds	Approximate households affected; children	Sesotho	Written information, radio, Pitso's/meetings	Child care for meetings
	Parents and caregivers of	extended families, poverty level	Sesotho, Sephuthi	Visit with translator and civil society representative	Graphics, education on selection process

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	Secondary school learners		Sesotho and English	School level information sharing by school leadership	School level information sharing by school leadership
	Teachers trained in STEM subjects		Sesotho and English	School level information sharing by school leadership	School level information sharing by school leadership

5. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

5.1 PURPOSE AND TIMING OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROGRAM

The main goal of the Stakeholder engagement plan is primarily to garner all support of the education sector. This support will allow for ease of implementation as it is assumed that mobilization of these stakeholders will provide an enabling environment for implementation of activities that will include amongst many others, training and procurement of teaching and learning materials. The ongoing sharing of information will be aligned with ongoing meetings that already exist. Examples of such meetings include Local Education Group *ad-hoc* meetings at the central level as well as the ongoing school level board meetings. In addition to these outlined meetings, it is worth mentioning that there will be progress updates on implementation of project activities at different levels. These updates will be provided by the different implementers of project activities. Documentation of these meetings will form part of project documentation.

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

- Provide guidance for stakeholder engagement such that it meets the standards of International Best Practice,
- Identify key stakeholders that are affected, and/or able to influence the Project and its activities,
- Identify the most effective methods, timing, and structures through which to share project information, and to ensure regular, accessible, transparent, and appropriate consultation,
- Develops a stakeholders engagement process that provides stakeholders with an opportunity to influence project,
- Establish formal grievance redress mechanisms disclosure,
- Define roles and responsibilities for the implementation of the SEP,
- Define reporting and monitoring measures to ensure the effectiveness of the SEP and periodical reviews of the SEP based on findings.

5.2 AN OVERVIEW OF STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

5.2.1 What is Stakeholder Engagement?

Stakeholder Engagement will be free of manipulation, interference, coercion, and intimidation, and conducted on the basis of timely, relevant, understandable and accessible information, in a culturally appropriate format. It involves interactions between identified groups of people and provides stakeholders with an opportunity to raise their concerns and opinions (e.g., by way of meetings, surveys, interviews and/or focus groups), and ensures that this information is taken into consideration when making project decisions.

Effective stakeholder engagement develops a “social licence” to operate and depends on mutual trust, respect and transparent communication between MOET and its stakeholders. It thereby improves its decision-making and performance by:

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

5.2.2 Principles for Effective Stakeholder Engagement

This (SEP) shall be informed by a set of principles defining its core values underpinning interactions with identified stakeholders. Common principles based on “International Best Practice” include the following:

- **Commitment** is demonstrated when the need to understand, engage and identify the community is recognized and acted upon early in the process,
- **Integrity** occurs when engagement is conducted in a manner that fosters mutual respect and trust,
- **Respect** is created when the rights, cultural beliefs, values and interests of stakeholders and affected communities are recognized,
- **Transparency** is demonstrated when community concerns are responded to in a timely, open, and effective manner,
- **Inclusiveness** is achieved when broad participation is encouraged and supported by appropriate participation opportunities; and
- **Trust** is achieved through open and meaningful dialogue that respects and upholds a community’s beliefs, values and opinions.

5.2.3 Stakeholder Engagement Considerations

The following considerations should be made when planning for stakeholder engagement:

Time and resources:

It takes time to develop and build trust-based relationships with stakeholders. The consensus from practitioners is that from the outset relationships with stakeholders should develop and grow, and that these relationships should be nurtured and fostered not to fade.

Additional stakeholders might be identified that also want to be engaged. No willing stakeholder should be excluded from the process of engagement. Some stakeholders will need to be educated about the concept of engagement itself, as well as on the complex issues requiring

specialised and technical knowledge. These demands can increase the cost of consultation required to meet external expectations, and often this occurs at a time when a project lacks the internal capacity and resources to implement a broad engagement strategy.

It raises expectations:

Stakeholders can have unrealistically high expectations of benefits that may accrue to them from a project. As such MOET from the outset must be clear on what they can and cannot do, establishing a clear understanding of their roles and responsibilities.

In LNHSS Project areas, the engagement processes should provide MOET with an opportunity to develop relationships with stakeholders and potential project partners.

Securing stakeholder participation:

Cultural norms and values can prevent stakeholders from freely participating in meetings. Often there are conflicting demands within a community, and it can be challenging for a project to identify stakeholders who are representative of common interests. This might be avoided by employing local consultants who are sensitive to local power dynamics, which requires project proponents developing an awareness of the local context and implementing structures to support and foster effective stakeholder engagement.

Consultation fatigue:

Moreover, there is evidence to suggest that stakeholders can easily tire of consultation processes especially when promises are unfulfilled, and their opinions and concerns are not taken into consideration. Often stakeholders feel their lives are not improving as a result of a project and this can lead to consultation meetings being used as an area to voice complaints and grievances about the lack of development. This might be avoided by coordinating stakeholder engagement and by ensuring BESP Consultants do not make promises to stakeholders, but rather use the public consultation process as an opportunity to manage expectations, challenge misconceptions, disseminate accurate project information, and gather stakeholder opinions which are feedback to the client and other project specialists.

5.2.4 Stakeholder Identification

In order to develop an effective SEP, it is necessary to determine who the stakeholders are and understand their needs and expectations for engagement, and their priorities and objectives in relation to the Project. This information is then used to tailor engagement to each type of stakeholder. As part of this process, it is particularly important to identify individuals and groups who may find it more difficult to participate and those who may be differentially or disproportionately affected by the project because of their marginalised or vulnerable status.

It is also important to understand how each stakeholder may be affected – or perceives they may be affected – so that engagement can be tailored to inform them and understand their views and concerns in an appropriate manner.

Stakeholders have been and will continue to be identified on a continuing basis by identifying:

- Various stakeholder categories that may be affected by, or be interested in, the Project; and

- Specific individuals, groups, and organizations within each of these categories taking into account,
- The expected Project area of impact, that is the geographical area over which it may cause impacts (both positive and negative) over its lifetime, and therefore the localities within which people and businesses could be affected,
- The nature of the impacts that could arise and therefore the types of national/local government entities, NGOs, academic and research institutions, and other bodies who may have an interest in these issues.

In general, engagement is directly proportional to impact and influence, and as the extent of impact of a project on a stakeholder group increases, or the extent of influence of a particular stakeholder on a project increases, engagement with that particular stakeholder group should intensify and deepen in terms of the frequency and the intensity of the engagement method used. All engagement should proceed on the basis of what are culturally acceptable and appropriate methods for each of the different stakeholder groups targeted.

5.2.5 Proposed strategy for information disclosure

Information and data that will be shared will be information about the project description that will include among many other issues, the project background, the theory of change and the summarized presentation of each of the project components and subcomponents. The projects beneficiaries selection will also be outlined. This is information that will largely be shared at the early stages of the project. This will be presented in document format to the district offices who will in-turn present these to school boards of selected schools. These documents will also be published in the Government of Lesotho website as well as the Ministry of Education and Training, and Ministry of Social Development websites. There will also be presentations and discussions over scheduled radio and television platforms where Ministry Officials responsible for implementation, management and coordination and coordination of project activities will make presentations about the project as well as the progress update while engaging with the public and answering any arising questions.

The Ministries will also use the platforms below to reach more stakeholders who do not have easy access to information:

- Newspapers, posters, radio, television,
- Information centres and exhibitions or other visual displays,
- Brochures, leaflets, posters, nontechnical summary documents and reports,
- Official correspondence, meetings,
- Website, social media.

The strategy will also include means to consult with project-affected stakeholders if there are significant changes to the project resulting in additional risks and impacts. The most critical aspect of the strategy is the leveraging of school boards engagement and coordination with the District Education Offices.

5.2.6 Proposed strategy for consultations

The Education Sector has a range of stakeholder groups as earlier identified. These include members of the Local Education Group, School Proprietor Representatives (churches, government, and communities), School boards which will in turn have access to the communities and community level governance structures as a result of their composition, District Education Officials, Ministry Officials and the general public. The Ministry of Education Information Office will be responsible for coordination of all these events and will keep a schedule of implementation of all outreach activities and report on progress.

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These groups will be engaged by use of different platforms including:

- Interviews
- Surveys, polls, and questionnaires for beneficiary feedback
- Public meetings, workshops, and/or focus groups on specific topic.
- Participatory methods
- Other traditional mechanisms for consultation and decision making.

Table 5-1 Stakeholder engagement techniques

Engagement Technique	Appropriate application of the technique
Correspondences (Phone, Emails)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Distribute information to Government officials, NGOs, Local Government, and organisations/agencies• Invite stakeholders to meetings and follow-up
One-on-one meetings	<p>Seeking views and opinions</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Enable stakeholder to speak freely about sensitive issues• Build personal relationships• Record meetings
Formal meetings	<p>Present the Project information to a group of stakeholders</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Allow group to comment – opinions and views• Build impersonal relation with high level stakeholders• Disseminate technical information• Record discussions
Public meetings (following COVID-19 guidelines)	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present Project information to a large group of stakeholders, especially communities• Allow the group to provide their views and opinions• Build relationship with the communities, especially those impacted• Distribute non-technical information• Facilitate meetings with presentations, PowerPoint, posters etc.• Record discussions, comments, questions.
Focus group meetings	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present Project information to a group of stakeholders (8- 15 people groups)• Allow stakeholders to provide their views on targeted baseline information• Build relationships with communities• Record responses
Project website	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present project information and progress updates• Disclose SEP, GRM and other relevant project documentation
Project leaflet	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Brief project information to provide regular update• Site specific project information.
Surveys	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Gathering opinions and views from individual stakeholders• Gather baseline data• Record data• Develop a baseline database for monitoring impacts
Workshops	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Present project information to a group of stakeholders• Allow a group of stakeholders to provide their views and opinions• Use participatory exercises to facilitate group discussions, brainstorm issues, analyse information, and develop recommendations and strategies• Record responses

5.2.7 Review of Comments

In engaging with the public, the Information will document discussions with collaboration from the implementing departments and will organize and present this collated information for documenting decisions made, concerns that need to be addressed and any other pertinent issues that might need to be referenced at any point in time during project implementation or at the end of the project. This will be done by documentation of presentations made, drafting of minutes from meeting or transcription of

recordings of meetings.

5.2.8 Future Phases of Project

Stakeholders and the public will be kept informed as the project develops, including reporting on project environmental and social performance and implementation of the stakeholder engagement plan and grievance mechanism. The Projects will report at least annually to stakeholders, but often will report more frequently during particularly active periods, when the public may experience more impacts or when phases are changing.

In addition to preliminary consultations that took place in December 2020, more in-depth stakeholder engagement activities, using the techniques described above in the chart, will be conducted prior to appraisal (by April 2021). This SEP will then be updated accordingly.

6. RESOURCES AND RESPONSIBILITIES FOR IMPLEMENTATION

6.1 RESOURCES

The cost of the stakeholder engagement activities can be benchmarked with those undertaken in both “Lesotho Education Quality for Equality Project” and “Lesotho Basic Education Improvement Project” in terms of cost estimation. This rationale therefore brings an estimated cost of about US \$ 50,000.00 which will be allocated from the overall project allotment. Other resources to be committed will be organized as such:

- The MoET Information Office (in close coordination with MoSD) will be in charge of the SEP in liaison with the project development team lead by the department of planning.
- The MoET (in close coordination with MoSD) is committed to the implementation of the project as well as the implementation of the SEP in keeping with requirements and good governance pillars therefore makes a commitment to commit some of the project funds towards the implementation of the SEP activities.
- Additional information on SEP related activities will be available from the Information office with support from the department of planning at the Ministry of Education (in close coordination with MoSD). The physical Offices are at Ministry of Education and Training, Off Constitution road, Maseru. The telephonic inquiries can be made at (+266) 22214400. Additional information will be available at the following website, www.gov.ls/ministry-of-education-and-training/

The responsibility for the proper SEP design and implementation will be the responsibility of the MOET through the PFU. The Project Coordinator will oversee the SEP implementation to ensure success of the LNHSS project.

6.1.1 Budget

The Project Coordinator will ensure that the PFU has an adequate standing budget allocated towards the Stakeholder Management Programme.

6.1.2 Training

All the BESP partners and PFU team will attend a workshop that will bring awareness on the project, SEP, GRM as well as other project specific documents.

6.2 RESPONSIBILITIES

The management, coordination and implementation of the SEP and its integral tasks will be the responsibility of dedicated team members within PFU, partner ministries and its Contractors,

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Sub-contractors and Consultants. The roles and responsibilities of the organizations are presented below.

The Project Implementation Unit will be responsible for the preparation and physical implementation of the LNHSS Project. This unit will be under the oversight of the Project Coordinator.

The Project Coordinator will work closely with the ESS to ensure that the SEP is implemented in a successful manner.

Environmental and Social Specialist (ESS) is responsible for the management of project related social and environmental issues. The ESS will oversee all stakeholders' engagement activities regarding the implementation of the GRM as well as other project specific documents. Responsibilities of the ESS include the following:

- Develop, implement and monitor stakeholders engagement plan for the project, GRM and other project specific documents;
- Liaise with the Project Coordinator to ensure that stakeholders engagement requirements are understood,
- Maintain the stakeholder database; and
- Proactively identify stakeholders, project risks and opportunities and inform Project Coordinator to ensure that the necessary planning can be done to either mitigate risk or exploit opportunities.

7. GRIEVANCE MECHANISM

7.1 INTRODUCTION

Transparency and accountability are core elements of the Project. For this purpose, the project will include a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). The goal of the GRM is to strengthen accountability to beneficiaries and to provide channels for project stakeholders to provide feedback and/or express grievances related to project supported activities. The GRM is a mechanism that allows for the identification and resolution of issues affecting the project. By increasing transparency and accountability, the GRM aims to reduce the risk of the project inadvertently affecting citizens/beneficiaries and serves as an important feedback and learning mechanism that can help improve project impact.

The mechanism focuses not only on receiving and recording complaints but also on resolving them. While feedback should be handled at the level closest to the complaint, all complaints should be registered and follow the basic procedures set out in this chapter.

The GRM procedures will be improved further by appraisal (April 2021) to include special guidelines to handle GBV-sexual harassment related complaints and grievances, taking into account their sensitivity. Procedures that will handle GBV-related issues will be based on the following key guiding principles that must be systematically applied to adequately respond to the specific nature of SEA/SH cases: confidentiality, survivor-centricity, and survivor safety.

7.2 DEFINITION OF GRM

For the purposes of these Operational Guidelines, a Grievance Redress Mechanism is a process for receiving, evaluating, and addressing project-related complaints from citizens and affected communities at the level of the project.

The terms 'grievance' and 'complaint' are used interchangeably.

7.3 GRM SCOPE AND USE

SCOPE: Grievance Redress Mechanism will be available for project stakeholders and other interested parties to submit questions, comments, suggestions and/or complaints, or provide any form of feedback on all project-funded activities.

GRM's users: Project beneficiaries, project affected people (i.e., those who will be and/or are likely to be directly or indirectly affected, positively or negatively, by the project), as well as the broader citizenry can use the GRM for the above purposes (see Scope).

GRM's management: The GRM is managed by the PFUs, under the direct responsibility of PFU.

Submission of complaints: Complaints can be expressed at any time throughout project implementation.

7.4 Procedures

7.4.1 Channels to make complaints

BESP establishes the following channels through which citizens/beneficiaries/Project Affected Persons (PAPs) can make complaints regarding project-funded activities:

- a. By Email: lineomokitimi@gmail.com
- b. Through the following web page <https://www.gov.ls/>, <https://www.education.org.ls/>
- c. In writing to MoSD and MoET: Constitution Rd, Maseru, Lesotho (Coordinates [29.3123967, 27.4815424](#)); Constitution Rd, Maseru, Pension Fund Building, Level 3, Lesotho

The project shall ensure flexibility in the channels available for complaints, as well as ensure accessibility to the contact information for individuals who make complaints.

7.4.2 Receipt and recording of complaints.

The person receiving the complaint will complete a grievance form (see Annex A) and will record the complaint in the Register of Complaints, kept under GRM manager. Then, the complaint is to be submitted immediately to the tracking system for sorting and redirecting to the appropriate department responsible for investigating and addressing the complaint, or to staff if the complaint is related to a specific project activity. The Project Coordinator is responsible for determining who to direct the complaint to, whether a complaint requires an investigation (or not), and the timeframe to respond to it.

When determining who will be the investigating officer, the Project Coordinator should ensure that there is no conflict of interest, i.e., all persons involved in the investigation process should not have any material, personal, or professional interest in the outcome and no personal or professional connection with complainants or witnesses.

Once the investigation process has been established, the person responsible for managing the GRM records and enters this data into the Register of Complaints.

The number and type of suggestions and questions should also be recorded and reported so that they can be analysed to improve project communications.

7.4.3 Review of the Complaints/Inquiries

The person responsible for investigating the complaint will gather facts in order to generate a clear picture of the circumstances surrounding the grievance. The investigation/follow-up can include site visits, review of documents and a meeting with those who could resolve the issue.

The results of investigation and the proposed response to the complainant will be presented for consideration to the PFU E&S staff, who will jointly with PFU directors both at MoSD and MOET will decide on the course of action. Once a decision has been made and on the complainant informed, the investigating specialist describes the actions to be taken in the grievance form (see Annex A), along with the details of the investigation and the findings, and submits the response to the Directors for signing.

7.4.4 Response to complainant

The complainant will be informed about the results of verification via letter, email or by post, as received. The response shall be based on the materials of the investigation and, if appropriate, shall contain references to the national legislation.

The deadline for investigating the complaint may be extended by 30 working days by the PFU, and the complainant is to be informed about this fact, whether:

- additional consultations are needed to provide response to the complaint,
- the complaint refers to a complex volume of information and it is necessary to study additional materials for the response.

7.5 Awareness building

7.5.1 Information provided in an accessible format

Information about the Grievance Redress Mechanism will be available at the <https://www.gov.ls/>, <https://www.education.org.ls/> website will be included in communications with stakeholders.

7.6 STAFFING AND CAPACITY BUILDING

7.6.1 Tasks and responsibilities of the PFU team on the GRM

The Ministries will allocate responsibilities to the PFU E&S staff. These will be documented in the Project Operations Manual and kept updated.

- Overall management of the GRM system
- Developing and maintaining awareness-building
- Collection of complaints
- Recording complaints
- Notification to the complainant on the receipt and timeline to review a complaint,
- Sorting/categorization of complaints
- Thorough examination of the issues, including the causal link between project activities and alleged damage/harm/nuisance,
- Decision-making based on such examination,
- Processing appeals or continuous communication with complainants with the purpose to resolve issues amicably,
- Publishing responses to complaints, unless otherwise is requested by complainants due to privacy or other concerns,
- Organization and implementation of information materials and awareness campaigns,
- Reporting and feedback on GRM results.

7.7 TRANSPARENCY, MONITORING AND REPORTING

7.7.1 Transparency

Policies, procedures and regular updates on the GRM system, the complaints made and resolved, will be available on the <https://www.gov.ls/>, <https://www.education.org.ls/> web page. They will be updated quarterly.

7.7.2 Regular internal monitoring and reporting

The Directors will assess quarterly the functioning of the GRM in order to:

- Provide a monthly/quarterly snapshot of GRM results, including any suggestions and questions, to the project team and the management.
- Review the status of complaints to track which are not yet resolved and suggest any needed remedial action.

During quarterly PFU meetings, the project team shall discuss and review the effectiveness and use of the GRM and gather suggestions on how to improve it.

7.7.3 Reporting in half-yearly and annual progress reports submitted to the World Bank

In the semi-annual project implementation reports submitted to the Bank, BESP shall include a GRM section, which provides updated information on the following:

- Status of establishment of the GRM (procedures, staffing, awareness building, etc.);
- Quantitative data on the number of complaints received, the number that were relevant, and the number resolved,

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- Qualitative data on the type of complaints and answers provided issues that are unresolved,
- Time taken to resolve complaints,
- Number of grievances resolved at the lowest level, raised to higher levels,
- Any issues faced with the procedures/staffing or use,
- Factors that may be affecting the use of the GRM/beneficiary feedback system,
- Any corrective measures adopted.

8. MONITORING AND REPORTING

8.1 INVOLVEMENT OF STAKEHOLDERS IN MONITORING ACTIVITIES

The role of stakeholders in the project through observation and objective reporting for improvement of programming cannot be overstated. The MoET and MoSD will be conducting periodic consultations throughout implementation. Outcomes of the noteworthy grievances will be made public, and both MoSD and MoET commit to transparency. In addition, SEP will be updated regularly and disclosed on the websites of both ministries. The PFUs within both ministries, and E&S specialist who will be hired, will be responsible for ensuring SEP is followed throughout project implementation, as well as ensuing coordination with the World Bank's E&S team.

Monitoring and evaluation of the stakeholder process is considered vital to ensure PFU is able to respond to identified issues and alter the schedule and nature of engagement activities to make them more effective. Adherence to the following characteristics/commitments/activities will assist in achieving successful engagement:

- Sufficient resources to undertake the engagement,
- Inclusivity (inclusion of key groups) of interactions with stakeholders,
- Promotion of stakeholder involvement,
- Sense of trust in PFU shown by all stakeholders,
- Clearly defined approaches, and
- Transparency in all activities.

Monitoring of the stakeholder engagement process allows the efficacy of the process to be evaluated. Specifically, by identifying key performance indicators that reflect the objectives of the SEP and the specific actions and timings, it is possible to both monitor and evaluate the process undertaken.

Two distinct but related monitoring activities in terms of timing will be implemented:

- During the engagement activities: short-term monitoring to allow for adjustments/improvements to be made during engagement; and
- Following completion of all engagement activities: review of outputs at the end of engagement to evaluate the effectiveness of the SEP as implemented.

A series of key performance indicators for each stakeholder engagement stage have been developed. Table 5 shows the indicators, and performance against the indicators will show successful completion of engagement tasks.

Table 5: Key Performance Indicators by Project Phase

Phase activities	Activities	Indicators
Planning for Project	Share updates on Project activities	Posters displayed in allocated service centres by time specified
GRM, SEP and other project specific documents Implementation	Share updates on SEP, GRM and other project specific documents activities	Posters displayed in allocated service centres by time specified; Affected community stakeholders will have received

		<p>and understand the information disclosed and attended the public meetings;</p> <p>Communities provided feedback;</p> <p>No complaints about non-receipt of project specific documents received.</p>

The identification of BESP related impacts and concerns is a key element of stakeholder engagement that will occur over the complete BESP life cycle. As such, the identification of new concerns, impacts and grievances as the GRM and BESP progresses will serve as an overall indicator for the implementation of the stakeholder engagement process.

During the BESP implementation there will be a review of the engagement activities conducted; levels of stakeholder involvement; the issues discussed and outcomes; and the extent to which stakeholder issues, priorities and concerns are reflected in the SEP as well as other project specific documents.

8.2 REVIEW OF ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES IN THE FIELD

During the engagements with stakeholders the engagement team will assess meetings using the following engagement tools:

- Stakeholders database;
- Issue and Response table; and
- Meeting records of all consultations held.

8.3 REPORTING STAKEHOLDERS ENGAGEMENT ACTIVITIES

Performance will be reviewed following the stakeholders engagement sessions conducted in the field. In assessing performance, the following will be considered:

- Materials disseminated: Types, frequency, and location,
- Place and time of formal engagement events and level of participation including specific stakeholders groups e.g., Chiefs,
- Number of people attending public or formal meetings,
- Number of comments received type of stakeholder and detail of feedback provided;
- Meeting minutes, attendance register and photographic evidence,
- Numbers and type of stakeholders who meet the LNHSS project Team by mail, telephone and any other means of communication,
- Comments received by government authorities, community leaders and other project partners and passed to the BESP; and
- Number and types of feedback and/or grievances and the nature and timing of their resolution; and the extent to which feedback and comments have been addressed and have led to corrective actions being implemented.

9. APPENDICES

APPENDIX 1. STAKEHOLDER'S DATABASE

LESOTHO BASIC EDUCATION STRENGTHENING PROJECT (BESP)

NO.	Name & Surname	Department	Designation	Email Address	Phone No.	Signature
1						
2						
3						
4						
5						

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APPENDIX 2. ISSUE AND RESPONSE TABLE

Issue	Sub Issue as Perceived by Potentially Affected Populations	Questions/Comments from Stakeholders	Response/Feedback

APPENDIX 3. GRIEVANCE REGISTER FORM.

Grievance Register Form

Project Grievance Register Template

Identifiers			About the PAP					About the Complaint				Method of Resolution	Escalation	Notes
ID	Date received	Date closed	Name & Surname	District	School name	Stakeholder (employee, parent, community)	Reporting method (F2F, suggestion box, online, social media, email, in writing, feedback forms)	Type of grievance (administrative or operational)	Root cause of the grievance (see also Explanations tab and List of Root Causes)	Outcome	If a resolution was offered please indicate 'accepted' or 'not accepted'.	Methods of resolution (optional) e.g.: negotiated, mediated, apology	Escalation of grievance (e.g. school board, LEQEP PFU)	

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Explanations of fields in the Grievance Register

Type of grievance (please indicate 'administrative' or 'operational')	Please indicate whether the grievance was classified as 'administrative' or 'operational' in nature, according to the Complaints and Grievances Procedures.
Service provider	Government or private
Root cause of the grievance (if possible, please choose cause from list under the Explanations tab)	Please name the process or type of decision that was the root cause of the grievance.
Escalation of grievance (i.e.: School board, PFU)	Please indicate if you are aware of the stakeholder pursuing the matter further through other avenues outside the PFU. If not known, indicate 'unknown'. The timelines for external reviews can be lengthy in many cases. Information in this column will only reflect what is known at the time of reporting, either via notification by the external body or stakeholder.

APPENDIX 4 STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PROCESS

This appendix contains the details of the field consultations that were conducted in the process of developing the BESP ESMF.

APP 4.1 Minutes of BESP Stakeholder's engagement Meeting: 5th March 2021

The following is an outline of the Public Consultation meeting that was held on the 5th of March 2021.

i) In Attendance:

Table APP 4.1 List of Consulted Stakeholders.

No.	MEETING DATE	NAME	ORGANIZATION	DESIGNATION	Contact No. & Email Address
2.1.1	05/03/21	Maema Ramaema	MoET	Monitoring and Evaluation Specialist. MoET PFU	
2.1.2	05/03/21	Lineo Mokitimi	MoET	Director Planning MoET.	
2.1.3	05/03/21	Mabakubung Bertha Seutloali	MoET	CEO Secondary Education	
2.1.4	05/03/21	Letsatsi Ntsibulane	MoET	Teachers' Association	
2.1.5	05/03/21	Mots'ea Tshabalala	UNICEF	Director - UNICEF	
2.1.6	05/03/21	Shoeshoe Mofokeng	NECDOL	Director - NECDOL	

ii) Chronology of events

1. Introductions
2. Introduction to BESP, Rationale and background to the project and its Components
3. Overview of the ESMF and its implications on the project

4. Review and summary discussions of the issues to consider and social and environmental needs and the shared tool.
5. Way forward

iii) Details of Issues discussed per Agenda Item

1. Introductions

The Participants introduced themselves and the attendance list outlines participants who participated in the meeting.

2. Introduction to BESP, Rationale and background to the project and its Components.

A summary presentation of the BESP was made based on information in the BESP Appraisal document. The key issues highlighted in this presentation included amongst others: The rationale of the project development was informed by this except from the BESP PAD.

a) Background and Summary of Project Structure and Strategy

Presentation: The World Bank has been providing support to improve access to education through large school construction programs, that have mostly been successful particularly at the primary education level. More recent projects focused on improving student retention and quality of maths and science education, including the ongoing projects of the GPE financed LBEIP and World Bank financed LEQEP. While there have been challenges in the implementation of these projects, there are also notable successes. To improve student retention, these two projects have made inroads in engaging parents, communities and school leaders to address the issue through the establishment of over 400 functioning school-based management committees (SBMC) in schools serving the poorest communities in Lesotho. These SBMCs, which have been trained under the project, have analyzed- at a school level- the reasons why students drop out of primary and junior secondary schools and what can be done to keep them in school. In most instances, as confirmed in household surveys, the high direct and indirect costs of schooling, and pregnancy for girls, are the main reasons behind students dropping out. While the school grants provided under the two ongoing projects have improved learning environments in schools, the intervention has been insufficient to improve student retention, and there is need complement this with demand-side interventions, i.e. Supporting families to send children to school. Other successes under existing projects include the Progressive Mathematics Initiative- Progressive Science Initiative (PSI-PMI) model, which has a strong online teacher training component has been successfully piloted and promising results have been documented. Moreover, the revision of the ECCD curriculum is moving forward under LBEIP with support from multiple partners including UNICEF and the Lego Foundation.

Building on ongoing initiatives in the education and social protection, the proposed grant seeks to improve student retention and the quality of education in targeted regions of Lesotho by: (i) supporting adolescents to stay in school by improving the targeting and impact of the OVC-B and the CGP cash transfers, (ii) supporting adolescents through peer support and mentorship groups by expanding existing youth club initiatives, and (iii) scaling up the Mathematics and Science online training for junior secondary teachers to improve their content knowledge and pedagogical instruction in these subjects. The project will also support the MoET to build a system to monitor ECCD service provision in Lesotho, provide support to roll out the new ECCD curriculum and develop costed expansion strategy for the sector.

Feedback: The collective demonstrated that they understood and appreciated the focus of the project and its strategy and emphasized that the proposed activities seemed rather important but shared concern that the project seems to lack focus particularly with the size of the resources envelope. It was advised that it will be helpful and wise to look into the project and its alignment with the 2016-2026 ESSP (Education Sector Strategic plan). It was however noted that the proposed activities are all important for the improvement of the education sector in Lesotho.

b) Overview of the ESMF and its implications on the project

Presentation:

The collective was made aware that as part of project preparation requirements, it is critical to ensure a detailed Environmental and Social impacts mitigation strategy which is informed by a number of key documents not particularly for documentation purposes. The documentation merely presents evidence of consideration and preparedness of implementing partners. The eventuality of social and environmental externalities for development interventions is second nature and therefore is advisable to have a preparedness system of forecasting what negative impacts might accrue from the implementation of the project and how best they can be mitigated against. The collective was briefed on the World Bank Environment and Social Management Framework by presenting an outline of the Environment and Social Standards and how a consideration of these should be made during development of any new project.

The presentation transitioned into a presentation of the proposed tool which participants had already received through e-mail by the time of the meeting. The key focus was on the following Issues:

1.0 IMPLEMENTATION/OPERATION PHASE

As the project is being implemented it will generate various social and environmental impacts. In your view, what Environmental, and Social impacts do you foresee during this implementation stage of the project?

1.1 Environmental Issues: *(e.g., Pollution due to solid waste, hazardous waste and end of life E-waste from the provided computers, laptops, solar panels and battery packs.)*

Feedback: Based on the overview of the project the issue that was foreseen to be a likely cause of some level of environmental impact was the potential disposal of laptops and solar panels to be used under the project. There was contention however that in Lesotho because of the rarity of hardware, these components are so

valuable that laptops usually have secondary use beyond the primary expected lifespan and that in many instances these end up getting fixed as opposed to being disposed of. The use of a laptop in a country such as Lesotho tends to really be long. It was suggested that the offset of the effects of this may be very long term.

1.2 Social Issues: *(e.g., Increased incidence of social conflicts, promotion of GBV/SEA incidences, special considerations for disadvantaged, poor communities.)*

Feedback: It was postulated that the social issues from the perspectives are very limited and there was a concern that maybe resources are being channeled in this instance towards issues that may not be as critical in the education sector which speaks to the failure to prioritise. On this sentiment it was further advised that the Ministry should maybe consider the re-prioritisation of resources towards issues that really impeded progress in the education sector on actual facts rather than hypotheses. The importance of risk mitigation was emphasized in response and a point of the value of risk preparedness as opposed to managing the eventuality in due course was made.

1.3 What are the Possible Interventions you would like to see being implemented to prevent or minimise the impacts? *(e.g., E-waste management, protection of Women against GBV/SEA, special considerations for minority groups, upholding of occupational health standards; etc.)*

The mitigation measures were not proposed. The rationale was premised on the understanding of the impact of these discussed issues that the environment of operation at the majority of schools in Lesotho is already difficult with the difficult terrain, bad weather, village level conflict at schools, poverty levels, gender related issues. However, the team agreed that they would further consider these issues and explore is maybe they could have solutions given time.

c) Review and summary discussions of the issues to consider and social and environmental needs and the shared tool.

The collective agreed that they would take time to review the overall tool and consider solutions to manage these. To facilitate this process, it was agreed that the tools would be filled by the participants and all other members of the LEG to beef up a strategy to mitigate against E&S impacts and also to explore other likely impacts that may not have been mentioned in the meeting.

d) Way forward

Participants will send through filled tools for consolidation.