

ASCENT

Accelerating Sustainable & Clean Energy Access Transformation



Grievance Redress Mechanism Brochure



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1.0 About ASCENT

The World Bank is supporting the Accelerating Sustainable and Clean Energy Access Transformation (ASCENT) Project with a total funding envelope of US\$5 billion through the International Development Association (IDA). This ambitious initiative aims to accelerate access to sustainable and clean energy for 100 million people across up to 20 countries in Eastern and Southern Africa, while also delivering clean cooking solutions to 20 million people in the region. To amplify its impact, ASCENT seeks to mobilize an additional US\$10 billion from public and private sources, including innovative mechanisms such as carbon markets. The program is structured around three strategic pillars:

- (i) Regional and National Platforms to Accelerate Energy Access
- (ii) Expanding Grid Electrification
- (iii) Scaling Distributed Renewables and Clean Cooking Solutions

Implementation of the regional platforms is led by Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the Trade Development Bank (TDB), ensuring strong regional coordination and institutional support.

2.0 The Project Grievance Redress Mechanism

2.1 Preamble

Despite the benefits, we understand that the ASCENT Project may cause unintended environmental or social risks and impacts. We are committed to addressing any concerns and ensuring that all stakeholders feel heard and supported.

If the ASCENT Project has caused or may cause harm to you, your community, or the environment, we encourage you to share your concerns through our Project Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM). This GRM system ensures that the Project and its partners remain accessible and responsive to all stakeholders, including local communities.

2.2 Who may file a complaint

Any person or community who believes that the Project has or is likely to adversely affect them or the environment can submit a complaint. A representative such as a civil society organization may also file a complaint on behalf of affected parties. People who file complaints may request the Project to protect their names and identities.

2.3 Complaint Eligibility

When a complaint is received, it will be assessed for its eligibility. The Project considers a complaint eligible when it:

- a) Relates to the Project;
- b) Alleges environmental and social harm caused or likely to be caused by the Project; and
- c) Is filed by a person or community who believes have been affected by the Project

2.5 What to include in submitting a grievance

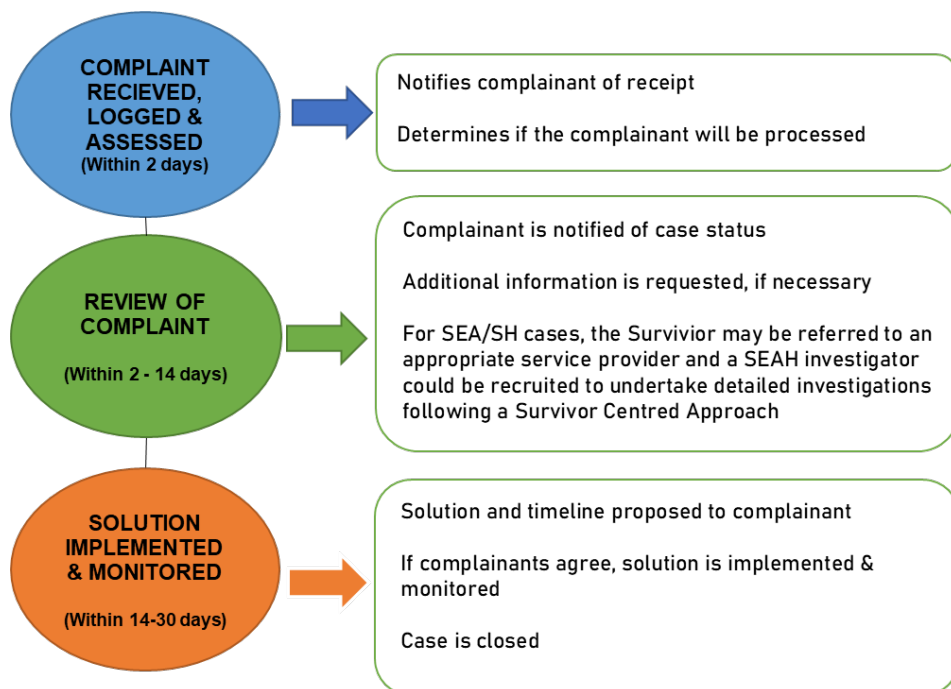
When submitting a grievance or complaint, it is important that the complainant provide the following information:

- Name, address, telephone number, and any other relevant contact information of the complainant
- Whether the complainant wishes to keep his/her identity confidential
- Description of Issue (what happened, when and where)
- How the complainant believes s/he has been, or is likely to be affected by the Project
- If the complaint is submitted by a representative, include the name, signature, contact details, and written proof of authority of the representative
- Supporting evidence, while not necessary, may be helpful in reviewing and/or resolving the complaint.
- Suggestions on how the complainant believes the complaint could be resolved
- Any efforts that may have been pursued to try to resolve the grievance

Grievance related to **sexual misconduct** or **other cases** may be submitted through our website at www.reap.comesa.int

2.6 How is a complaint handled

See Figure 1 below which details the procedure of handling complaints:



2.7 How to submit a complaint

You can reach us through any of the following channels:

Email: grmascent@comesa.int; ascentproject@comesa.int

Phone: +260 211 229725 / 229732

Fax: +260 211 225693 / 232311

WhatsApp: +260 772 909403 / +260 773 000254

Mail:

ASCENT Programme Coordinator
Infrastructure and Logistics Division
COMESA Secretariat
COMESA Centre, P.O. Box 30051
Lusaka 10101, Zambia

In Person:

ASCENT Programme Office
COMESA House, Ben Bella Road, Lusaka, Zambia

For complaints related to sexual misconduct:

Email our SEA/SH focal points at seah_ascent@comesa.int

During Events:

Raise concerns during project-organised meetings, conferences, or workshops.

3.0 Other grievance redress channels

It is important that our stakeholders are aware that the GRM is intended to complement and not to replace formal legal channels for resolving grievances (e.g. the national court system, organizational audit mechanisms, etc.). Our stakeholders always have the option to approach other formal redress mechanisms including legal redress.

3.1 National Legal Systems

The existence of the GRM should not prevent affected parties or communities from pursuing their rights and interests in any other location, national or international forum, and thus complainants are free to choose legal redress or other formal dispute resolution mechanisms ahead of the GRM.

3.2 World Bank Grievance Redress Service

Project stakeholders who believe the ASCENT Project has caused or may cause adverse effects on them, their community, or the environment may also submit their complaints to the Bank's Grievance Redress Service (GRS) or its independent Accountability Mechanism (AM). For more information on submitting complaints, please visit:

- Bank's Grievance Redress Service (GRS) <http://www.worldbank.org/GRS>
- Bank's Accountability Mechanism (AM) <https://accountability.worldbank.org>

The **GRS** enhances the World Bank's responsiveness and accountability by ensuring grievances are promptly reviewed and addressed. The **Accountability Mechanism (AM)** houses the **Inspection Panel**, which assesses whether harm has occurred or may occur due to Bank non-compliance with policies and procedures.



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