

**Government of Malawi
Ministry of Tourism
Department of National Parks and Wildlife**

Effective Management of Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve Project

**GEF Implementing Agency: Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi
GEF Project Number: P110112**

Process Framework

FINAL

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

| | |
|-------|--|
| ADC | Area Development Committee |
| CBNRM | Community Based Natural Resources Management |
| CBO | Community Based Organization |
| DDC | District Development Committee |
| DEC | District Environment Committee |
| DNPW | Department of National Parks and Wildlife |
| EIA | Environmental Impact Assessment |
| EMA | Environment Management Act |
| EMNWR | Effective Management of the Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve |
| ESMF | Environmental and Social Management Framework |
| GEF | Global Environment Facility |
| GoM | Government of Malawi |
| GPS | Global Positioning System |
| HQ | Headquarters |
| IBA | Important Bird Area |
| IGA | Income Generating Activity |
| MACC | Management for Adaptation of Rural Communities to Climate Change |
| MTWC | Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Culture |
| NGO | Non Governmental Organization |
| NP | National Park |
| NR | Natural Resources |
| NRC | Natural Resources Committee |
| NRM | Natural Resource Management |
| NWR | Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve |
| PA | Protected Area |
| PAC | Problem Animal Control |
| PAC | Project Advisory Committee |
| PAP | Project Affected People |
| PF | Process Framework |
| TA | Traditional Authority |
| TLC | Total Land Care |
| VDC | Village Development Committee |
| VNRC | Village Natural Resources Committee |
| WB | World Bank |
| WESM | Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi |
| WMA | Wildlife Management Authority |

1. EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The objective of the 'Effective Management of the Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve' (EMNWR) project is to ensure effective management of the Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve through a sustainable management model focusing on its Bua watershed area.

The project aims to apply a new protected area (PA) management approach with involvement of public and private sector that focuses on strengthening national and sustainable PA management capacity related to the Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve (NWR). The project will be implemented by the Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi (WESM) in partnership with the Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW), the agency in charge of Malawi's PA network.

The EMNWR Process Framework (PF) describes the process by which affected communities participate in design, implementation and monitoring of relevant project activities. The purpose of the PF is to ensure effective participation by the Project Affected People (PAP) in the project, recognizing and protecting their interests and ensuring that their living standards do not deteriorate as a result of the project.

The PF describes:

- The administrative and legal procedures including (i) previous agreements between communities and government relating to access to natural resources, and (ii) the administrative and financial responsibilities of key stakeholders;
- The criteria for eligibility by which PAP will be determined and measures to ensure that their living standards do not deteriorate as a result of the project; and
- How affected persons will benefit from the project and the measures that will be implemented to assist them to improve or maintain their standard of living.

The project triggers the following World Bank Safeguard Policies: OP 4.01 Environmental Assessment; OP 4.04 Natural Habitats; 4.09 Pest Management; 4.11 Physical Cultural Resources; 4.12 Involuntary Resettlement; and 4.36 Forests. It has been assigned the environmental category B since all the envisaged environmental impacts in the project area will be site specific, minimal, short term and readily mitigated.

An Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) to comply with the OP 4.01, 4.04, 4.09, 4.11, 4.12 and 4.36 has been developed and will be applied in tandem with the PF.

Although the project does not involve any resettlement of people, there is a chance that some people might lose their former illegal access to natural resources in the reserve. This PF, therefore, responds to the principle considerations of OP 4.12 which aims to protect the livelihood of people who lose access to resources. This will be mitigated by limited expansion and improved management of community user zones in the reserve as well as capacity building of the natural resources committees (NRCs) who will be involved in communal management of these zones. There will also be a limited increase in job opportunities as a result of the project through increased tourism opportunities.

Through the ongoing parallel funded small scale DNPW community outreach program, the EMNWR project will engage communities as much as possible through existing decentralisation structures at the district and Traditional Authority (TA) level such as Area and Village Development Committees, Wildlife Management Authorities and Village

Natural Resources Committees (ADC, VDC, WMA, VNRC). The project will follow the respective district development processes.

DNPW deploys dedicated extension staff to work with community structures and will assess the effects of the project on resource use in the NWR and determine how this will impact on the livelihoods of PAP. The extension staff will also coordinate with community development partners with regard to community outreach.

Some points of discussion to be addressed during the project implementation process include:

- Design of a realistic DNPW community outreach workplan considering the limited available human and financial resources;
- Discussion of and agreement on detailed roles and responsibilities of the project partners, DNPW and WESM on community outreach;
- Agreement on clear communication channels.
- Investigation and negotiation of opportunities to integrate relevant functions of local decentralization structures (e.g. ADC, VDC versus WMA, VNRC);
- Investigation of opportunities to include alternative problem animal control measures, alternatives for fish poisoning and drying of fish in reserve protection and community outreach program.

The PF and ESMF have been designed in close cooperation with the major stakeholders and will be publicized before project effectiveness in order to allow project stakeholders to verify its contents and comment.

2. INTRODUCTION

2.1 Project description

The Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve (NWR) is the oldest and largest wildlife reserve of Malawi. It encompasses important watersheds, including the lower portions of the Bua River, one of the largest rivers to enter Lake Malawi from the Malawian side, and one of the few rivers where Lake Salmon spawn. The Nkhotakota area is one of four Malawian areas of global biodiversity significance and classified as an Important Bird Area (IBA). The NWR is managed by the Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW).

The 'Effective Management of the Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve' (EMNWR) project was first proposed to the GEF by the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Culture (MTWC) in 2007 and approved by GEF in 2010.

The project's objective is to ensure effective management of the Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve through a sustainable management model focusing on its Bua watershed area. The project aims to develop and apply a new management approach with the involvement of border communities, public sector, private sector and civil society that focuses on strengthening national PA management capacity. The project will be implemented by the Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi (WESM) in partnership with DNPW.

The EMNWR project will engage communities as much as possible through existing decentralisation structures at the district and Traditional Authority (TA) level such as Area and Village Development Committees, Wildlife Management Authorities and Village Natural Resources Committees (ADC, VDC, WMA, VNRC). The project will follow the respective district development processes.

The project will communicate regularly with Total Land Care (TLC) that is working with communities bordering the reserve through the USAID-funded 'Kulera Biodiversity Project'. The Kulera Biodiversity Project targets communities surrounding the reserve to address sustainable natural resource use issues, as well as improved agricultural production and alternative energy sources, and should contribute to reducing human pressure on the reserve.

The project will also communicate regularly with the DNPW-led small scale community outreach program that is also being implemented in parallel to the EMNWR project.

The EMNWR project has three components and outcomes: 1) Reserve management leading to improved management effectiveness in NWR, specifically in the Bua watershed area; 2) Revenues for improved reserve maintenance; and 3) Project management leading to satisfactory project delivery.

The project is expected to contribute to poverty reduction in the communities surrounding the reserve through limited job creation in tourism and construction works, access to community user zones and the formation and training of Natural Resources Committees involved in the management of these zones.

However, certain activities financed by the project under Component 1, including: improved reserve management and law enforcement may result in adverse social impacts in that some individuals who reside in communities bordering the reserve may lose their previous (illegal) access to the reserve's natural resources. This impact will be

readily mitigated by provision of legally regulated access to reserve resources for a larger portion of the community through expanded village user zones in the NWR. To appropriately mitigate such impacts, WESM will use the ESMF and this PF to guide implementation of appropriate mitigation measures. However, it is expected that the combined ecological and socio-economic impacts of the project will be positive.

2.2 Community stakeholders profile

Four districts form boundaries with NWR: Nkhotakota, Ntchisi, Kasungu and Mzimba, but the reserve itself is entirely within the Nkhotakota District, occupying approximately 24% of the district's territory. The Nkhotakota District is located on the west coast of Lake Malawi, 200 km northwest of the capital Lilongwe. The 2008 census recorded 303,659 people inhabiting the district, with a 2.9% growth rate. There are ten Traditional Authorities (TAs) around the reserve (*Figure 1*) with a population density of approximately 71 persons per square kilometre. The Chewa Tribe is the main ethnic group in the district (70% of the population), with Tonga and Tumbuka people in the northern portion of the district.

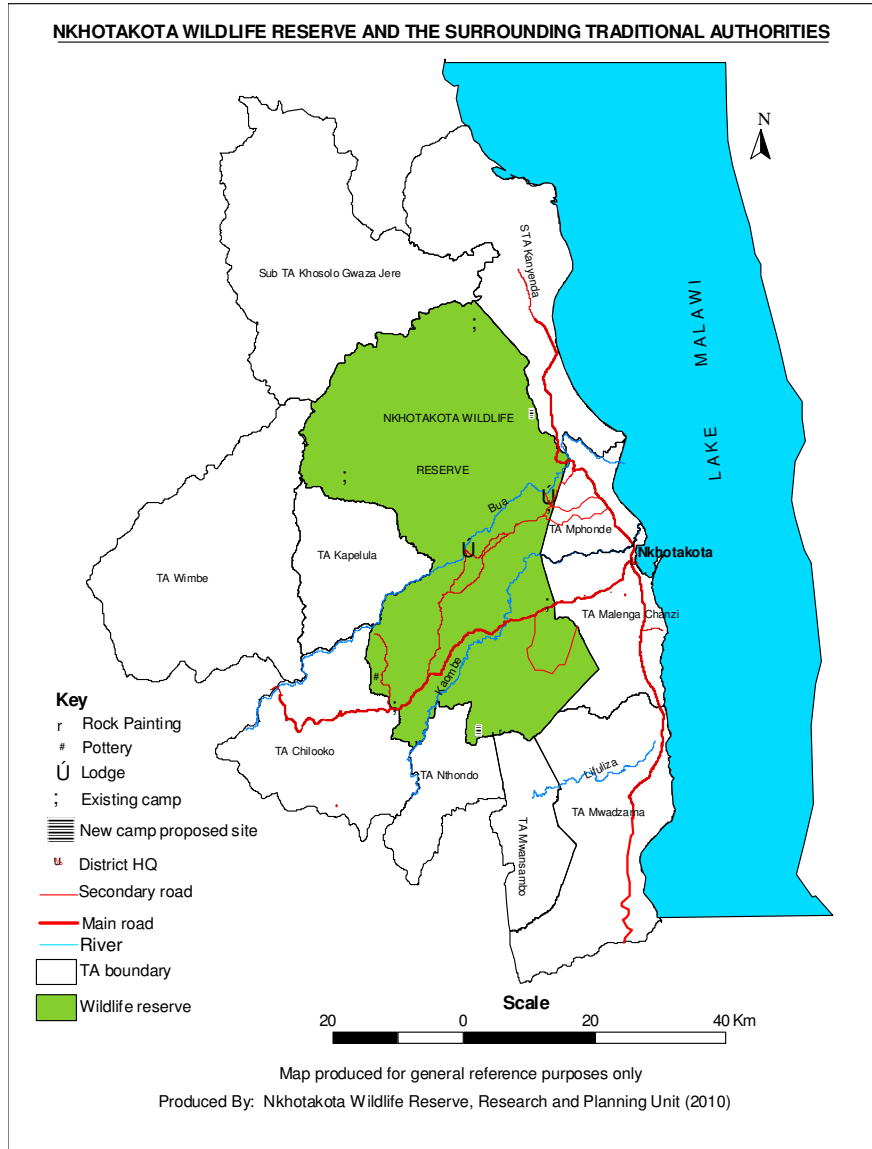


Figure 1: Location of NWR with surrounding TAs (Source: DNPW)

Of the four districts, Mzimba has the lowest literacy rate (40%), while Ntchisi the highest (59.5%). Most communities use water from unprotected wells, which results in high prevalence of water borne diseases. However, Nkhatakota was found to have relatively better access to potable water relative to the other three districts, due to the existence of numerous boreholes in the district. Food security is a major issue in the region, with 73.3% of respondents to a 2006 WESM community assessment reporting that food ran out during portions of the agricultural production cycle.

Communities living around the reserve depend primarily on agricultural crops and forest products such as firewood, thatching grass, mushrooms, medicinal plants and timber. WESM's 2006 assessment of the populations living around NWR indicated that approximately 63% of the households do not possess woodlots from which to collect forest products, relying on reserve resources to complement livelihoods or even as sole source of income from the commercialization of firewood, charcoal and bricks. As customary lands around the reserve degrade rapidly, pressure on the reserve tends to

increase unless initiatives to improve and diversify agricultural production, and alternative opportunities for income and energy generation are developed.

2.3 Purpose of Process Framework

A Process Framework (PF) describes the process by which affected communities participate in identification, implementation and monitoring of relevant project activities.

The purpose of the PF is to ensure participation of Project Affected People (PAP) in the project while recognizing and protecting their interests and ensuring that they do not become worse off as a result of the project. Specifically, the PF will: (i) describe activities that may involve new or more stringent restrictions on use of natural resources in the NWR; (ii) describe the mitigation and compensation measures required; (iii) describe the grievance procedure or process for resolving disputes to natural resource use restrictions; and, (iv) describe the participatory monitoring arrangements with border communities.

A project which may potentially restrict access to resources should establish the status quo and the expected direction and magnitude of change through:

- Assessing and describing the administrative and legal procedures including (i) previous agreements between communities and government relating to access to natural resources, and (ii) the administrative and financial responsibilities for the key stakeholders;
- Establishing the criteria for eligibility by which PAP will be determined and measures to ensure that their living standards do not deteriorate as a result of the project; and
- Identifying how the affected communities will benefit from the project and the measures that will be implemented to assist them improve or at least maintain their standards of living.

The 'Assessment of socio-cultural, economic characteristics and livelihood of populations around Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve' (WESM 2006) was an important guideline for the design of the Process Framework. The planned project activities will benefit involved communities directly and indirectly and the benefits are expected to increase over time. At the same time, some planned project activities include changes in resources protection and law enforcement that will result in some restrictions on resources now (illegally) accessible to community members. The PF and ESMF have been designed in close cooperation with all project stakeholders and will be publicized before project effectiveness to allow all stakeholders to verify its content and comment.

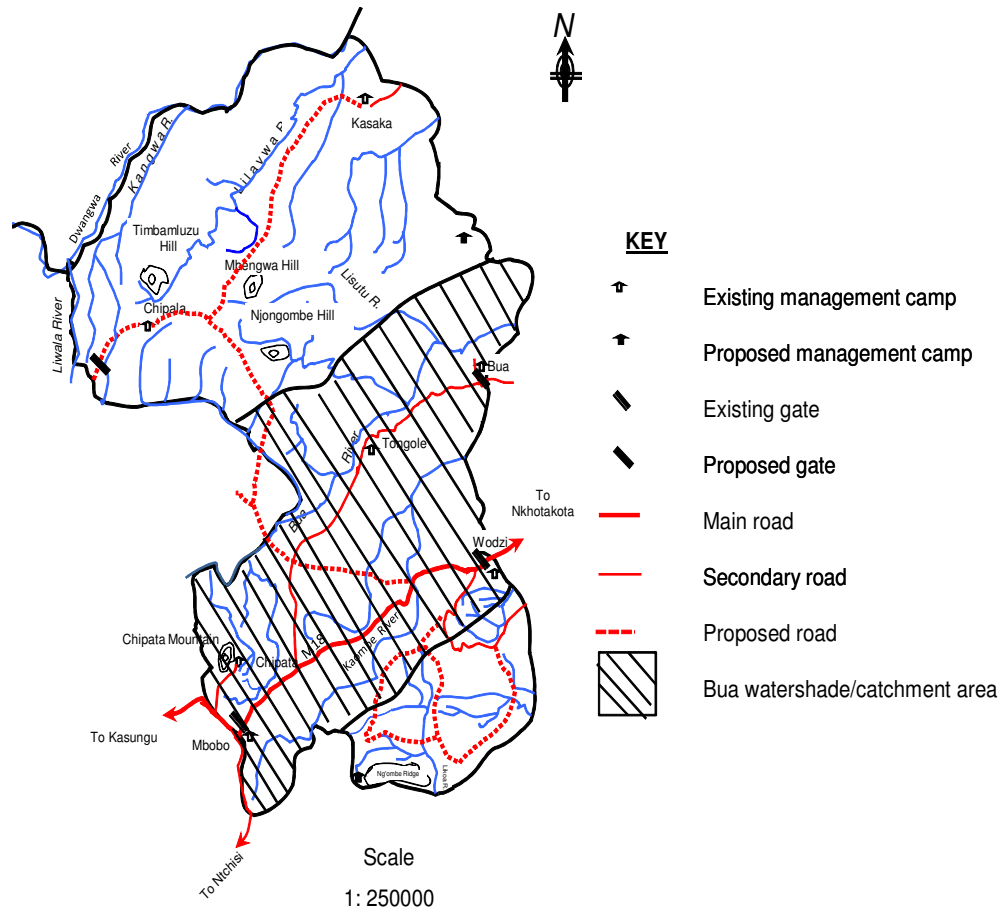


Figure 2: Location of project area: Bua Watershed (Source: DNPW)

2.4 World Bank safeguard policy requirements

The project triggers the following World Bank Safeguard Policies: OP 4.01 Environmental Assessment; OP 4.04 Natural Habitats; 4.09 Pest Management, 4.11 Physical Cultural Resources, 4.12 Involuntary Resettlement, and 4.36 Forests. It has been classified as the environmental category B since all envisaged environmental impacts at the sites will be localized, minimal, short term and readily mitigated. A separate Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) has been developed to comply with the OP 4.01, 4.04, 4.09, 4.11 and 4.36. The ESMF provides guidance on subproject screening, assessment and management, including appropriate mitigation measures of expected adverse environmental and social impacts that may be generated by the project.

This Process Framework addresses the principle considerations of OP 4.12 which aims to protect the livelihoods of people displaced from their land or houses or who lose access to resources. Although the project will not involve any resettlement, there is a chance that some people may lose their former illegal access to natural resources in the reserve. This loss will be mitigated by limited expansion and improved management of community user zones in the reserve as well as capacity building of natural resources committees (NRCs). There will also be a limited increase in tourism related job opportunities as a result of the project.

3. ENGAGEMENT OF PARTNERS AND INTERVENTION FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

3.1 General principles

Current efforts to support community outreach in the Nkhotakota District, including support to Village Natural Resources Committees and reserve user zones, have been under the auspices of the ongoing DNPW small scale community outreach program.

WESM has also been active in conducting environmental education activities through its Dwangwa branch.

The Kulera Biodiversity Project is designed to scale up community outreach activities around the reserve.

3.2 DNPW

The Department of National Parks and Wildlife is the statutory organisation in charge of national parks, wildlife reserves and sanctuaries as well as wildlife management on communal lands in Malawi. It is housed in the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Culture. DNPW will act as the executing agency in the project. The department has appointed two focal points for the project: one based at the DNPW headquarters in Lilongwe and one at Nkhotakota town section office headed by the NWR Reserve Manager.

DNPW encourages community participation in the management of natural resources and employs community outreach staff for environmental education and capacity building in communal management. Communities may sign an agreement with DNPW which allows them to harvest small forest products from the outer section of a protected area.

The NWR DNPW staff have experience working with Village Natural Resources Committees (VNRC) and community user zones. DNPW extension officers initiate the formation and training of VNRCs and beekeeping clubs as well as the establishment of community user zones. Currently, seven community user zones and 26 VNRCs have been officially established in the Nkhotakota area.

Community members wishing to participate have to register with the chairperson of the respective VNRC. They are allowed to enter under certain conditions as further elaborated in chapter 4. Beekeepers are allowed to site their hives in the same zone. The boundaries of the user zone and an assessment of sustainable off take are agreed between the DNPW research officer and the committee members.

3.3 WESM

The Wildlife and Environmental Society of Malawi is a non-governmental organisation registered as a Trust in Malawi. WESM is promoting public participation, awareness raising and education in the field of sustainable management of wildlife, natural resources and the environment. WESM will be the implementing agency of the project. WESM has various autonomous branches which run an environmental education program with the help of volunteers. Dwangwa Branch is active in the area around the NWR, working with

schools, wildlife clubs and CBOs. They are planning to expand their activities once the project is effective.

3.4 Kulera Biodiversity Project

The USAID-funded Kulera Biodiversity Project aims to improve community sustainable management of natural resources on customary land. The project is targeting 45,000 resource poor households around four PAs; Nyika-Vwaza complex, Mkuwazi Forest Reserve, Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve and Ntchisi Forest Reserve. Collectively, these PAs encompass 6,102 square km excluding the 10 km border zone around their perimeter.

The aim of the project is to create synergies for increased effectiveness and impact under a strategy comprising 3 inter-linked objectives:

- Improved governance of PAs through a participatory, decentralized structure that provides economic incentives to support sustainable natural resource management;
- Improved rural livelihoods around the borders of protected areas under a framework that promotes increased food security, diversification, sound resource management, village savings and loans, and incomes. The ultimate goal is to transform livelihoods from subsistence survival to thriving rural enterprises that are self sufficient;
- Increased rural incomes from eco-tourism and enterprises among local producers and entrepreneurs to produce, process and market agricultural and natural products.

The emphasis of Kulera's activities is to work closely with communities and small agribusinesses to determine needs and opportunities and strengthen sustainable livelihoods. The project is implemented by a consortium of NGOs with Total Land Care (TLC) as the lead agency. TLC has extensive experience and capacity in practical research and technology transfer to meet the needs of communities and agribusinesses in the NWR area.

The Kulera NWR project has started implementation in 2010 and has a separate office neighboring DNPW park management office. TLC has agreed to share information with the EMNWR project on a continuous basis.

4. EXISTING CONDITIONS FOR COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION

This section outlines: (i) existing agreements between communities and Government with respect to access to natural resources along with the associated administrative and financial responsibilities; (ii) existing Community Based Organisations and administrative structures active in the NWR GEF Project Area; (iii) which people are affected by the project (Project Affected People); (iv) criteria for eligibility of affected persons; and, (iv) how affected persons will benefit from the project.

4.1 Existing agreements on land access, resource rights and responsibilities

The EMNWR project area consists of the Bua Watershed Area (figure 2) in the Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve which is the oldest and largest wildlife reserve of Malawi with a total area of 1,800 square km. DNPW provides community outreach services in an area of 10 square km around the reserve. The Kulera Biodiversity Project targets the same area for community livelihood support outside the legal footprint of the GEF project.

Protected lands

Malawi's legal framework is explained in the project's ESMF (WESM 2011). In summary, the management of Malawi's National Parks and Game Reserves including community user zones and problem animal control is the responsibility of DNPW. The Forest Reserves are managed and protected by the Forestry Department; the Fisheries Department is responsible for the management of the national fisheries stocks in communal areas.

All three departments encourage community participation in resources management. In the protected land category, communities have limited resource use and access rights.

In Malawi, communities neighbouring protected areas have use and access rights to selected wildlife resources and revenues based on agreements with the DNPW. As indicated in the DNPW Wildlife Policy, the collaborative management scheme is still in a pilot stage and will be introduced gradually following an adaptive management approach (Ministry of Information and Tourism/ DNPW 2000).

In NWR, seven collaborative management zones in the reserve border zone have been established so far following the initiation of 26 Village Natural Resources Committees (VNRCs). The average size of a user zone is 15 ha. The boundaries are established through a participatory process using streams and visible land marks. After demarcation of the user zone, committee members are trained by the DNPW community outreach staff. Quota setting is done by the research officer together with committee members. Resources permitted for harvesting include: mushrooms, reed, thatching grass, palm leaves, bamboo, fruits, termites and traditional medicinal plants. In addition, placement of bee hives in the user zone and fire management of the area surrounding the hives is permitted. The collection of timber, firewood, fish and wild animals is not permitted.

User zone management rules are mostly based on common sense and good will. Examples are:

- Before entering the reserve permission should be obtained from the respective VNRC's chairperson by filling in and signing a 'user zone form';

- The allowable off take is based on what one person can carry;
- The number of people allowed to enter is minimal 2; maximum 10;
- There is a list of allowable/ not allowable tools (e.g. spear, gun, machete are not allowed);
- Illegal activities should be reported;
- Upon returning the harvest should be weighed/ counted by the same VNRC's chairperson;
- The 'user zone form' should be completed by the VNRC's chairperson and forwarded to DNPW research officer for data processing.

An issue of concern is DNPW's current lack of financial and human resources for monitoring the seven existing user zones as well as the guidance and support of the 26 VNRCs around the NWR as well as planned additional user zones. This issue will be addressed by WESM during discussions with project partners and a decision will be made whether and how resources will be focused to achieve the highest impact.

Community representation and revenues from Protected Areas

Currently the NWR statutory fee revenue defined as gate fees, guide fees and game meat sales goes directly to the Treasury of the Government of Malawi (GoM). However, the GoM recently established, through an agreement between the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Culture, a retention system to allow protected areas to retain a certain percentage of tourism concession fees and gate fees at the regional park level to complement the PA management budget. This system is currently being initiated in Nyika - Vwaza¹ and will be replicated throughout the country including at the Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve.

A special government account has been opened in Kasungu to service three protected areas, under which a sub-account will be opened for the Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve. Under this system, communities around Nyika-Vwaza receive a share of 20% of statutory fees, while 80% goes to government. The tourism concession fees are supposed to be shared 50% to DNPW (protected area) and 50% to local communities. However, the government has not yet begun implementation of this scheme and is currently defining nationwide standard shares for the statutory fees revenue. It is unclear whether this process will be finalized within the EMNWR project period.

4.2 Existing community based organisations and administrative structures

The EMNWR project area has several community based organisations and administrative structures directed at good governance and social organisation including community development, conservation and sustainable use of natural resources. The EMNWR project will work with these institutions as much as possible rather than forming new organisations. The following table (table 1) provides an overview of the existing CBOs, their mandate and linkage to higher levels.

In Malawi, different systems coexist promoting rural participation in decision making and poverty reduction through general community development and communal management and sustainable use of natural resources. Different sectors have developed their own systems to integrate wildlife management into their activities (WESM 2006).

¹ Although funds are being retained in the special governmental account for these two protected areas, disbursement still depends on final definition of the shares and procedures to share revenues with local communities.

For example, Village Natural Resources Management Committees (VNRCs) often exist alongside Village Development Committees (VDCs). Equally, it is possible that a communally managed 'Village Forest Area' applies to the same area as a 'Wildlife Management Authority'.

WESM has recommended that there is need to harmonize the sector institutional framework for wildlife management within the decentralized structure.

Table 1: Existing Community Based Organisations active in EMNWR project area

| Key Community-Based Organisations (CBOs) | Mandate and Responsibility | Current Status and Activities | Support Staff on the Ground | Main Channel for Higher Level Support |
|--|--|--|--|---|
| 1. Chiefs and Traditional Authority (TA) | Overall local governance. Represent the District Commissioner and Office of the President on the ground | Well established and active. Attending matters of land and natural resources and resolving social conflicts | Headmen, Local Development Committee, Village Courts | Local Government, District Assemblies |
| 2. Village Natural Resources Committees (VNRCs) | Resource use in PAs and communal areas and contributing to their management | Partially established and some active in areas around the reserve. Controlling NR use in parks and reserves, managing and monitoring compliance with agreements, enforcing law | Village Heads, Group Village Heads and village members | Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW) |
| 3. Wildlife Management Authority | Resource use in PAs and communal areas and contributing to their management | Umbrella organisation of VNRCs. Not yet established in EMNWR area | Local Chiefs, VNRC chair persons. Group Village Heads | DNPW |
| 4. Various NRM based Income Generating Activity (IGA) Groups | Generating income from several CBNRM activities including beekeeping, mushroom collection and fish farming | Established and active. Small scale activities | Local Chiefs, VNRCs, NGOs | Community Development Office, Forestry Department, DNPW |
| 5. Village Development Committee | Community development and social organisation at village level | Established with some active | Village Group Headman | Local Government, District Assembly |
| 6. Area Development Committee (ADC) | Community development and social organisation at area level | Established with some active | Local Chiefs | Local Government, District Assembly |
| 7. District Development Committee (DDC) | Community development and social organisation at district level | Established and active | All line departments and ADC | Local Government, District Assembly |

4.3 Project Affected People (PAP) and criteria for eligibility

PAP are those people who depend on a certain level of access and use of a given resource to maintain their standard of living. As a general guideline, PAP include all families and their dependants living in or near the Nkhotakota Wildlife Reserve and are dependent on it on a continual or seasonal basis. This may include hunters, fishermen, agriculturists, pastoralists,

women collecting firewood, loggers, and others. PAP also include people who practice a seasonal occupation or second profession activities – they may depend on this second activity as alternative sources of livelihood income when necessary.

Restrictions to resource access and use by communities living outside the NWR will not be directly compensated by the project as this is not considered involuntary action. This will be addressed through other mitigation measures such as the expansion of community user zones in the reserve.

In principle, opportunities for participation in project activities will be open and advertised to all PAP. As for general community consultations especially raising awareness about the project, it is recommended to reach out to all Traditional Authorities (TAs) surrounding the reserve. These are sensitive issues and neglecting one or more TAs may undermine the project.

Depending on available budget, the timeframe and activity it may be necessary to focus certain activities within the eligible target groups in or near the Bua Watershed Area. The same goes for accessing labour and inviting supply industries for tourism based activities and/or reserve infrastructure. Private sector participation in these discussions is recommended.

Criteria for eligibility could be:

- Resource use: where are most illegal resource users located, who is mostly affected by restricted access, where are most people willing to change;
- Existing support provided by (local) government or NGOs;
 - Strengthening existing CBOs, VNRC groups and user zones through cooperation with their higher level support organisations might be more efficient than starting new ones.
 - Geographic position: How close is the target group to the Bua Watershed area. It is recommended to concentrate outreach activities on communities within the 10 km range of the reserve.
- Commitment, involvement or experience with sustainable agriculture or small scale (tourism) business.

Participatory methodology

Initial identification of PAP eligibility and mitigation level required will be defined with the communities concerned and will include assessment of resources, capabilities, and interest as well as the type and level of support needed. The entry point to identify beneficiaries starts with the leadership structures of communities and villages in the Bua Watershed area as well as established CBNRM associations.

DNPW will focus its support, under its community program, on the poorest households which are very dependent on natural resource use. DNPW will also take gender issues into account to ensure participation of women and youth. Criteria for eligibility and work plans for community outreach will be discussed with the NWR Project Advisory Committee (PAC). It should be noted that there are no GEF funds to support the PAC and DNPW will finance PAP mapping directly.

People moving newly into the project area

As a first step the borders of the project area (proposed as 10 km around the NWR) should be clearly confirmed by WESM and DNPW. Any person entering the project area after the PAP identification and eligibility determination exercises are concluded will not be eligible for consideration as PAP. However, it is recognized that extended family structures are a common feature of rural African households and that some families will

have members especially grown children or husbands working or living with relatives outside the project area. These family members might from time to time or permanently return home. In these situations, and as they are easily identifiable by their community members, such returnees will be absorbed into the community-wide activities in which their families participate.

4.4 Measures to reduce negative impact

The EMNWR project ESMF has identified various measures that will be implemented to assist the affected communities in improving or at least maintaining their standards of living. The PAP benefits will include measures to mitigate negative livelihood impact as further described in the ESMF. Along these lines Figure 4 presents an overview of project activities that may generate adverse environmental and social impacts. The Project ESMF presents the detailed list of mitigation measures proposed to address each of these impacts. Specific measures to mitigate adverse impact on local communities are described below and in the ESMF.

Figure 4: Project Activities that may generate adverse impacts

| Environmental Screening | Planned Activities | Environmental Impacts | Social Impacts |
|---|--|--|--|
| <i>Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) including Environmental Management Plan (EMP). EMP to be prepared and approved before works begin.</i> | Construction of new facilities Construct 1 scout camp of 6 staff families each | Increase in human disturbances, loss of trees and habitat in affected area Restricted wildlife access to resource requirements | Restricted areas, could cause antagonism with park authorities |
| <i>Environmental screening and application of appropriate mitigation measures</i> | Linear Infrastructure rehabilitation Rehabilitate 300 km of existing bush tracks Rehabilitate 200km of existing gravel road inside the NWR | Potential erosion, soil/water loss. Increased access for illegal extraction of natural resources in the NWR. Siltling of streams. Increased wildlife disturbance near water holes and feeding grounds. Potential destruction of natural vegetation and habitat during construction. Increased human impact on vegetation and wildlife movements. | Increased undesired human immigration into area. Increased exposure to illegal markets. |
| | Rehabilitation of facilities | Loss of habitat in affected area | None identified |
| | Rehabilitate 1 scout camp | | |
| <i>No environmental analysis required.</i> | Increased law enforcement | Nil | Reduced income from illegal use of natural resources from the Reserve |
| | Increased fire management control | Nil | Possible fines |
| | Increased controls on tree cutting and collection of firewood in park | Nil | Possible fines, reduced access to natural resources |
| | Controlled access to natural resources | Nil | Loss of income and food |
| <i>Environmental screening and application of appropriate measures as</i> | Implementation of tsetse control program | May impact vulnerable species such as fish and amphibia. | Health risk for staff handling pesticide. |

| | | | |
|---|--|--|---|
| <i>outlined in the pest management approach section of the ESMF</i> | Expand and maintenance of tsetse baits | | Reduced incidence of sleeping sickness in reserve and tourism staff and visitors. |
|---|--|--|---|

Mitigation measures to avoid adverse impacts in communities surrounding the Reserve:

The Process Framework is designed to respond to the principle considerations of OP 4.12 on Involuntary Resettlement as they pertain to the project.

The following is a summary of the measures to be taken during project implementation and to be adopted in tandem with application of the ESMF.

- a. Prioritize local community members for employment.
- b. Expand reserve village user zones for sustainable harvesting of forest produce.
- c. Train Village Natural Resources Management Committees in sustainable use and monitoring of natural resources, including fire management and beekeeping.
- d. Community members wishing to traverse the reserve should obtain a permit from DNPW, and should be allowed only on specific and controllable routes during daylight.
- e. Ensure demarcation of reserve boundaries in sensitive areas.

In addition, DNPW will continue to support its current limited community outreach program (annual budget US\$ 6,200) around NWR focusing on the formation, management and monitoring of community user zones as well as the initiation, training and support of VNRCs and associated user groups.

The GEF project will support the design and implementation of action plans which will include the expansion and improved management of community user zones. In addition, there will likely be an increase in job opportunities as a result of tourism expansion and maintenance works in the reserve. Table 2 provides an overview of planned activities under the EMNWR project.

This section provides further guidance on the current and future community benefits in the EMNWR project area.

Community user zones

Currently, seven community user zone agreements have been signed between DNPW and the respective VNRCs. Participatory management of the user zones is being piloted but the system needs to be strengthened to make it more transparent and accountable. The process will be reviewed under the proposed project. A decision should be made whether to expand the number of user zones to cover the whole reserve border area or whether to first concentrate on the existing zones and to improve their management. A related area needing further research is the demarcation of park boundaries in sensitive areas.

Capacity building for CBNRM and project awareness

DNPW has been active in the initiation of VNRCs and beekeeping clubs, their training and monitoring. Currently, 26 committees exist around the NWR. To date, DNPW's follow-up activities have been scarce due to limited staff and resources.

The design and implementation of a communication strategy enhancing awareness about the project's benefits as well as benefits of conservation in general should be an important element of DNPW's investment in the area. WESM's Dwangwa branch is

already active in the area directing its environmental education activities mainly to schools. Environmental education including project awareness can be expanded in a cost effective manner to the wider community around the reserve through existing CBOs with the help of WESM, DNPW and TLC. The project ESMF earmarks 10% of the project budget for environmental screening, monitoring and implementation of appropriate mitigation measures. A portion of this allocation will be used towards increasing project awareness, support to VNRCs and community user zones.

Problem animal control

Problem animals are being reported regularly to DNPW. It concerns mainly elephants and hippos raiding crops outside the reserve, mostly at the end of the rains and crocodiles attacking fishermen and other people. DNPW provides phone numbers of their officers to community leaders and the local radio station so they can contact the officers in case of emergencies.

With increasing reserve protection it is possible that there will be an increase in problem animals. It is recommended that alternative measures, including production and use of chilli fences, chilli briquettes and bee hive fences, are adopted to deter increased human-wildlife conflicts.

Livelihood support

DNPW has initiated some small scale livelihood support towards beekeeping clubs, and collectors of non-forest products (mainly mushrooms). These clubs are all related to VNRCs with often the same members. It is recommended to combine these functions as the VNRC members have a direct personal benefit from protecting 'their' portion of the reserve.

Job opportunities

The availability of new jobs - whether permanent or temporal - will be another benefit for local communities. Jobs are expected to become available in tourism (e.g. lodge management, catering, cleaning, guiding), road maintenance and construction, infrastructure maintenance and construction as well as reserve protection. It is recommended to prioritize local community members for employment. Jobs should be advertised publicly in all surrounding TAs.

Recommendations

Some major threats to the reserve are the collection of firewood, production of charcoal and the uncontrolled use of pesticides in fishing waters to extract fish. Mitigation measures are needed to reverse the trend. A campaign promoting village woodlots can help to reduce pressure on the reserve. Tourism concessionaires have pledged to initiate their own village woodlots. DNPW could follow suit and provide a good example by establishing a woodlot for use by reserve staff and families. Affordable green energy solutions such as energy saving (clay) stoves, solar cookers, solar panels should be promoted for use by villagers and/or use by DNPW staff. More environmentally friendly methods of drying of fish should be researched.

Fish poisoning can potentially cause long lasting damage to the natural ecosystems as well as to consumers' health. Again a campaign is recommended to promote alternative methods and to make people aware of the dangers of using pesticides in fishing. Coordination with the Department of Fishery is essential. Law enforcement related to fisheries inside and outside the reserve could be strengthened with the help of VNRCs and community policing.

Given the fact that the EMNWR project has a limited budget it is crucial to plan carefully and see where the limited human and financial resources can be used most efficiently.

Table 2: Responsibilities of EMNWR project partners and external organizations

| Risk | Mitigation measure | Participating organisation | Suggested source of funding |
|-------------------------------------|--|-----------------------------------|---|
| Loss of access to natural resources | Extension and monitoring of community user zones | DNPW | DNPW (limited funding) |
| Loss of access to natural resources | Capacity building of Natural Resources Committees | DNPW, WESM | DNPW (limited funding) |
| Loss of access to natural resources | Project communication with stakeholders including public meetings, District Council and Project Advisory Committee | DNPW | EMNWR project (limited funding) |
| Loss of access to natural resources | Livelihood support | DNPW, WESM | DNPW (limited funding) Tourism operators (limited funding) |
| Loss of access to natural resources | Job opportunities related to tourism activities in the reserve | DNPW | EMNWR project Tourism operators |
| Loss of income | Problem Animal Control | DNPW | EMNWR project (limited funding) |

5. COMMUNITY PARTICIPATION PROCESS

This section provides guidelines on how to establish effective community participation processes and channels by building on existing efforts and programs. This will help the project engage the communities in a way that achieves significant impact on project goals including community livelihoods enhancement and at the same time comply with World Bank safeguards requirements.

5.1 Mechanisms for participation

Communication is the basis for creating awareness, consensus building, participation in development processes as well as for making informed decisions and resolving conflicts. Clear communication channels will be formulated to ensure that information is readily available to various stakeholders and other interested parties. This communication approach is an essential tool to help communities accept the project and its goals, to understand the benefits of conservation and to become involved in sustainable development changes. The approach will also ensure a two-way exchange of knowledge and information with stakeholders at different levels. Awareness creation among communities about the project and opportunities associated with it, the planning process, eligibility and options for participating in development activities will play an important part in the communication approach by DNPW.

The communication process will complement and feed into existing processes for district planning.

At District Level, communication can be initiated through:

- District Development Committees (DDC)
- District Environment Committees (DEC)
- Relevant line ministries
- Nkhotakota Project Advisory Committee (PAC)

At Chiefdom level, communication can be initiated through:

- Traditional Authorities
- Existing ADCs
- WMAs

At Village level, communication can be initiated through:

- Village Group Headmen, Village Headmen
- Women, youth groups
- Commodity groups
- Public meetings/ drama performances
- VNRCs
- VDCs

Benefits, eligibility and mitigation decisions

During the process of project implementation the following topics will be discussed with relevant stakeholders, and decisions will be publicly communicated:

- What consumptive and non-consumptive uses and income generating activities will be allowed in the NWR - especially in the Bua Watershed Area - and in community woodlots in the communal areas?

- Will current user zone agreements with the DNPW remain valid or will they change under the project? If so how and with what social impact?
- Who is eligible to use any given resources, and in the interest of sustainability, what levels or quantities and methods of harvesting are allowed in each resource system?
- What form of benefit and mitigation assurances in terms of signed agreements or Memorandums of Understanding will be in place?
- What are the channels and mechanisms for expressing and settling grievances regarding eligibility and mitigation?

Decisions on levels and use of conservation based revenues

This will include decisions regarding:

- Allocations of roles and responsibilities (between WESM, DNPW and community members) in conservation and livelihood activities in and outside the reserve;
- Revenue sharing between DNPW and communities as the primary partners managing the reserve (e.g. tourism concessions, statutory fees);
- How public funds meant for community wide benefits should be distributed and/or invested on behalf of community members;
- Which community members are allowed to transit through the park, on what grounds, using which routes and how will they be monitored.

These topics and related questions will be discussed and agreed with PAP in the Bua Watershed Area during project implementation. In addition, the project and community leaders will discuss and take account of any other issues and questions raised by the communities regarding project activities and their related rights and benefits. The most efficient forum for community participation in these decisions is public meetings. However, to be practical each of these forums must focus on just a few strategic and most appropriate issues and questions at a time. A launching workshop at project effectiveness with DNPW and WESM is recommended to agree on a detailed focus of the Process Framework.

5.2 Institutional organisation for implementation

WESM will be responsible for applying the agreed arrangements in the PF and ESMF as well as liaising with the relevant authorities (District and DNPW HQ and field level). The project will implement the guidelines contained in these frameworks to promote an environmentally and socially acceptable process. WESM is also responsible to ensure all agreed EMNWR related mitigation measures are being implemented and the results monitored on annual regular basis. Additional monitoring will be planned for as required.

Monitoring reports will be submitted to the Environmental Affairs Department, PAC, DNPW and the WB on an annual basis coinciding with the annual planning and reporting cycle. Ten percent of the EMNWR project budget has been earmarked for environmental and social safeguard screening, assessment, management and monitoring. The budget will include staff time, fuel and equipment and will be specified in the 3-year work plan.

Institutional arrangements

The Department of National Parks and Wildlife (DNPW): DNPW is the statutory organisation in charge of national parks, wildlife reserves and sanctuaries as well as wildlife management on communal lands in Malawi. It is housed in the Ministry of Tourism, Wildlife and Culture (MTWC). DNPW will act as the executing agency of the

project. DNPW has two focal points for the project: (i) in the Division of Wildlife Management at DNPW HQ and (ii) the DNPW NWR park manager based in Nkhotakota.

The Wildlife Environmental Society of Malawi (WESM): WESM is a non-governmental organisation registered as a Trust in Malawi. WESM is promoting public participation, awareness raising and education in the field of sustainable management of wildlife, natural resources and the environment. WESM will be the GEF grant recipient and will be responsible for project administration and management and thereby account for project funds. The administrative structure of WESM has been examined as part of project preparation. The financial management and procurement recommendations will be implemented by WESM. An operational manual has been prepared defining procedures, roles and responsibilities for each party.

Tourism operators: At present, DNPW has granted two tourism concessions in the NWR (Bua River Lodge and Tongole Lodge) both are situated in the Bua watershed area. Participation of these tourism operators in project implementation (input in management and tourism plan, monitoring and evaluation plan, participation in PAC), through component 2, is essential to ensure the sustainability of proposed actions and increased revenues for the reserve.

Other government stakeholders: Other government stakeholders that will be informed and consulted throughout project implementation include the regional staff of the Department of Forestry (two forest reserves are adjacent to the NWR), the Department of Fishery and the District Assembly for the Nkhotakota District.

Nkhotakota Project Advisory Committee (PAC): A PAC will be established prior to effectiveness. It will consist of one representative of DNPW HQ (chair), DNPW NWR Reserve Manager, regional Department of Forestry, regional Department of Fishery, tourism operators in the NWR, District Commissioner/Director for Planning and Development, TLC HQ, a representative of the PAP and WESM (Secretariat). The PAC will meet biannually and evaluate the semi-annual progress reports as well as key project outputs (tourism plan, management plan, training plan) in addition to providing input into annual work plans.

Project Implementation Arrangements:

WESM is responsible for project management. The management function will be carried out by a WESM-funded project coordinator. The project coordinator will be permanently posted at the WESM Nkhotakota field office.

WESM functions will include the following:

- Ensure timely and satisfactory implementation of project activities according to the project design and annual work plan/ budget and procurement plan;
- Prepare annual work plan and budget including procurement schedule and submit to the Director of DNPW as well as the Chairperson of WESM for approval and the World Bank for no objection;
- Ensure project safeguard compliance as prescribed in ESMF and PF including monitoring and reporting to GoM and World Bank;
- Implement monitoring and evaluation plan and use evaluation findings to adopt corrective measures when necessary;
- Prepare and submit semi-annual progress reports to the Project Advisory Committee and the World Bank;
- Liaise with relevant governmental, non-governmental and private sector stakeholders;
- Carry out procurement in accordance with the procurement plan;
- Serve as secretariat to the Project Advisory Committee;

- Participate as an observer at TLC Kulera Biodiversity Project steering committee sessions.

5.3 Grievances and conflict resolution

Conflicts or grievances may arise from the implementation of project activities or may already exist (e.g. conflicts between people and wildlife). Conflicts generally arise from poor communication, inadequate or lack of consultation, inadequate flow of relevant up-to-date information, or restrictions that may be imposed on PAP.

Preventive measures

As preventive measure, the implementation of a good communication strategy is an absolute requirement to reduce misunderstanding and grievances. Project awareness raising activities will be conducted throughout the life of the project. Consultations and negotiations will be carried out with PAP where there are indications of potential conflicts. Monetary issues are often a source of grievance. Another important preventive measure is to provide clear information on the project's policy concerning allowances entitlements for community members, chiefs and government employees participating project activities. The same goes for guidelines and procedures for micro credits or other community funds.

Grievance and conflict resolution

Grievance mechanisms would involve the local community leaders in providing a first level of listening and informal resolution. These leaders will be involved in project consultation, e.g. a local VNRC member. As these people are already involved in awareness raising, these fora are a natural channel for informal resolution at the village level. Some land- and resource use related conflicts may also be resolved by a Traditional Authority.

As a final step, grievances could be taken to the local courts. It is expected however, that grievances should be resolved by working within existing community structures.

If conflicts or complaints are outside the capacity of the community or local authorities to resolve, depending on the topic, they could be presented to:

- Meetings of the Nkhotakota Project Advisory Committee
- The NWR park manager

If issues are concerned with project management or implementation of project activities, they should first be presented to the NWR park manager. When the results are not satisfactory with the complainant the case can be referred to the WESM project manager and/ or the PAC.

In all cases, PAP and communities will be encouraged to resolve conflicts harmoniously. In the case of grievances, decisions on how to solve the issue and communication of procedures and decisions will be made timely (e.g. within 1-2 months). This will promote greater trust in the communication system and improve attitudes towards the project within the community. Information should ideally be returned to the community using the same channels as for the original message. The results will be communicated to all other levels and other relevant organizations at the same time to promote transparency and coordination. If the complainant is not satisfied with the decision of the Project Authority, then as an ultimate step they may submit the complaint to the District Development Committee or the District Commissioner.

Administrative and Legal Procedures

Provisions to appeal with sector grievances to higher levels of government such as the Permanent Secretary, National Director or Minister exist in national legislation. Should any party be dissatisfied, the grieved party may take the complaint to court where it will be dealt with under Malawian law.

Legal procedures for restricting access to natural resources shall be observed as provided for in the Constitution and laws of Malawi and supplemented by this PF and ESMF.

5.4 Community participation in monitoring

The project will utilise a participatory monitoring and evaluation process which will monitor the effectiveness of mitigation measures to improve (or maintain) PAP's standards of living.

The EMNWR project will support affected communities so that they are able to monitor:

- Status of adverse social impacts (e.g., limited access to different types of natural resources inside the NWR, direct impact of Tsetse fly control program pesticide application and disposal, construction phase impacts (noise, debris, waste disposal), etc) and effectiveness of mitigation measures outlined in the ESMF and PF (Note: WESM will ensure that communities are provided with a copy of the ESMF so that they have a complete list of potential adverse impacts to monitor and specific indicators will be developed with the communities to ensure effective monitoring of each impact);
- Implementation of agreed activities;
- Effectiveness of the conflict resolution and grievance settlement mechanisms.

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