

Grievance Redress Mechanism for the Cubango-
Okavango River Basin – Financing Innovation in
Transboundary Waters (CORB – FIT)

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Acronyms

CORB	Cubango Okavango River Basin
CORB-FIT	Cubango-Okavango River Basin – Financing Innovation in Transboundary Waters
CORB-Fund	Cubango-Okavango River Basin Fund
OKACOM	The Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission
OKASEC	
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
GRS	Grievance Redressal Service
IEC	Information, Education and Communication
GBV	Gender Based Violence
GEF	Global Environment Facility
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

1. INTRODUCTION

The United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), acting as an implementing agency of the Global Environment Facility (GEF), is supporting the Governments of Angola, Botswana and Namibia through the Permanent Okavango River Basin Commission (OKACOM) in implementing a project by the CORB Fund titled “Catalyse Investments into Nature – positive outcomes” in the Cubango-Okavango River Basin.”

The Cubango-Okavango River Basin (CORB) is a transboundary system that flows through Angola, Botswana and Namibia. It emanates from the Angolan highlands and is drained by the Cubango River (known as the Kavango in Namibia and the Okavango in Botswana) which forms the border between Namibia and Angola, as well as by its main tributary, the Cuito, and flows 1,260 km before spilling into the Okavango Delta in northern Botswana.

The CORB supports an astounding variety and abundance of terrestrial and freshwater animal and plant life, and it is essential to the livelihoods of more than a million people who directly rely on its natural resources and ecosystem services. The Basin is still relatively underdeveloped, yet it faces many interrelated challenges: increasing water abstraction for commercial agriculture, deforestation and forest degradation driven by commercial logging and charcoal production, largescale hydropower infrastructure development, and the rapid growth of a population that relies almost exclusively on subsistence resource-based livelihoods. These challenges are exacerbated by the effects of climate change and result in deviations from historical flood-pulse patterns. Loss of freshwater resources in the Basin will present a risk for both the people and the unique but fragile ecosystems that depend on them.

The CORB Fund is a public benefit Organisation and was established as a Company Limited by Guarantee in December 2019, to address the urgent challenges facing the Basin and to deploy an alternative resilient development pathway. Angola, Botswana and Namibia are members of the Fund and are represented by their respective Ministries in charge of Water. The Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission (OKACOM) Secretariat is providing support to the Fund as the Process Agent, The CORB Fund Board of Directors comprises seven members and includes representation from all 3 Member States and independent members.

OKACOM has been working with a number of partners to support the operationalization of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin Fund (CORB Fund). The CORB Fund is a dedicated financial mechanism designed to mobilize and manage resources for innovative, sustainable investments in the Cubango-Okavango River Basin, to support transboundary water resources management and to conserve biodiversity.

OKACOM in collaboration with the World Bank is endeavouring to access funding from Global Environment Facility (GEF) to support the operationalisation of the CORB Fund through a Project titled “Development of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin – Financing Innovation in Transboundary Waters (CORB – FIT)”. The CORB-FIT project is aimed to be a transformative step in the sustainable management of the Cubango-Okavango River Basin. With a total budget of US\$10 million, CORB-FIT aims to help in the operationalisation of this robust financial mechanism to unlock innovative financing for transboundary water management, livelihood improvement, and biodiversity conservation across Angola, Botswana, and Namibia.

2. Project Description

The Cubango-Okavango River Basin (CORB) Fund is an innovative mechanism that aims to enhance livelihoods, improve ecosystem resilience, and provide equitable benefits to the people of Angola, Botswana, and Namibia. It is designed to generate an estimated US\$2.1 billion in net present value benefits and deliver a Return on Investment of US\$7 for every US\$1 invested over the next three decades.

The CORB Fund will make crucial investments in environmental and social interventions to protect globally important biodiversity, build more resilience to climate change, and improve socio-economic conditions for the 1 million people who depend on this unique ecosystem. These interventions will blend lower-impact ecological infrastructure investments, tourism development, and livelihoods opportunities with more traditional infrastructure.

The Fund’s dual vehicle architecture integrates a Sinking Fund (short- and medium-term liquidity) and an Endowment Fund (long-term sustainability). The Sinking Fund covers initial operationalization, pilot projects, and non-bankable interventions, while the Endowment Fund provides a stable, perpetual revenue stream for core programs and scalable investments. Both vehicles will be managed under a unified, transparent governance framework.

3. Project institutional Arrangements (The Fund’s structure)

The Fund is a fully independent Company Limited by Guarantee in Botswana, with three distinct levels of governance:

Five Members – one from each of the three Member States, one non-government livelihoods anchor and one non-government ecosystems anchor – will comprise the highest decision-making body and will meet annually.

Seven Non-Executive Directors – one from each of the three riparian state and four independent, non-government experts – will meet quarterly to oversee the business and affairs of the company, and ensure it delivers on its purpose.

One Executive Director – employed by the board of directors – will be responsible for managing the day-to-day activities of the Fund and for ensuring its operational efficiency

4. What is Grievance Redress Mechanism

A Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) refers to methods and processes by which redressal to a grievance is sought and provided. Its design can be specific to a Project or it can build on existing institutions and processes whether they are formal or informal. A grievance refers to an issue, concern, problem or claim, whether actual or perceived, that affects the physical, social and/or economic conditions of individuals and/or communities in the Project area of influence.

5. Purpose of GRM

The GRM is designed to act as recourse for situations in which, despite proactive stakeholder engagement, some stakeholders may have a concern about the project's potential impacts on them. Ultimately the purpose of the GRM is to find a win-win solution and in case the GRM fails, the parties to a grievance may resort to the formal courts at any stage of the grievance resolution process. It is intended to complement, not replace, formal legal channels for managing grievances e.g. the court system, organizational audit mechanisms, etc.).

The GRM process is outlined below:



6. Objectives

The objectives of the Project level GRM are:

- Ensure that the CORB- Fund and World Bank Operational Policies are adhered to in all sub-projects and activities;
- Receive, address, resolve and respond to all grievances in atimely manner;
- Establish relationships of trust between Project staff and stakeholders;
- To provide feedback mechanisms to project affected persons on resolution of their Complaints

7. Principles of Grievance Redress Mechanism

The GRM has been designed according to the following eight internationally accepted principles for the design of GRM:

- Accessibility – provides adequate assistance to those who wish to access it, including specific groups such as children, women and the disabled accessibility needs to take into consideration language, literacy, awareness, finance, distance or fear of reprisal.
- Predictability – offers a clear and known procedure, with timeframes for each stage, clarity on the types of processes and outcomes it can and cannot offer, and means of

monitoring the implementation of any outcome.

- Fairness – all decisions shall be perceived as fair and objective especially in terms of access to information and opportunities for meaningful participation in the final decision
- Rights compatibility – it is with applicable national and international standards; should not restrict access to other redress mechanisms
- Transparency – procedures and outcomes or decisions shall be made public and in a transparent manner.
- Feedback – Should serve to channel citizen feedback to improve project outcomes for the people
- Legitimate: has clear, transparent, and sufficiently independent governance structure to ensure that there is no bias or interference and the process can be conducted fairly with respect to all parties.

8. Available channels to submit grievances

Complaints can be made in person, writing, verbally over the phone, emails or social media. The public, especially persons living in the Project area of influence, must be informed about the Project activities, as well as where they can submit their concerns, who will be responsible and the timeframe of the response. Grievances can be submitted through the following channels:

Channel	Details
1. In person/ Mail	1. The Executive Secretary CORB- Fund P.O. Box 25741 Plot 25019, Old Lobatse Road Gaborone 2. During public Interaction
2. Email	info@corbfund.org , Joshua@corbfund.org .
3. Telephone	Telephone: +267 3161593

9. Socialisation of the GRM

Information, Education and Communication (IEC) materials shall be developed to disseminate information to various stakeholders so that they are provided with information they require on GRC mandate, objectives and operational principles for effective delivery of their functions, also to inform the people on the channels available to submit grievances.

The GRM will also be disclosed on both the CORB fund and OKACOM websites, social media. And mass media. Various stakeholders including civil society, NGOs are considered as key actors of the GRM and play a crucial role in disseminating the information on GRM and facilitating quick and amicable resolution of complaints.

10. Anonymity

Grievances can be submitted without providing the complainant's name or contact. If the grievance registration form is not available, the following key information should be noted:

- a. The Project's name
- b. Name of the person lodging the grievance (if provided)
- c. Information on the nature of the grievance including person/s affected.

11. World Bank Grievance Redressal Service(GRS)

The complainant has the option of approaching the World Bank, if they find the Project-level GRM did not result in satisfactory outcome. The WB GRS should ideally only be accessed once the Project GRM has been exhausted. World Bank procedures require the complainant to express their grievances in writing to World Bank office in Washington DC by completing the bank's GRS complaint form which can be found World Bank at the following URL link: <http://www.worldbank.org/en/Projects-operations/products-and-services/grievance-redress-service#5>.

Email: grievances@worldbank.org

Fax: +1-202-614-7313

By letter: The World Bank

Grievance Redress Service (GRS)

MSN MC 10-1018NW,

Washington, DC 20433, USA

12. Addressing Gender Based Violence

To address GBV, the project will follow the guidance provided on the World Bank Technical Note “Addressing Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) in Investment Project Financing Involving Civil Works”. This GRM will follow the official WB definitions described on the Technical Note. GBV grievances can be received through any of the available channels and will be considered serious grievances investigated and addressed immediately .

14. Grievance Redress Budget

Item	Cost/ USD
GRM Information and Awareness (various formats)	5000.00
Consultations Support	3,500.00
Production of GRM Information and Awareness materials including brochures, banners, community notice boards, newsletters etc.	10,000.00
TOTAL	18,500.00

15.ANNEXES

15.1 ANNEX i: Project Grievance REGISTRATION Form

Grievance and Resolution Form

Name (Filer of Complainant): ID Number

Contact Information (mobile number):

Nature of Grievance or Complaint Submitted:

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Individuals Contacted</u>	<u>Summary of Discussion</u>
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Signature:

Signed (Filer of Complaint):.....

Name of Person Filing Complaint (if different from Filer):

Position or

Relationship to Filer:

Review/Resolution

Date of Mediation Session:

Was filer present? YES { } NO { }

Was field Verification of complaint conducted? YES { } NO { }

Findings of Field Investigation:

Summary of Conciliation/Mediation Summary Discussion

Issues:

Was agreement reached on issues? YES { }. NO { }

If agreement was reached, detail agreement below:

If agreement was not reached, specify points of disagreement below:

.....

.....

Signed (Conciliator):

Signed (Filer):

Signed (Independent Observer):

Date:

Annex 15.2. Grievance Acknowledgement Form (GAF)

The Project acknowledges receipt of your complaint and will contact you within 3-5 working days.

Date of grievance/complaint: (dd/mm/yyyy)	
Name of Grievant/Complainant:	
Complainant's Address and Contact Information:	
Summary of Grievance/Complaint: (Who, what, when, where)	
Name of Project Staff Acknowledging Grievance:	
Signature:	
Date: (dd/mm/yy)	

ANNEX 15.3 . COMPLAINTS LOG

Location (District)..... County.....

Village (Town)

Ref. No.	Date Received	Mode of Receipt	Name of Complainant	Contacts of Complainant	Description of Complaint	Action Taken

Notes

1. **Reference Number:** a unique number assigned to the complaint for easy tracking and follow up
2. **Mode of receipt:** how the complaint was received. This could be by Telephone, Email, Written, In Person, verbal
3. **Contact of complainant:** to include phone number, P.O. Box number, e-mail
4. **Description of complaint:** a brief description of the complaint received, could include; fraud, land disputes, compensation, environment and social management issues service delivery, facilities, management etc.
5. **Action taken:** includes remedies, resolution, agreed upon actions to the satisfaction of the complainant

ANNEX 15.4. Meeting Record Form

Date of the Meeting: Grievance No: ...

Venue of meeting:.....

Details of Participants:

Complainant	Project/Government

Summary of

Grievance:.....

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Meeting Notes:

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Decisions taken in the meeting / Recommendations of GRC:

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Issue Resolved / Unresolved:.....

Signature of Chairperson of the meeting:.....

Name of Chairperson: **Date (DD/MM/YYYY):**