

**CUBANGO-OKAVANGO RIVER BASIN (CORB):  
FINANCING INNOVATION IN  
TRANSBOUNDARY WATERS (CORB\_FIT)**



**OKACOM**

*The Permanent Okavango River Basin Water Commission*



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## Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

### 1. Introduction/Project Description

- 1.1 The Cubango-Okavango River Basin is a transboundary basin with a network of river systems traversing through Angola, Botswana and Namibia. It comprises of a network of rivers whose headwaters are in the Angolan highlands where the Cuito and Cubango Rivers originate. The topographic extent of the CORB is approximately 700,000 km<sup>2</sup>, but derives its principal flow from 120,000 km<sup>2</sup> of sub-humid and semi-arid rangeland in the Cuando Cubango Province of Angola. The Cubango-Okavango stretches for approximately 1,100 kms and is drained by the Cubango (referred to as Kavango in Namibia and Okavango in Botswana). The Cubango-Okavango River forms the boundary of Namibia and Angola, and on this stretch is joined by the main tributary, the Cuito, before flowing through the panhandle as it enters Botswana and spilling into the Okavango Delta in Botswana.
- 1.2 The basin supports predominantly rural communities most often located either adjacent to the river or along roads. Relative to capital cities and main centres of economic activity, the basin populations of these countries are remote; this is reflected in lower social development indicators in the basin than those for national social development. In general, the people of the basin are poorer, less healthy, and less educated than other groups in their respective countries. This is particularly the case in Angola where war curtailed social and economic development.
- 1.3 The CORB is internationally important for its biodiversity and biological productivity. The Okavango Delta is the best-known feature of the CORB. It is one of the largest Ramsar Sites in the world. The Delta was declared a World Heritage site under the UNESCO convention in 2014. With its high variety of habitat types which supports high diversity of biological life forms, it remains one of the most important areas for biodiversity conservation in the world.
- 1.4 The Cubango-Okavango River Basin (CORB) is a hydrologically complex, and deeply interconnected system which highlights the importance of transboundary solutions. Community livelihoods in Angola, Namibia and Botswana depend on the CORB's floodplains, rivers, wetlands and other natural resources. Water resources in the CORB are facing competing demands that jeopardize the sustainability of livelihoods and ecosystems. In addition to threats posed by poverty, rapid rural population growth, and climate change, the CORB's water resources face demands from urbanization trends; resource-based livelihoods; expanding tourism; commercial agriculture; and water extractions.
- 1.5 Innovations in transboundary water financing are key to achieve economies of scale and scope for transboundary basin financing needs that cannot otherwise be accomplished at a national level. The project will (a) support the consolidation and expansion of the CORB Fund and advance collaboration towards its long-term sustainability; (b) enable innovative financing to address priority areas, laying the foundation for larger/more complex investments in the future; and (c) support targeted technical assistance to maximize the impact of livelihood interventions and biodiversity conservation. The

project is intended to be innovative through the development of project concepts and business models and strengthening OKACOM's capacity on financing innovation. These interventions will contribute to the overall global targets to improve cooperative management of shared water ecosystems, conserve biodiversity, and build resilience.

1.6 The Project includes four components:

1.6.1 **Component 1. CORB Fund operationalization.** This component will support the capacity, consolidation and expansion of the CORB Fund as an innovative financial mechanism, and advance collaboration towards its long-term sustainability. The component will complement the funding provided to the CORB Fund by other development partners (i.e., UNDP and the European Union), focusing on supporting the Fund's implementation through (a) the establishment and rolling-out of the Fund's governance structure, operations, and systems to ensure effective functioning; and (b) the implementation of stakeholder coordination to enable the CORB Fund's long-term sustainability.

- Sub-component 1.1. Establishment and implementation of the CORB Fund's capacity, governance, and operational systems.
- Sub-component 1.2. Implementation of stakeholder coordination.
- Sub-component 1.3 Communication and Knowledge Management.
- The output of Component 1 is that the CORB Fund Secretariat is staffed.

1.6.2 **Component 2: Enabling Innovative Financing in the CORB.** This component will enable innovative financing in the CORB to address the priority areas identified by Angola, Botswana and Namibia, laying the foundation for larger/more complex investments in the future. The component's activities will focus on two complementary areas of support: (a) preparing the CORB Fund Financing Roadmap and project concepts for investment; and (b) capitalizing the CORB Fund Endowment.

1.6.2.1 As part of this component, the project will: (a) conduct an assessment of CORB Fund strategy and governance structure, including making adjustments to allow the CORB Fund to evolve into a financial institution, and developing capitalization and financing plan; (b) engaging with Ministers of Finance of Angola, Botswana and Namibia on the CORB Fund support and financing; (c) identifying outsourcing options for a professional Fund Manager to run the CORB Fund, including bidding out the work to the market; (d) conduct market sounding on the financing needs, roles, instruments, and terms needed from CORB Fund to play a catalytic role in the region for transboundary projects, as well as identification of an initial investment pipeline (this includes a roadmap for CORB Fund financial instruments over time); and (e) initiating funding concepts for investments in transboundary projects via the CORB Fund, considering gender aspects and inclusion of Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs), including a pre-feasibility study for priority investment projects.

1.6.2.2 This last point includes supporting the preparation of pre-feasibility and feasibility studies for priority projects, economic and financial analysis, Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA), and technical designs ensuring environmental and social

considerations, and gender and climate resilience considerations; as well as the development of investment-ready project packages to attract co-financing from donors, development banks, and private sector investors. This work will be pivotal to identify where the CORB Fund can play a catalytic role through selected projects in the Basin. Project activities will identify and prioritize pipeline projects in close collaboration with Angola, Botswana, and Namibia, based on basin-wide needs assessments and strategic priorities.

1.6.2.2 This sub-component will provide seed capital to be placed into the CORB Fund endowment. This is contingent upon the governance, staffing, and arrangement for outsourcing the management of the funds being in place. This seed capital would be matched 1:1 by the three member states and donor(s), with a full target funding of \$20 million of initial capital for the endowment.

- Sub-component 2.1: Preparation of CORB Fund financing roadmap and concepts for investment.
- Sub-component 2.2: Capitalization of the CORB Fund endowment.

**Component 2 Outputs:-** CORB Fund financing roadmap and concepts for investment; investment-ready project packages, including gender and IPLCs inclusion considerations, to attract co-financing; assessment of CORB Fund strategy and governance structure; professional Fund Manager recruited; market sounding on the financing needs, roles, instruments, and terms needed from CORB Fund; initial investment pipeline; seed capital placed into the CORB Fund endowment.

1.6.3 **Component 3: Enhanced livelihoods and biodiversity in the Cubango-Okavango river basin.** Building on past and ongoing analytical work supported by the Cooperation in International Waters in Africa (CIWA) program, this component will support targeted technical assistance to maximize the impact of livelihood interventions and biodiversity conservation in the Basin, focused on two priority areas: a) the economics of biodiversity; and (b) capacity building for integrating biodiversity as part of planning and investment in the Okavango basin. The activities will consider the targets set out in the Kunming-Montreal Global Biodiversity Framework (GBF), adopted during the fifteenth meeting of the Conference of the Parties (COP 15). The framework supports the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals and sets out an ambitious pathway to reach the global vision of a world living in harmony with nature by 2050.

- **Sub-component 3.1. Implementation of the Basin-wide economics of biodiversity.** Activities under this sub-component will (a) design and implement a basin-wide economics of biodiversity study, quantifying the economic value of key ecosystem services (including water regulation, flood control, biodiversity, and tourism) and identifying priority conservation–development trade-offs; and (b) develop a biodiversity–livelihood investment case for the CORB to inform donor and government funding decisions, including gender-responsive and socially inclusive considerations. **Sub-component 3.2.** Capacity building for integrating biodiversity values into planning and investment decisions. The project will (a) provide capacity building for OKACOM member states (Angola, Botswana, Namibia) on integrating biodiversity economic valuation into national policies, development planning, and CORB Fund investment criteria; and (b)

develop policy briefs and guidelines to operationalize biodiversity valuation in project selection and natural resource management, integrating gender and IPLCs inclusion considerations, targeted at decision-makers, basin managers, and private sector investors.

**Component 3 Outputs:** Basin-wide economics of biodiversity study; biodiversity–livelihood investment case for the CORB to inform donor and government funding decisions; capacity building workshops for OKACOM member states (Angola, Botswana, Namibia); policy briefs and guidelines to operationalize biodiversity valuation.

**1.6.4 Component 4: Project Management.** This component will support project management costs and capacity building of the implementing agency, notably the CORB Fund Secretariat in OKACOM (see C. Implementation Arrangements).

**1.6.4.1 Sub-component 4.1.** Project management. Activities under this sub-component will support project management costs. Sub-component 4.2. Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E). The project will (a) organize a Project inception workshop; (b) establish and conduct ProjectSteering Committee (PSC) meetings; and (c) conduct a mid-term and a terminal evaluation compliant with donor requirements. OKACOM will follow an M&E plan to monitor and report on project progress and to adjust as required, based on lessons learned.

**Sub-Component 4.2 Monitoring & Evaluation:** M&E reports, including project progress reports, midterm evaluation and terminal evaluation report. The project will likely address: (i) mainstreaming gender and social inclusion in the sustainable management of water resources and biodiversity in the CORB; (ii) breaking barriers and maximizing opportunities for women and marginalized groups to participate in CORB Fund-financed activities; and (iii) mainstreaming gender and social inclusion in sustainable water management and biodiversity public policies. Illustrative examples of the way in which the project will seek to reduce the gender and social inclusion gap are listed below. The project may also support the establishment or strengthening of OKACOM Women in Water Diplomacy Network within the framework of the SADC and Global Networks.

1.7 The CORB-FIT is being prepared under the World Bank’s Environment and Social Framework (ESF).

## **2. Objective/Description of SEP**

2.1 The World Bank’s ESS 10 recognizes the importance of open and transparent engagement with all project stakeholders, based on the recognition that effective stakeholder engagement can improve environmental and social (E&S) sustainability of project activities, enhance project acceptance, and implementation, and allow stakeholders to contribute to project design. The key objectives of stakeholder engagement are to identify all relevant stakeholders and design effective methods and strategies for engaging such stakeholders. It is firmly believed that once a suitable programme and adaptable plan for stakeholder engagement are required for seamless engagement with stakeholders over the Project’s life and support the CORB-FIT in achieving its objectives.

- 2.2 WB guidelines stipulate that Grant Recipients are required to develop clear guidelines how they will engage with stakeholders in an inclusive and integrated manner as part of a project's environmental and social assessment and project design and implementation. The CORB-FIT will conduct and participate in stakeholder engagements that enhance understanding of the value of transboundary cooperation in the conservation of the River Basin's environment and its wetlands. It is critical that all stakeholders are fairly involved in decisions and actions to maintain the CORB's place as a globally important wetland with better understanding, sound management and responsible utilization of the Basin's natural resources. This means, consultations with stakeholders must be meaningful and be based on stakeholder identification and analysis, clear planning on how to engage stakeholders, disclosure of information, actual consultations, as well as responses to stakeholder grievances and reporting back to stakeholders.
- 2.3 As such, the SEP will help facilitate inclusive communication and provide an instrument that will help capture a wide range of issues and concerns. Identifying the major stakeholders affected by the project either directly or indirectly (including vulnerable groups) as well as those with other interests that could influence decisions about the project.
- 2.4 The overall purpose of a SEP is as follows:
- (i) **Stakeholder Identification:** Maps out all relevant stakeholders (communities, NGOs, government, workers) and analyzes their potential impact on the project.
  - (ii) **Engagement Strategy:** Defines *how* to engage (consultations, workshops, feedback mechanisms) and *when*, tailored to different groups, including vulnerable populations.
  - (iii) **Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM):** Establishes clear processes for stakeholders to raise concerns, provide feedback, or lodge complaints, including timelines for resolution and reporting.
  - (iv) **Monitoring & Evaluation:** Details on how the effectiveness of engagement will be assessed and reported to the World Bank.
  - (v) **Social Inclusion:** Ensures vulnerable groups' views are considered, promoting equity.
- 2.5 This purpose is in line with the OKACOM Communication Strategy and Stakeholder Engagement Plan 2020-2025 (CSSEP), which sets out guidelines on how to focus the messaging and specifies the various tiers and types of stakeholders in the CORB. As such, meaningful engagements with these stakeholders throughout the project cycle is an essential aspect of good does not only represent prudent project management but also provides opportunities for OKACOM to learn from the experience, knowledge, and concerns of the affected and interested stakeholders especially local communities, and to manage their expectations by clarifying the extent of OKACOM's responsibilities and resources under CORB-FIT Project.

### 3. Stakeholder identification and analysis per project component

#### 3.1 Methodology:



3.1.1 Project stakeholders are people and or institutions interested, have a role or affected by the Project. The OKACOM CSSEP recognizes that the CORB stakeholder groups can be placed in three categories as shown in the Figure above. The SEP is designed to anchor all stakeholder engagement in a systematic way that ensures strengthening of the government capacity of the CORB-FIT project. It is also intended that such capacity will be extended to both OKACOM and CORB Fund Structures. Further to this, the CORB-FIT Project will start-off with consideration of the stakeholders identified in the OKACOM CSSEP and progressively adapt the list as new information about the range of relevant stakeholders as the project implementation process continues. These stakeholders include affected parties (as defined in section 3.2), other interested parties (as defined in section 3.3) and disadvantaged/vulnerable individuals or groups (as defined in section 3.4).

3.1.2 The following principles will underpin the SEP for this project:

- (i) Public consultation and transparency: Public consultations for the project will be done annually for the duration of the project and carried out in an open and transparent manner, free of external manipulation, interference, coercion, or intimidation.
- (ii) Informed participation and feedback loop: Information will be provided to and widely distributed among all stakeholders using digital media and any appropriate format; stakeholder feedback and reviews will be prioritised while demonstrating that due care has been provided when addressing comments and concerns of the stakeholders.
- (iii) Inclusiveness and sensitivity: Stakeholder identification will continually be undertaken to support better communications and build effective relationships. The participation process for the project is inclusive and ensures that grassroots and the lowest level of stakeholders take part. All stakeholders at all times are encouraged to be involved in the consultation process. Equal access to information is provided to all stakeholders i.e. when non-digital formats are most suitable, efforts will be made to deliver information using such non-digital means. Sensitivity to stakeholders' needs is the key principle underlying the selection of

engagement methods. Special attention is given to vulnerable groups that may be at risk of being left out of project benefits, particularly women, the elderly, persons with disabilities, displaced persons, and migrant workers and communities, and the cultural sensitivities of diverse ethnic groups.

- (iv) Trust and accountability: Stakeholder engagement to be done in an environment where honest, taking ownership, and safe to speak up are thriving with clear expectations and mutual reliance.

**3.2. Affected parties**

3.2.1 Affected parties include local communities, community members, and other parties that may be subject to direct impacts from the Project. The projects’ stakeholders also include parties other than the directly affected communities. include NGOs or civil society groups at the local and national levels, business owners and providers of services within the project area, research and environmental groups other government officials.

Project-Affected Parties			
Stakeholder group	Interests	Influence	
		Interest	Impact
Local communities	Diversified livelihood systems	Very High	Medium
	Enhanced engagement processes		
	Transparent communication channels		
Non-Governmental Organisations	Implementing partners	High	Medium
	Involvement in conservation and natural resources management		
	Scientific and social understanding of a range of community problems		
	Involvement in community development activities		
State parties (Governments): Angola, Botswana and Namibia	Supervision and monitoring	High	Low
	Coordinated and equitable basin development		
Community-Based Organisations (CBO’s)	CBOs Represents the interests of different interested parties	High	Medium
	Especially vulnerable groups		
District level administration	Supervision and monitoring	High	Low
	Understanding of social issues		
	Government instruments at the grassroots level		

OKACOM Structures (OBSC, CoC & FoM)	Supervision and monitoring	High	Medium
	Custodians of joint basin management		
	Promote programs for improving socio-economic state of basin communities		
Donors: International funders; multi-lateral agencies	Leading various areas around operationalisation of the CORB Fund	High	High
	Strong interest in the preservation of the Okavango Delta		
	Strong interest in resilient investment and improved local community livelihoods		

### 3.3. Other interested parties

The projects' stakeholders also include parties other than the directly affected communities, including: *[add list of other possible stakeholders]*.

3.3.1 Other Interested Parties – individuals/groups/entities that may not experience direct impacts from the implemented Project(s) but who consider or perceive their interests as being affected by the project(s) and/or who could affect the project and the process of its implementation in some way. The list of other interested stakeholders is as follows:

- (i) The General public
- (ii) ICPS/Donors who have supported various interventions at the different stages of implementation of the SAP
- (iii) ICPs/Donors with interest to support and collaborate with OKACOM in the future
- (iv) Academic (Research and Development) Institutions
- (v) Global communities/tourists
- (vi) Environmental Activists/Lobbyist

### 3.4. Disadvantaged / vulnerable individuals or groups<sup>1</sup>

3.4.1 Disadvantaged and vulnerable individuals and groups often lack the ability to voice their concerns or fully understand the impacts of a project, which can lead to their exclusion from stakeholder engagement processes. In the CORB, a vulnerability assessment identified hotspots for climate and resource vulnerabilities. Large sections of the local communities, individuals and groups that are situated in those parts of the basin lack access to digital media and fair means for participating in the project engagements. This exacerbates the disadvantages and vulnerabilities and at the same time calls for stronger, innovative methods for stakeholder engagement that allows for inclusivity and equitable participation. The CORB-FIT project aims to support comprehensive reforms with basin-wide impacts, ultimately benefiting all stakeholders and citizens of the

riparian states by improving conservation and climate-resilience investment, and livelihood systems.

3.4.2 Vulnerable groups within the communities affected by the project will be further confirmed and consulted through dedicated means, as appropriate. Description of the methods of engagement that will be undertaken by the project is provided in the following sections.

**4. Stakeholder Engagement Program**

**4.1. Summary of stakeholder engagement done during project preparation**

4.1.1 To conceptualize and agree on the components, outcomes and focus of the project, two general stakeholder consultation workshops were undertaken. The first being during the OKACOM week of statutory meetings where the principles and the focus areas of the project were discussed and jointly agreed by various stakeholders including representatives of the CORB Member State Governments and District Level Administrative Authorities. To further align and develop synergies with similar interventions and projects, multiple stakeholder meetings were also held. It has been planned in this SEP that further stakeholder engagements will be undertaken in the near future to consolidate the project development processes and affirm the principles and focus areas that have been coined in the various project components presented in section 1 of this SEP. Further, consultations with various vulnerable groups (including any Indigenous Peoples) are also planned to take place as early as possible during preparation, all in line with the World Bank’s ESS 10 on Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure. Outcomes of the consultation workshops and their minutes will be used to update the SEP.

4.1.2 During implementation of the CORB-FIT project, a set of diverse stakeholders will be involved. The counterparts from Member States that will be involved in the Project Governance will come from the four statutory Organs of the Commission namely: i) The OKACOM Forum of Ministers (one from each of the riparian states) responsible for Water, ii) The Council of Commissioners comprising senior officials from the riparian States (three (3) from each Country), iii) The Okavango Basin Steering Committee (OBSC) comprising directors of Water, environment, Agriculture (including fisheries) – three (3) from each Member State, and iv) Members from the five (5) Specialized Technical Committees who will also participate in the technical reference group (TRG) for the Project. Members of the Project Steering Committee will also be drawn from the OBSC and Council to guide the implementation of the Project as appropriate. These counterparts will be expected to continue in support of the implementation of the project until its completion.

4.1.3 The following stakeholders have been consulted so far as part of the project preparations:

Organization	Name	TITLE	Location	Date	Mode of consultation
<b>1. Basin stakeholders and Development Partners Consultations</b>					

<b>UNDP</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Madeleine Nyiratuza</li> </ul>	UNDP Regional Technical Advisor for Water, Ocean Governance, Ecosystems and Biodiversity (Africa)	Addis	August 4 <sup>th</sup> 2025 August 18 <sup>th</sup> 2025	Virtual consultation (Teams meeting)
<b>AFD</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Audrey Seon</li> <li>▪ Florence Magalon</li> <li>▪ Lionel Goujon</li> <li>▪ Martin Lemenager</li> <li>▪ Mahaut Stefani</li> <li>▪ Marie-Anne De Villepin</li> </ul>	Project Lead Expert in the transformation of public institutions Head of Water & Sanitation Task Team Leader Water and Sanitation Project Manager Sustainable Development Officer, Southern Africa	Paris Paris Paris Johannesburg Johannesburg Johannesburg	August 4 <sup>th</sup> 2025	Virtual consultation (Teams meeting)
<b>EU</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Arnaud De-Vanssay</li> <li>▪ Antoine Saintraint</li> <li>▪ Matlhare Tebogo</li> <li>▪ Hein Gietema</li> </ul>	Team Leader Water Head of Operational Section Programme Officer Strategic Advisor on Finance for Water at Netherlands Water Partnership	Brussels Brussels Gaborone	August 4 <sup>th</sup> 2025 August 21 <sup>st</sup> 2025	Virtual consultation (Teams meeting)
<b>Pegasys</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mike Vice</li> <li>▪ Guy Robertson</li> </ul>	Senior Associate, Resilience Practice Manager	U.K.	August 4 <sup>th</sup> 2025	Virtual consultation (Teams meeting)
<b>TNC</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Sekgowa Motsumi</li> <li>▪ Kim Young-Overton</li> </ul>	KAZA Landscape Director Conservation Director - Africa Region	Zambia	August 4 <sup>th</sup> 2025	Virtual consultation (Teams meeting)
<b>Espelia</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Alois Belie</li> <li>▪ Lucie Perez</li> </ul>	Specialist Specialist	Paris	August 4 <sup>th</sup> 2025	Virtual consultation (Teams meeting)
<b>2. OKACOM regional and country counterparts</b>					
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Octavio Nani</li> </ul>	OBSC Co-Chairperson	Angola	28 – 29 July 2025	Maun Botswana
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Mr Maceu Neves</li> </ul>	OBSC Member	Angola	28 – 29 July 2025	Maun Botswana
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Dr Kobamelo Dikgola</li> </ul>	OBSC Co-Chairperson	Botswana	28 – 29 July 2025	Maun Botswana
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lesego Raditsebe</li> </ul>	OBSC Member	Botswana	28 – 29 July 2025	Maun Botswana
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ms Wendy Seone</li> </ul>	OBSC Member	Botswana	28 – 29 July 2025	Maun Botswana
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Ms Cynthia Ortmann</li> </ul>	OBSC Co-Chairperson,	Namibia	28 – 29 July 2025	Maun Botswana

	▪ Mr Christopher Munikasu	OBSC Member	Namibia	28 – 29 July 2025	Maun Botswana
	▪ Dr Victoria Shifidi	OBSC Member	Namibia	28 – 29 July 2025	Maun Botswana
	▪ Mr Carolino Mendes	OKACOM Council of Commissioners	Angola	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025	Maun Botswana
	▪ Mr Pirre Kiala	Ministry of Water and Energy, Commissioner	Angola	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025	Maun Botswana
	▪ Mr Nchidzi Mmolawa	Commissioner, Co-chairperson	Botswana	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025	Maun Botswana
	▪ Mr Botsalo Thamuku	Communication and Outreach Officer	Botswana	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025	Maun Botswana
	▪ Mr Teofilus Nghitila	Council Co-Chair, Commissioner	Namibia	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025	Maun Botswana
	▪ Ms Lilian Mbaeva	OKACOM Council of Commissioner	Namibia	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025	Maun Botswana
	▪ Mr. Jerry Mikka	OKACOM Council of Commissioner	Namibia	31 <sup>st</sup> July 2025	Maun Botswana

4.1.4 A second stakeholder consultation workshop was held on 18th March 2026. the workshop was to consult key basin stakeholders on the proposed project design and gather feedback that can be used to strengthen the project preparation and its implementation, validate and guide the next steps of development for the of the CORB Fund and to also discussed the Gender Action Plan to ensure inclusivity in the implementation and benefits of the Project.

More specifically to:

- To Introduce the project, its purpose, expected benefits, and stakeholders’ role in shaping the programme.
- To strengthen shared understanding of the Project approach and methodology for implementation and.
- Establish participatory dialogue that captures stakeholders’ priorities, knowledge, and expectations related to sustainable innovative financing of the CORB resilient socially and environmentally focused interventions.

4.1.5 The stakeholder consultation presentations covered the CORB Fund design and steps to operationalize long-term financing for the Okavango River Basin. Presenters discussed prior feasibility work that proposed a hybrid fund with two windows—a sinking fund for short to medium term interventions and an endowment window, for long-term sustainability. The Fund was developed to address basin threats and support resilient governance, socio-economic development, and environmental protection. Some of the expected outcomes discussed included land restoration, protected-area expansion, emissions reductions, tourism revenue growth, water quality and access, sustainable agriculture, fisheries, and renewable energy.

4.1.5 Table 2. List of participants

Name	Institution
1.Phera Ramoeli	Executive Secretary OKACOM
2. Mr Joshua Moloji	Executive Director – CORB-Fund
3. Ms Joyce Motsholapheko-	Finance administration Manager – OKACOM
4. Mr Botsalo Thamuku-	Communications and `outreach Manager OKACOM
5. Ms Rosalina Solunga	Bilingual Editor Translator- OKACOM
6. Dr Casper Bonyongo-	Okavango Research Institute
7.Thatayaone Mmapatsi-	Botswana Tourism Organisation
8. Anders Jagerskog-	The World Bank
9. Tebogo James	Ngamiland Council of Non-Governmental Organisations
10. Simasiku Siyoka	Ngamiland council of Non-Governmental Organisations
11. Mr. Guy Robertson	Pegasus - The Nature Conservancy - The Nature for Water Programme.
12. Mr. Sekgowa Motsumi-	The Nature Conservancy
13. Dr. Pascoal Jeremias	José Eduardo dos Santos University
14. Bernice Mutelo	Southern African Science Service Centre for Climate Change and Adaptive Land Management (SASCAL)
15. Dr Botlhe Matlhodi-	University of Botswana.
16.Mr Octanio Nani	OBSC -Angola
17. Ms Wendy Seone	OBSC- Botswana
18. Ms. Lynnety	Namibia
19. Mr Valente Sabino	Water Resources Technical Committee - Angola

*(Refer to the detailed proceedings and outcomes report of the workshop covered in a separate report also published on our website)*

**4.2. Summary of project stakeholder needs and methods, tools and techniques for stakeholder engagement.**

4.2.1 The Stakeholder Engagement Plan below outlines the engagement process, methods, including sequencing, topics of consultations and target stakeholders. The World Bank and the Borrower do not tolerate reprisals and retaliation against project stakeholders who share their views about Bank-financed projects.

**Table 1: SEP Summary Table**

Project stage	Target stakeholders	Topic of consultation / message	Method used	Responsibilities	Frequency/Timeline
- Preparation stage	Stakeholders of all levels, including Project Affected Parties and other interested parties (Full list in Table....)	Disclose relevant project information to stakeholders and solicit inputs into the focus areas and priority components of the project.	Consultation to collect insights on the priority areas that should be used to build the project concept. Email, workshops, face to face. Regular feedback using virtual platforms	OKACOM Secretariat and World Bank Partners	This was done regularly and mostly virtual because of the different locations of the various stakeholders. The goal to meet all GEF milestones and deadlines has really dictated the frequency of the engagements.
		Discuss and jointly agree on the Project scope and, approach and methodology for the SEP			
Project implementation phase	Representatives of basin local communities, communities, traditional authorities, regional/district administrative entities, Ministries of the Governments	Regular updates on project activities and specific interventions for local communities, vulnerable groups and the environment. Implementation of the SEP and GRM procedures.	Consultations to review progress and jointly agree on the way forward and how to adapt the components based on lessons learned to efficiently achieve the project objectives.	CORB FUND Secretariat, Project Implementation Unit, OKACOM Secretariat and World Bank Partners	Annual meeting for the ICP Forum, when need be extra ordinary meeting can be convened
		Project overview, Review Progress, SEP, GRM procedures and Feedback mechanisms	Consultations to always ensure alignment and remove duplications with the actions implemented by other partners		Regular meeting with affected parties and government stakeholders
	Implementing partners/NGOs and ICPS supporting parallel components	Progress reporting, SEP and GRM procedures	Email, workshops, face to face. Regular feedback using virtual platforms. Annual for the ICP forum		
		Monitoring and Evaluation			
		Improved project scope based on lessons learned			

### **4.3. Proposed strategy to incorporate the views of vulnerable groups**

4.3.1 The CORB-FIT project will seek the views of local communities and other vulnerable groups by convening kgotla meetings. Kgotla meetings are gatherings in a cultural setting where all concerned, affected or interested parties are invited to participate in open deliberations to seek solutions that are jointly accepted and fair for everyone. These meetings will be held in collaboration with the Traditional Authorities and District Administrative Entities of the Governments. Information will be shared through media announcements and via local agents, especially traditional liaison persons and by phone. The following measures will be taken to remove obstacles to full and enabling participation / access to information:

- (i) Targeted engagements
- (ii) Feedback mechanisms to ensure that messages are received timeously
- (iii) Robust grievance mechanisms that can be leveraged by vulnerable parties<sup>2</sup>

## **5. Resources and Responsibilities for implementing stakeholder engagement**

### **5.1. Implementation Arrangements and Resources**

5.1.1 Implementation of all ESF instruments including the SEP will be financed from the program budget. An estimated budget will be provided in an updated SEP at the start of program implementation. Based on prior experience in similar engagement undertaken by OKACOM, the budget for the SEP is proposed to be approximately USD\$100,000. The detailed costs will be presented once the activity plans are developed.

5.1.2 The CORB-FIT will be anchored in the CORB FUND Secretariat and a Programmes Manager within the will oversee the E & S activities including the implementation of the SEP and coordinating all stakeholder engagement activities.

## **6. Grievance Mechanism**

A Grievance Mechanism is a system that allows not only grievances, but also queries, suggestions, positive feedback, and concerns of project-affected parties related to the environmental and social performance of a project to be submitted and responded to in a timely manner.

## 6.1. Description of Grievance Mechanism (GM)

**Table 2: Illustrative Table on the GM Steps - to be adjusted to each project**

[Step]	Description of process (e.g.)	Timeframe	Responsibility
GM implementation structure	Establish a mechanism for different levels- Project Level and Community Level	Before project inception	PIU
Grievance uptake	Grievances can be submitted via the following channels	Throughout the project implementation	PIU
	E-mail to info@okacom.org		
	Letter to grievance focal persons at local facilities		
	In-person at project implementation sites in their locality		
	Grievance or suggestion boxes located project implementation sites		
	Social media facebook: on the CORB		
Sorting, processing	Any complaint received is logged and, categorised by GRM focal points and shared with	Upon receipt of complaint	Local grievance focal points
Acknowledgement and follow-up	Receipt of the grievance is acknowledged to the complainant by PIU/ E&S specialist	Within 2 days of receipt	Local grievance focal points
Verification, investigation, action	Investigation of the complaint is led by PIU and proposed resolution is formulated by CORB Fund board of directors PIU and relevant stakeholders and communicated to the complainant by PIU.	Within 10 working days	Complaint Committee composed of the Executive Director, Board of Directors and E & S Specialist
Monitoring and evaluation	Data on complaints will be collected by PIU or in logbook and reported to CORB fund Board of directors quarterly	On going	PIU/Contractors
Provision of feedback	Feedback from complainants regarding their satisfaction with complaint resolution is collected by PIU	Within 10 working days	PIU

Training	Training needs for staff/consultants in the PIUs, Contractors, and Supervision Consultants are as follows:	Training will be done as soon as the project is effective, and follow-up trainings will be done prior the initiation of activities.	PIU/ WB
	<b>1. Training for PIUs Staff and Consultants</b>		
	<b>Understanding the GRM Framework:</b> Overview of grievance handling procedures, roles, and responsibilities.		
	<b>Grievance Documentation &amp; Record-Keeping:</b> Training on maintaining grievance registries, recording complaints, and updating databases.		
	<b>Legal &amp; Policy Framework:</b> Understanding national laws, environmental and social safeguards, and donor policies related to grievances.		
	<b>Monitoring &amp; Reporting:</b> Training on data collection, analysis, and preparing periodic grievance reports		
	<b>2. Training for Contractors/Vendors</b>		
	<b>Awareness of GRM Process:</b> Understanding how the grievance redress system works and its role in addressing complaints.		
	<b>Reporting Mechanisms:</b> Guidelines for documenting and reporting grievances to the PIUs.		
If relevant, payment of reparations following complaint resolution	[If relevant, describe how payment of reparations will be handled		
Appeals process	The GRM Focal Person will formally notify the complainant about the resolution of the GRM within 7 days after the date of the notification.		

	<p>If the complainant accepts the resolution, the GRM focus person will take a written statement of such acceptance and will immediately take necessary actions to implement the agreed resolution.</p>		
	<p>If a grievance remains unresolved, legal action may be pursued in accordance with the laws and provisions of the riparian state where the project activity is carried out</p>		

6.1.1 The CORB fund recognizes the different types of workers that will be involved in project activities. Effective grievance redress mechanism for addressing and managing workplace and employment related conflicts or complaints as well as GBV is crucial for the Project. A grievance structure will therefore be established for project workers (direct workers and contracted/supply workers), as required in ESS2. Complaints received will be promptly reviewed to address project-related concerns in line with the Revised OKACOM human resource manual including the world bank Grievances redress system. The CORB fund will have other measures in place to handle sensitive and confidential complaints, including those related to Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Harassment (SEA/SH) in line with the World Bank ESF Good Practice Note on SEA/SH.<sup>1</sup>

**7. Monitoring and Reporting**

**7.1. Summary of how SEP will be monitored and reported upon (including indicators)**

7.1.1 A monitoring and evaluation plan to ensure transparency and accountability will be concomitantly strengthened and updated on an ongoing basis, with all level stakeholders to monitor the implementation process of the SEP based on the performance indicators for the project.

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<sup>1</sup> In some projects, the GM could be adapted to receive SEA/SH allegations/complaints. If so, the responses should follow a survivor-centered approach that prioritizes survivors’ dignity, confidentiality and safety, and the project accountability and response framework. Kindly refer to the Good Practice Notes on Addressing SEA/SH in Investment Project Financing involving [Major Civil Works](#) (page 53) and in [Human Development Operations](#) (page 38).

### 7.1.2 SEP reporting will include the following:

- (i) Progress reporting on the ESS10-Stakeholder Engagement commitments under the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP)
- (ii) Cumulative qualitative reporting on the feedback received during SEP activities, in particular (a) issues that have been raised that can be addressed through changes in project scope and design, and reflected in the basic documentation such as the Project Appraisal Document, Environmental and Social Assessment, Resettlement Plan, Indigenous Peoples Plan, or SEA/SH Action Plan, if needed; (b) issues that have been raised and can be addressed during project implementation; (c) issues that have been raised that are beyond the scope of the project and are better addressed through alternative projects, programs or initiatives; and (d) issues that cannot be addressed by the project due to technical, jurisdictional or excessive cost-associated reasons. Minutes of meetings summarizing the views of the attendees can also be annexed to the monitoring reports.
- (iii) Quantitative reporting based on the indicators included in the SEP. An illustrative set of indicators for monitoring and reporting is included in Annex 3.

## 7.2. Reporting back to stakeholder groups

7.2.1 It is critical to follow up with stakeholders at different stages of the project cycle. Once consultations have taken place, stakeholders will want to know which of their suggestions will be used, what risk or impact mitigation measures will be put in place to address their concerns, and how, for example, project impacts are monitored. Often the same methods used in information disclosure are applied to reporting back to stakeholders. Given the current context and the need for effective consultations with basin local communities who cannot be reached with digital platforms, alternate means such as face-to-face interviews and focus group discussions may need to be considered and their potential for escalating M & E costs.

7.2.2 Monitoring and evaluation (M&E) are essential to ensure successful implementation of this SEP and will be undertaken as a part of overall Project implementation. The SEP will be periodically revised and updated as necessary during project implementation, to ensure that the information presented herein is consistent and is the most recent, and that the identified methods of engagement remain appropriate and effective in relation to the project context and specific phases of implementation. Any major changes to project-related activities or its schedule will be duly reflected in the SEP. Quarterly results reporting to the World Bank will include indicator-level reporting on grievances. Information on public engagement activities undertaken by the Project during the year may be conveyed to the stakeholders in the E&S section of the normal reporting cycle for the Project.

7.2.3 The following KPIs will be monitored:

- (i) Number of consultation activities and other public interactive engagements with stakeholders conducted within a reporting period (e.g. quarterly, or annually).
- (ii) Frequency of public engagement activities.
- (iii) Number of participants in different engagement activities (where applicable)
- (iv) Number of public grievances received within a reporting period (e.g. monthly, quarterly, or annually) and number of those resolved within the prescribed timeline;
- (v) Type of public grievances received; and
- (vi) Number of press materials published/broadcast by type of media

### **Annexes**

- Annex 1. Template to capture minutes/records of consultation meetings
- Annex 2. Example of a SEP Budget Table
- Annex 3. Sample Table: Monitoring and Reporting on the SEP

Other Annexes can include:

- Visual summaries such as stakeholder mapping or stakeholder diagrams
- Grievance submission form
- Project maps (if applicable)

## Annex 1: Template to Capture Consultation Minutes

Stakeholder (Group or Individual)	Summary of Feedback	Response of Project Implementation Team	Follow-up Action/Next Steps

## Annex 2: Example of a SEP Budget Table

Budget categories	Quantity	Unit costs	Times/ Years	Total costs	Remarks
<b>1. Estimated Staff salaries* and related expenses</b>					
1a. <i>E.g., Communications consultant</i>					
1b. <i>E.g., Travel costs for staff</i>					
1c. <i>E.g., Estimated salaries for Community Liaison Officers</i>					
<b>2. Consultations/ Participatory Planning, Decision-Making Meetings</b>					
2a. <i>E.g., Project launch meetings</i>					
2b. <i>E.g., Organization of focus groups</i>					
<b>3. Communication campaigns</b>					
3a. <i>E.g., Posters, flyers</i>					
3b. <i>E.g., Social media campaign</i>					
<b>4. Trainings</b>					
4a. <i>E.g., Training on social/environmental issues for PIU and contractor staff</i>					
4b. <i>E.g., Training on Gender-Based Violence (GBV) for PIU and contractor staff</i>					
<b>5. Beneficiary surveys</b>					
5a. <i>E.g., Mid-project perception survey</i>					
5b. <i>E.g., End-of-project perception survey</i>					
<b>6. Grievance Mechanism</b>					
6a. <i>E.g., Training of GM committees</i>					
6b. <i>E.g., Suggestion boxes in villages</i>					
6c. <i>E.g., GM communication materials</i>					

6d. E.g., Grievance investigations/site visits					
6e. E.g., GM Information System (setting up or maintenance)					
6f. Other GM Logistical Costs					
<b>7. Other expenses</b>					
7a. ...					
<b>TOTAL STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT BUDGET:</b>					

\*Note: Salary costs can be indicative

### Annex 3. Sample Table: Monitoring and Reporting on the SEP

Key evaluation questions	Specific Evaluation questions	Potential Indicators	Data Collection Methods
<p><b>GM.</b> To what extent have project-affected parties been provided with accessible and inclusive means to raise issues and grievances? Has the implementing agency responded to and managed such grievances?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are project affected parties raising issues and grievances?</li> <li>• How quickly/effectively are the grievances resolved?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Usage of GM and/or feedback mechanisms</li> <li>• Requests for information from relevant agencies.</li> <li>• Use of suggestion boxes placed in the villages/project communities.</li> <li>• Number of grievances raised by workers, disaggregated by gender of workers and worksite, resolved within a specified time frame.</li> <li>• Number of Sexual Exploitation, and Abuse/Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) cases reported in the project areas, which were referred for health, social, legal and security support according to the referral process in place. (if applicable)</li> <li>• Number of grievances that have been (i)</li> </ul>	<p>Records from the implementing agency and other relevant agencies</p>

		opened, (ii) opened for more than 30 days, (iii) resolved, (iv) closed, and (v) number of responses that satisfied the complainants, during the reporting period disaggregated by category of grievance, gender, age, and location of complainant.	
<p><b>Stakeholder engagement impact on project design and implementation.</b> How have engagement activities made a difference in project design and implementation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Was there interest and support for the project?</li> <li>Were there any adjustments made during project design and implementation based on the feedback received?</li> <li>Was priority information disclosed to relevant parties throughout the project cycle?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active participation of stakeholders in activities</li> <li>Number of actions taken in a timely manner in response to feedback received during consultation sessions with project affected parties.</li> <li>Number of consultation meetings and public discussions where the feedback and recommendation received is reflected in project design and implementation.</li> <li>Number of disaggregated engagement sessions held, focused on at-risk groups in the project.</li> </ul>	<p>Stakeholder Consultation Attendance Sheets/Minutes</p> <p>Evaluation forms</p> <p>Structured surveys</p> <p>Social media/traditional media entries on the project results</p>
<p><b>Implementation effectiveness.</b> Were stakeholder engagement activities effective in implementation?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Were the activities implemented as planned? Why or why not?</li> <li>Was the stakeholder engagement approach inclusive of disaggregated groups? Why or why not?</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Percentage of SEP activities implemented.</li> <li>Key barriers to participation identified with stakeholder representatives.</li> </ul>	<p>Communication Strategy (Consultation Schedule)</p> <p>Periodic Focus Group Discussions</p> <p>Face-to-face meetings and/or Focus Group</p>

		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Number of adjustments made in the stakeholder engagement approach to improve projects' outreach, inclusion and effectiveness.</li> </ul>	discussions with Vulnerable Groups or their representatives
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<sup>1</sup> It is particularly important to understand whether project impacts 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 and to ensure that awareness raising and stakeholder engagement with disadvantaged or vulnerable individuals or groups are adapted to take into account such groups or individuals particular sensitivities, concerns and cultural sensitivities and to ensure a full understanding of project activities and benefits. The vulnerability may stem from person's origin, gender, age, health condition, economic deficiency and financial insecurity, disadvantaged status in the community (e.g., minorities or fringe groups), dependence on other individuals or natural resources, etc. Engagement with the vulnerable groups and individuals often requires the application of specific measures and assistance aimed at the facilitation of their participation in the project-related decision making so that their awareness of and input to the overall process are commensurate to those of the other stakeholders.

<sup>2</sup> Examples may include (i) women: ensure that community engagement teams are gender-balanced and promote women's leadership within these, design online and in-person surveys and other engagement activities so that women in unpaid care work can participate; consider provisions for childcare, transport, and safety for any in-person community engagement activities; promote gender-segregated consultations and other approaches allowing for the free and enabling participation of women and girls, including groups of women and girls who are particularly vulnerable to exclusion and risks potentially associated with the project; consult with women's organizations, including organizations advocating for survivors' rights (ii) Pregnant women: develop education materials for pregnant women on basic hygiene practices, infection precautions, and how and where to seek care based on their questions and concerns; (iii) Elderly and people with existing medical conditions: develop information on specific needs and explain why they are at more risk & what measures to take to care for them; tailor messages and make them actionable for particular living conditions (including assisted living facilities), and health status; target family member; (iii) Persons with disabilities: provide information in accessible formats, like braille, large print; offer multiple forms of communication, such as text captioning or signed videos, text captioning for hearing impaired, online materials for people who use assistive technology; consider and take into account gender and other dimensions of identity and vulnerability and (iv) Children: design information and communication materials in a child-friendly manner and provide parents with skills to gather and promote children's voices, best interest, perspectives and participation; mobilize capacity as needed to be able to safely engage teenagers, and/or engage with organizations advocating for children's rights.