



**Food and Agriculture Organization
of the United Nations**

YEMEN DESERT LOCUST RESPONSE PROJECT-P174170

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN (SEP)

MAY 17, 2020

**FOOD AGRICULTURE ORGANIZATION (FAO)
REPUBLIC OF YEMEN**

Yemen Desert Locust Response Project (P174170)
Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

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1- Context

Yemen is currently facing one of the largest locust infestations in decades. The locust crisis originated in South Asia and Yemen and has now reached 10 countries could carry on endangering millions more people. Climate change created unprecedented conditions for the locusts to breed in the usually barren desert of the Arabian gulf, according to experts, and the insects were then able to spread through Yemen, where civil war has devastated the ability to control locust populations.

At the same time, Yemen is also one of the key breeding grounds of the locust swarms. Swarms develop in Yemen across the entire year and in a number of locations. From the breeding locations in Yemen, the swarms travel within the country, as well as regionally. The locust-induced losses in Yemen just for the agricultural season 2020 are estimated at US\$ 222 million. Cyclone Mekunu, which struck in 2018, allowed several generations of desert locusts the moist sand and vegetation to thrive in the desert between Saudi Arabia, Yemen and Oman known as the Empty Quarter, breeding and forming into crop-devouring swarms.

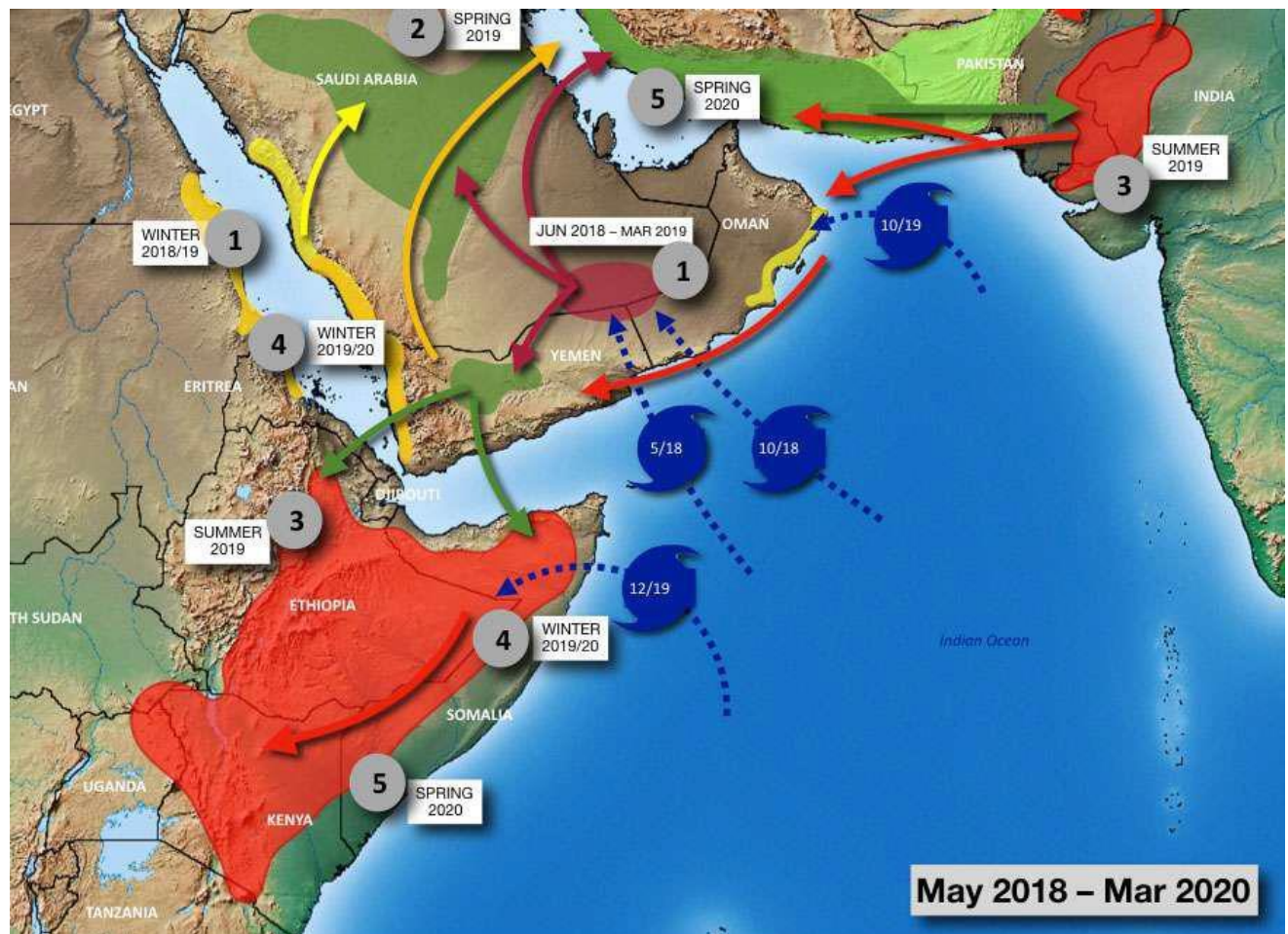


Figure 1: Source [FAO](#) and [Reliefweb](#)

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Locust Swarm Development in the Arab Peninsula and East Africa

2018:

Cyclones in May and October brought heavy rains that gave rise to favorable breeding conditions.

2019

Jan - June: the first swarms left the Empty Quarter to Yemen and Saudi Arabia, later breeding in Yemen, Saudi Arabia and Iran.

June - Dec: swarms invade the Indo-Pakistan border from Iran. Swarms form in Yemen and move to Somalia and Ethiopia.

Oct - Dec: swarms move from Ethiopia and Somalia to Eritrea, Djibouti, East Ethiopia to reach NE Kenya.

2020

Jan: swarms continue to invade, spread, mature and lay eggs in Ethiopia and Kenya. Hatching occurs in NE Somalia. Other swarms move into interior of Yemen and Saudi Arabia.

Feb: swarms continue to move in Kenya, a few reach Uganda and South Sudan, other reach Tanzania. Widespread hatching in Kenya. Other swarms reach both sides of Persian Gulf.

March: widespread hatching causes a new generation of swarms to form in Ethiopia and Kenya. A few swarms invade Uganda and South Sudan. Widespread swarm laying and hatching in southern Iran.

The locust swarm infestations are exacerbating the already dire food security situation in Yemen and creating a crisis within crisis. Agriculture constitutes a backbone of the livelihoods in Yemen and is the most important non-oil sector for the economy, generating about 10 percent of GDP (World Bank). Yemen produces only around 20 percent of its food, and food insecurity is one of the major development challenges highlighted by the Government of Yemen (GOY).

Violent conflict, now in its sixth year, has crippled Yemen's economy and created an unprecedented humanitarian crisis. The dramatic deterioration of conditions in Yemen has translated into a significant worsening of poverty. The share of the population living on less than \$3.20 PPP per day has dramatically worsened since the conflict began, and it is estimated that 75-80% at present (World Bank 2019) live below the poverty line. Yemen's food security crisis is described as one of the "world's largest man-made food security crisis", driven by constrained food production, food supply and distribution and people's diminishing purchasing power.

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2- Project Description

The aim of the Desert Locust Response Program (DLRP) is to help the Government of Yemen prepare for, control, and respond to the locust invasion, deliver safety net support and livelihood restoration to affected households, and improve the early warning and response systems.

The Project objectives would be achieved by supporting investments across three pillars as per the regional approach to the desert locust outbreak response: (a) monitoring and controlling locust population growth and curbing the spread of swarms while mitigating the risks associated with control measures; (b) protecting livelihoods of locust-affected households to prevent asset loss, and return them to productivity; and (c) preventing future locust upsurges by strengthening capacity for ex ante surveillance and control operations to facilitate early warning and early response.

3- Environmental and social impacts associated with the project

The SEP will engage stakeholders on the impacts associated with the E&S project risks, such as:

(i) environmental and community health and safety impacts relating to waste and pollution caused by the spraying of insecticides, in addition to unadvertently spreading COVID-19 and cholera infections during operations. It is expected that mostly bio-pesticides will be used to neutralize hopper bands before they develop into adult swarms. To lessen the impact on honey producers, a lesser volume will be deployed in those areas. Community exposure could also happen through consumption of contaminated food grown in sprayed areas and there is need to promote awareness and to ensure that communities respect the re-entry time for their livestock and withholding periods for their harvests. Additional risks could be attributed to security risks, child labor, forced labor, GBV/SEA risks and potential land acquisition for the construction of new control centers and restriction of access to farmlands after spraying.. Mitigation measures include: (a) the preparation of a comprehensive Pest Management Plan (PMP), which would optimize the selection of control strategies, protection measures, and insecticides based on situational and environmental assessment. The Pest Management Plan will be followed by laboratory testing of insecticides residual risks in human health, soil, air, and water; (b) the provision of safety and awareness training (e.g., handling, transport, storage) for spraying teams and other locust control personnel and (c) a public awareness campaign to keep the public informed about the possible environmental and health effects of insecticides, before, during and after locust control operations. During operations, all personnel will comply with a community and safety plan for the prevention and mitigation of contagion of cholera and COVID-19 among communities. Cholera is an existing contextual risk in the country and is covered in the ongoing Yemen Emergency Health and Nutrition Project to address such risks through WASH etc. Communities will be informed about such risks and the appropriate mitigation measures, such as hand washing, boiling water, and wearing PPEs.

(ii) impacts relating to the improper storage of pesticides. The pesticide-related equipment would be procured, used and maintained in conformity with FAO Directive on pesticide equipment, application and maintenance. The design of the vehicles with mounted sprayers that would be procured and utilized would have non-adjustable specifications, manufactured as a build-in module which cannot be used for another purpose. At the end of the desert locust eradication campaign, soil, water and plant samples will be taken for pesticides residue analysis by a nationally or regionally accredited laboratory.

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(iii) impacts relating to occupational health associated with (a) handling and spraying of pesticides; and (b) the risk of contagion with SARS-CoV-2 and cholera among personnel during implementation. All personnel involved in the project and exposed to pesticides (storage, transport, calibration, empty containers, handling, etc.), should have a health certificate, insurance, take a Acetyl choline esterase test before and at the end of desert locust eradication campaign, and should be trained on the appropriate use of PPE. Testing of human health (especially logistical staff involved with handling, transporting and storing insecticides, and spraying teams) and soil and water for contamination from use of insecticides will also be carried out. Besides providing safety and awareness training (e.g., handling, transport, storage) for spraying teams and other locust control personnel on safe insecticides use, all personnel should adopt health and safety measures to prevent the spread of pathogens such as COVID-19 and cholera, in compliance with ESS2 and the recommendations of WHO.

(iv) impacts relating to mistargeting and the lack of transparency and favoritism in their screening of recipients of cash for works and in the livelihood restoration programs. Farmers, beekeepers, livestock owners and other primary producers who have faced losses as a direct result of the desert locust crisis need urgent assistance to arrest the decline in their income and meet their production and consumption needs. These primary producers need to be identified and compensated for losses incurred through direct and immediate assistance measures to (a) prioritize inclusion of small farmers/ agricultural laborers that have suffered due to the locust crisis, and (b) incentivize communities to adopt public works activities that can contribute directly to restoration of losses incurred due to locust infestation.

(v) impacts relating to sexual abuse and exploitation typically associated with catastrophic events. Disaster contexts are often characterised by the aggravation of discriminatory norms, social inequalities and gender-based violence, particularly against women and girls. The SEP will engage stakeholders and communities about such risks, will include provisions on sexual exploitation and abuse in project documents, including through the signing of codes of conduct, and will map and develop referral pathways and GRMs to prevent and mitigate such risks.

4- Rationale and Objective of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan

The proposed Project is being prepared under the World Bank's Environment and Social Framework (ESF). As per the Environmental and Social Standard 10 (ESS10): Stakeholders Engagement and Information Disclosure, implementing agencies should provide stakeholders with timely, relevant, understandable and accessible information, and consult with them in a culturally appropriate manner, which is free of manipulation, interference, coercion, discrimination and intimidation.

The SEP recognizes the importance of open and transparent engagement between the Borrower and project stakeholders as an essential element of good international practice. Effective stakeholder engagement can improve the environmental and social sustainability of projects, enhance project acceptance, and make a significant contribution to successful project design and implementation. Stakeholder engagement is an inclusive process conducted throughout the project life cycle. Where properly designed and implemented, it supports the development of strong, constructive, and responsive relationships that are important for successful management of a project's environmental and social risks.

The overall objective of this SEP is to define a plan of action for stakeholder engagement, including technically and culturally appropriate approach to public consultation and information disclosure,

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throughout the entire project cycle. The SEP outlines the ways in which the project team will communicate with stakeholders and includes a mechanism by which people can raise concerns, provide feedback, or make complaints about project activities.

The involvement of different stakeholders, including the local population and farmers is essential to the success of the project in order to ensure smooth collaboration between project staff and local communities.

The present SEP will:

- Establish a systematic approach to stakeholder engagement that will help Borrowers identify stakeholders and build and maintain a constructive relationship with them, in particular project-affected parties.
- Assess the level of stakeholder interest and support for the project and to enable stakeholders' views to be taken into account in project design and environmental and social performance.
- Promote and provide means for effective and inclusive engagement with project-affected parties throughout the project life cycle on issues that could potentially affect them.
- Ensure that appropriate project information on environmental and social risks and impacts is disclosed to stakeholders in a timely, understandable, accessible, and appropriate manner and format.
- Provide project-affected parties with accessible and inclusive means to raise issues and grievances and allow Borrowers to respond to and manage such grievances.

As such, the stakeholder engagement process will provide a dual-way system of communication, especially in regards of Components 1 and 2: 1). Improving locust surveillance which aims to provide early warning system, effective operations and assistance to affected and at-risk communities and subcomponent; 2) Livelihood Restoration through replacement of productive assets. The SEP is based on an understanding of the channels of communication that are most used and trusted by the affected population, including in the current context of active conflict and displacement, and provide recommendations for a more informed approach to community engagement.

5- Stakeholder identification and analysis

Stakeholder analysis identifies and determines the likely relationship between the project and the different stakeholders. Stakeholders are directly or indirectly affected by a project, as well as those who may have interests in a project and/or the ability to influence its outcome, either positively or negatively. It is a useful tool for managing communication between the project team and stakeholders. Project stakeholders are defined as individuals, groups or other entities who:

- (i) Are impacted or likely to be impacted directly or indirectly, positively or adversely, by the Project (also known as 'affected parties'); and,
- (ii) May have an interest in the Project ('interested parties'). They include individuals or groups whose interests may be affected by the Project and who have the potential to influence the Project outcomes in any way.

In all phase of the project, cooperation and negotiation with stakeholders is required. Persons within the groups who act as legitimate representatives of their respective stakeholder group and entrusted by their

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fellow group members will be identified in the process of engagement. Community representatives may provide helpful insight into the local settings and act as main means for dissemination of the Project information and as a primary communication/liaison link between the Project and targeted communities and their established networks. Legitimacy of the community representatives can be verified by talking informally to a random sample of community members and heeding their views on who can be representing their interests in the most effective way.

A- Methodology

Stakeholder analysis helps to know the perceptions, interests, need, and influence of actors on the project. Identifying the appropriate consultation methodology for each stakeholder throughout the project lifecycle is necessary. In order to meet best practice approaches, the project will apply the following principles for stakeholder engagement:

- **Openness and life-cycle approach:** public consultations for the project will continue during the whole project lifecycle from preparation through implementation. Stakeholder engagement will be free of manipulation, interface, coercion, and intimidation;
- **Informed participation and feedback:** information will be provided and widely distributed among all stakeholders in an appropriate format; conducted based on timely, relevant, understandable and accessible information related to the project; opportunities provided to raise concerns and assure that stakeholder feedback is taken into consideration during decision making;
- **Inclusiveness and sensitivity:** stakeholder identification is undertaken to support better communications and building effective relationships. The participation process for the projects is inclusive. All stakeholders are always encouraged to be involved in the consultation process. Equal access to information is provided to all stakeholders. Sensitivity to stakeholders' needs is the key principle underlying the selection of engagement methods. Special attention is given to vulnerable groups, particularly women headed households, youth, elderly and the cultural sensitivities of diverse ethnic groups.

Stakeholders of the proposed project can be affected parties, interested parties and vulnerable groups as discussed below.

B- Affected parties

Affected Parties are those groups of people that are directly influenced (actually or potentially) by the project and/or have been identified as most susceptible to potential risks and impacts associated with the project and who need to be closely engaged including local community members and other parties that may be subject to direct impacts from the Project. Specifically, the following individuals and groups fall within this category:

- Farmers, pastoralist and agro-pastoralists communities.
- Community workers involved in cash for work
- Rural populations at large who lost crops, livestock and livelihoods.
- IDPs (Internally displaced people)
- Field officers directly involved in handling and spraying operations.
- Populations at risk in areas in which spraying is carried out.

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- Plant Protection Directorate staff under MAI (project personnel).
- Local NGOs involved in mobilization and preparation of communities' readiness for implementation.
- Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MAI) as surveillance/monitoring sensitization and provision of control personnel.
- Water Users Associations (WUA) as local resources and management
- Contracted workers, consultants, scouts, vehicle and aircraft operators.

C- Other interested parties

These are considered to have either high interest but low mandate or high mandate but low interest. Other interested parties of the projects' stakeholders include:

- Politicians (leadership in both north and south Yemen).
- National Institutions that have role for this operation in Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MAI):
 - Directorate of Plan protection;
 - Desert Locust monitoring and control center; and
 - Project Implementation Unit (PIU)
- Social Fund for Development (SFD) which has extensive outreach to potential beneficiaries throughout the country.
- Tribal authorities
- Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE).
- Ministry of Public Health and Population (MPHP)
- Agriculture Research Institutions.
- Other local NGOs.
- The public at large.
- Social Fund for Development (SFD) as an expert entity in agriculture and outreach.
- Main implementing agency UN FAO and WFP.

D- Disadvantaged/vulnerable individuals or groups

Disadvantaged or vulnerable individuals or groups are those peoples or groups highly vulnerable to potential project impacts and often do not have a voice to express their concerns or understand the impact and risk of the project. They may be disproportionately be impacted or further disadvantaged by the project as compared with any other groups due to their vulnerable status, and usually require special arrangement to ensure their equal representation in the consultation and decision-making process associated with the project. Their vulnerability may stem from person's origin, gender, age, health condition, disability, economic deficiency and financial insecurity, disadvantaged status in the community (e.g. minority groups), dependence on other individuals or natural resources, etc.

Awareness raising and stakeholder engagement with disadvantaged or vulnerable individuals or groups on the project must consider such group's or individuals' sensitivities, concerns and cultural differences to ensure a full understanding of project activities and benefits. Engagement with these 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.

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Within the proposed Project, the vulnerable or disadvantaged groups may include, but not limited to, the following:

- Historically underserved and disadvantaged communities in coastal plains along the Red Sea and Gulf of Aden, western interior parts of the country, and central and eastern parts of the country.
- Affected households those reliant on cropping activities and already facing food insecurity.
- Elderly people in hard-hit areas and facing food shortages.
- Female headed households.
- Children and youth heads of households
- Internally displaced persons.
- People with disabilities.
- Poor people, including ex-pastoralists.
- Illiterate persons.

Vulnerable groups within the communities affected by the project will be further confirmed and consulted during Environmental and Social Assessment preparation through dedicated means, as appropriate.

6- Stakeholder Engagement Program

A- Summary of stakeholder engagement during project preparation

The speed and urgency with which this project has been developed to meet the growing threat of locust invasions in the country, combined with recently-announced government restrictions on gatherings of people has limited the project's ability to develop a complete SEP before this project is approved by the World Bank. This initial SEP was developed and disclosed prior to project appraisal, as the starting point of an iterative process to develop a more comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategy and plan. So far, the extent of the stakeholder engagement has been the Ministry's involvement and FAO experts to prepare the damage and losses assessments from the Locust invasion. It will be updated periodically as necessary, with more detail provided in the first update planned after project approval.

B- Summary of project stakeholder needs, methods, and tools for stakeholder engagement

The FAO Desert Locust Control Guideline notes that the public must be informed about the impacts of pesticide before, during and after locust control operation including the hiring of specialized communication and information officer as part of the environment and social team. The guideline states:

It is important to keep the public informed about possible environmental and health effects of insecticides, before, during and after locust control operations. This is to ensure that precautionary measures are taken whenever needed but also to reduce any misunderstandings that may exist about the risks of locust control. It is suggested that a specialized communication and information officer must be assigned to this task, especially if the campaign is expected to be large (FAO, 2003).

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Years of war, destruction and inter-communal fighting have gradually eroded social cohesion and trust. According to the 2016 evaluation by the Yemen Community Engagement Working group ¹, stakeholder engagement in conflict-affected areas in Yemen are challenging. During Focus groups discussions, although the majority of community members indicated that they felt involved and able to influence humanitarian response, only 15% know how to provide a feedback or to lodge a complaint to humanitarian agencies – the percentage is very similar between IDP and Host – and only 11% have ever provided feedback – 13% amongst IDPs and 9% amongst Host. Amid the small percentage of people who did provide a feedback or a complaint, 40% felt their opinion or concern was taken into account. This percentage dropped amongst IDPs as 71% of them reported feeling their feedback was not taken into account.

Trusted and Preferred Communication Channels Cell phone calling (59%) and word of mouth (56%) were the most used channels of communication by the affected population. Community volunteers (32%), radio (25%) and WhatsApp (24%) were also reported as frequently used. WhatsApp were used by 26% of IDP population. Television was also commonly used but less than the above listed channels. TV and radio were most widely used during the early morning and evening times. The use of these communication channels closely relates with the level of trust people bestow upon them. However, both television and TV, even if widely used, were considered less trustworthy due to the perceived politicized nature of the information. Notice boards are the least used mode of communication both for IDPs and Host.

Overall, word of mouth (54%) and cell phones calling (52%) remain the most trusted sources of information. However, amongst IDPs cell phone calling is the most trusted and word of mouth is the most trusted among Host community members. FDGs showed that received information is from friends, relatives, community leaders or knowledgeable members of the community [e.g. the religious leaders]. Community volunteers are considered the third most trustworthy source of information (36%) and radio the fourth (23%). All the above listed three modes of communication are both highly utilized and trusted.

Humanitarian staff members are used by 12% of the affected populations while they are considered a trusted source of information by 23%. This difference not only showcases the perceived neutrality of humanitarian agencies but also provides a renewed space for humanitarian actors to engage with the affected population and be the interlocutor between the provision of humanitarian assistance and knowledge that the affected population have of its modus operandi.

In addition, a precautionary approach will be taken to the consultation process to prevent infection and/or contagion, given the highly infectious nature of COVID-19. The following are some considerations for selecting channels of communication, in light of the current COVID-19 situation and the current threat of cholera outbreak in the country:

¹https://reliefweb.int/sites/reliefweb.int/files/resources/enhancing_informed_engagement_with_conflict_affected_communities_in_yemen.pdf

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- Avoid public gatherings (taking into account national restrictions or advisories), including public hearings, workshops and community meetings;
- If smaller meetings are permitted/advised, conduct consultations in small-group sessions, such as focus group meetings and deploy hygiene practice. If not permitted or advised, make all reasonable efforts to conduct meetings through online channels;
- Diversify means of communication and rely more on social media and online channels. Where possible and appropriate, create dedicated online platforms and chatgroups appropriate for the purpose, based on the type and category of stakeholders;
- Employ traditional channels of communications (TV, newspaper, radio, dedicated phone-lines, and mail) when stakeholders do not have access to online channels or do not use them frequently. Traditional channels can also be highly effective in conveying relevant information to stakeholders, and allow them to provide their feedback and suggestions;
- Where direct engagement with project affected people or beneficiaries is necessary, identify channels for direct communication with each affected household via a context specific combination of email messages, mail, online platforms, dedicated phone lines with knowledgeable operators;
- Each of the proposed channels of engagement should clearly specify how feedback and suggestions can be provided by stakeholders.

The Project will adopt two different Stakeholder Engagement approaches for Component 1 and Component 2:

Component 1. According to FAO (2003) guidelines, during the campaign planning phase, detailed stakeholder's communication strategy will be prepared and put in place in which the following issues are addressed:

- Location of treatments, general information on potential risks of pesticides, precautionary measures, re-entry intervals, pre-harvest intervals, etc.
- Appropriate and effective type of communication method to reach the target groups (e.g. radio, television, newspapers, extension service, locust survey/control teams).
- Means of informing the public in case of emergencies (e.g. insecticide spills, human intoxications, etc).
- Reach all affected villagers in the operation area including medical information sources in case of intoxications.
- In line with the above precautionary approach, different engagement methods are proposed and cover different needs of the stakeholders as below:

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Table 1: Engagement Approach and application

Engagement Approach	Appropriate application of the approach
Correspondences (Phone, Emails)	Distribute information to Government officials, NGOs, Local Government, and organisations/agencies Invite stakeholders to meetings and follow-up
Focus group meetings	Present Project information to a group of stakeholders Allow stakeholders to provide their views on targeted baseline information Build relationships with communities Record responses Introduce Covid-19 Action Plan Guidance Risk Communication and Community Engagement.
Project website	Present project information and progress updates Disclose ESMF, RF and other relevant project documentation
Visibility/ Signage	Share information door-by-door, respecting social distancing, on project activities; project investment location; project disclosure; Educational materials on ESMF
Project leaflet	Brief project information to provide regular update Site specific project information.

Component 2: The Project will adopt strategies to reduce adverse impacts relating to mistargeting and the lack of transparency and favoritism in the attribution of cash for works and livelihood restoration programs. Beneficiaries of cash for works and of livelihood restoration programs will be selected according to transparent criteria, that will be validated through community-based mechanisms to avoid conflict. The Project will adopt inclusive strategies with particular focus on vulnerable groups (for example, how to address illiterate persons and disabled persons. who may have difficulties in understanding/accessing to the info).

7- Proposed strategy for information disclosure and consultation process

The strategy for information disclosure and consultation may vary depending on the regional and local context including the changing situation of COVID-19. However, it will be important that the different activities are inclusive and culturally sensitive, thereby ensuring vulnerable groups outlined above will have the chance to participate in the Project benefits and contained from potential pesticide risks. This can include, among others, household-outreach activities, group discussion, use of local radios and the use of verbal communication or pictures, etc. While country-wide awareness campaigns will be established, area specific communication and awareness raising consultation might be conducted when combating infestation of locust in a given locality.

Stakeholder engagement is an ongoing process. The FAO and the local implementing partners MAI and SFD will conduct proper consultation with the community members and other concerned stakeholders before, during and after the spray of pesticide using communication channels outlined above or deemed appropriate.

During preparation and implementation of subcomponents 2.1 and 2.2, on livelihood restoration and safety net response, communities will be consulted, and their full participation sought guided by FAO and SFD representatives' approach and structure. In addition, consultations will be conducted during the preparation of E&S instruments. The SEP will be disclosed prior to formal consultations.

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Through its targeted approaches consultations and stakeholder engagement will ensure that information is meaningful, timely, and accessible to all affected stakeholders, use of different languages including addressing cultural sensitivities, as well as challenges deriving from illiteracy or disabilities, tailored to the differences in geography, livelihoods and way of life. The project will also ensure the establishment of a Grievance Redress Mechanism.

A- Reporting back to stakeholders

Stakeholders will be kept informed as the project develops, especially regarding guidelines on operations in line with health and safety procedures and taking into consideration the COVID -19 guidelines and restriction during the period. This will include reporting on project environmental and social performance and implementation of the stakeholder engagement plan and grievance mechanism. This will be important for the wider public, but specifically critical for the directly impacted community members.

B- Management functions and responsibilities

The FAO of the UN will be the implementing entity responsible for project activities. FAO will work closely with the Ministry of Agriculture and Irrigation (MAI) and its relevant directorates and SFD. The Plant Protection Directorate of the MAI in Sana'a Governorate is mandated nationally to lead pest management support service (PMSS) in the country including Desert Locust. The Sana'a Directorate will work with the plant protection directorates in Aden and three new established control centers in Hodeida, Shabwa, Seiun, governorates and SFD branches.

The Regional Project Coordination Units (RPCUs) already established under SAPREP and located at the FAO regional hubs in Aden, Hodeida, and Saada and SFD representatives in turn will cooperate in project coordination and implementation. The tasks performed by the RPCU staff will include providing implementation advice and general supervision, monitoring progress, supporting the implementation of safeguards, reviewing and approving annual work plans for the region (which would then be consolidated at the national level), conducting M&E, and reporting. The MAI agriculture branch offices will play role in project implementation. MAI Plant Protection Directorate and SFD agriculture unite will be responsible for carrying out stakeholder engagement activities, while working closely together with branch offices, etc.

MAI will also be responsible for implementing Components 1 and 3 given their roles and responsibilities for locust response in Yemen. The SFD will be responsible for implementing Component 2. However, the inner-ministerial, detailed institutional approach is at this point not agreed on yet and an update will need to be included here prior to disbursements for Component 2.

The stakeholder engagement activities will be documented through quarterly and annual progress reports and shared with the World Bank.

8- Grievance Mechanism

The project will prepare a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) through which, the project affected as well interested persons, local communities and the public are able to raise issues on the project. The GRM should guarantee privacy and confidentiality on the part of the aggrieved party.

The main objective of a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) is to assist resolve complaints in a timely, effective and efficient manner. Project-level GRMs can provide the most effective way for people to raise

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issues and concerns about project that affect them. The project-level GRM will be culturally appropriate, effective, accessible and should be known to the affected population. FAO and SFD will conduct awareness raising for the affected communities about the presence of the GRM and inform their right to file any concerns, complaints and issues they have related to the project.

The GRM provides a transparent and credible process for fair, effective and lasting outcome. It also builds trust and cooperation as an integral component of broader community consultation that facilitates corrective actions. Specifically, the GRM:

- Provides affected people with avenues for making a complaint or resolving any dispute that may arise during the project implementation;
- Ensures that appropriate and mutually acceptable redress actions are identified and implemented to the satisfaction of complainants; and
- Avoids the need to resort to judicial proceedings.

A- Approach to GRM Establishment

Grievance redress committee will be established at the district level and governorate level to ensure accessibility and transparency of the GRM for addressing grievances related to the locust response project with provision of appropriate training for the committee members regarding the requirement in the project.

FAO and SFD will develop and implement a GRM guideline that details the procedure, timing, indicative committee members, etc as defined in the ESCP. Resources will be allocated for the GRM. The complaints recorded, resolved and referred will be reported quarterly and bi-annually together with the environmental and social implementation performance report. Complaints that could not be resolved through the normal process/channel, it can be referred to legal courts. Grievances related to SEA/SH can also be forwarded through the GRM channels with confidential measures to coop with Yemen culture and norms.

B- Description of GRM

Having an effective GRM in place will also serve the objectives of reducing conflicts and risks such as external interference, corruption, social exclusion or mismanagement; improving the quality of project activities and results; and serving as an important feedback and learning mechanism for project management regarding the strengths and weaknesses of project procedures and implementation processes.

The GRM will be accessible to a broad range of project stakeholders who are likely to be affected directly or indirectly by the project. These will include beneficiaries, community members, project implementers/contractors, civil society, media—all of who will be encouraged to refer their grievances and feedback to the GRM.

The GRM can be used to submit complaints, feedback, queries, suggestions or compliments related to the overall management and implementation of the project activities, including:

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- Violation of project policies, guidelines, or procedures, including those related to procurement, labor procedures, child labor, health and safety of community/contract workers and gender violence;
- Disputes relating to resource use restrictions that may arise between or among targeted districts and communities;
- Grievances that may arise from members of communities who are dissatisfied with the project planning measures, or actual implementation of project investments;
- Any issues with land donations, asset acquisition or resettlement specifically for project supported activities.

The GRM's functions will be based on the principles of transparency, accessibility, inclusiveness, fairness and impartiality and responsiveness. The grievances will be handles by the following steps:

Step 1: Submission of grievances:

Anyone from the affected communities or anyone believing they are affected by the Project can submit a grievance by using the following channels:

- By completing a written grievance registration form that will be available in the PMU offices.
- Submitting the complaint electronically via the electronic grievance form that will be available at the project's website.
- Telephone and mobile numbers assigned for complaints at the PMU.

Where possible it is desirable that complaints are submitted in writing by the complainant. Should the complainant not wish to comply with this request and submit the complaint verbally, then the complainant information and the details of the complaint should be entered in the GRM log.

Step 2: Recording of grievance and providing the initial response:

Once a grievance is received, the designated staff at PMU will fill it in accurately. All complaints received should filed in a GRM log. The following information will be registered in the Log:

- Complaint Reference Number
- Date of receipt of complaint
- Name of complainant
- Confirmation that a complaint is acknowledged
- Brief description of Complaint
- Details of internal and external communication
- Action taken: (Including remedies / determinations / result)
- Date of finalization of complaint

Step 3: Investigating the grievance:

The staff at PIU will investigate the grievance by following the steps below:

- Verify the validity of the information and documents enclosed.
- Ask the complainant to provide further information if necessary.
- Refer the complaint to the relevant department.

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- The relevant department shall investigate the complaint and prepare recommendation to the PIU of actions to be taken and of any corrective measures to avoid possible reoccurrence.
- The staff shall register the decision and actions taken in the GRM log.

Step 4: Communication of the Response:

The PMU staff shall notify the complainant of the decision/solution/action immediately either in writing, or by calling or sending the complainant a text message. When providing a response to the complainant, the staff must include the following information:

- A summary of issues raised in the initial complaint;
- Reason for the decision.

C- Recommended Grievance Redress Time Frame

The GRM will establish clearly defined timelines for acknowledgment, update and final feedback to the complainant. To enhance accountability, these timelines will be disseminated widely to the project stakeholders. The timeframe for resolving the complaint shall not exceed 30 days from the time that it was originally received; if an issue is still pending by the end of 30 days the complainant will be provided with an update regarding the status of the grievance and the estimated time by which it will be resolved; and all grievances will be resolved within 45 days of receipt.

Appeal Mechanism. If the complaint is still not resolved to the satisfaction of the complainant, then s/he can submit his/her complaint to the appropriate legal procedures in Yemen.

9- Monitoring and Reporting

In the course of project implementation, the SEP will be periodically updated, as necessary, consistent with the requirements of ESS10, in a manner acceptable to the Association. Any major changes to the project related activities and to its schedule will be duly reflected in the SEP. FAO will prepare and submit to the Association quarterly and annual SEP implementation reports including ESHS performance and other environment and social instruments of the Project, including the grievance mechanism, and incidents and fatalities as per WB ESIRT. The quarterly summaries will provide a mechanism for assessing both the number and the nature of complaints and requests for information, along with the Project's ability to address those in a timely and effective manner.

Information on public engagement activities undertaken by the Project during the year will be conveyed to the stakeholders in following ways: (i) publication of a standalone annual report on project's stakeholder engagement; and (ii) Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) will also be included and monitored by the project on a regular basis as part of the Community Communication and Outreach Guideline.

Further details will be outlined in the updated SEP, to be prepared within 1 month of effectiveness, including the establishment of detailed stakeholder's communication guideline.

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10- Annex-1: Indicative Table of Content for Community Communication and Outreach Guideline

1. MAI Locust Strategic Communications Guideline

- 1.1. Purpose and background
- 1.2. Goal and key audiences

2. MAI Principles for Effective Communications

- 2.1 **Accessible:** (defining the parameters of communication accessibility, identification of effective channels, making information available using effective channels and devising effective channels for historically underserved and vulnerable groups)
- 2.2 **Actionable:** (defining the parameters of communication actionability, moving audiences toward action: the communications continuum, designing a behavior change campaign and encouraging action during a health emergency)
- 2.3 **Credible and Trusted:** (outlining the defining criteria for trusted communication, establishing technical accuracy, transparency, coordination with partners and communicating as one MAI message)
- 2.4 **Relevant:** (identification of relevant communication content, knowing the audience, listening the audience, tailoring the message to the audience, motivating the audience to take part and provide feedback).
- 2.5 **Timely:** (ensure timely communication, communicate what is known at the right time (than leaving stakeholders to speculate) and keep the conversation in continuum.
- 2.6 **Understandable:** (use simple language, relate the message with stories stakeholder's context, use visual and familiar language.

3. Monitoring, Evaluation and Learning: (ensure tentative monitoring indicators using the principles of effective communication).

4. Communication Functions at MAI and other implementing entities: ensure adequate exploration of the various communication functions and units at the MAI, including the changes used and how such functions would be relevant to the proposed project.

5. Annexes: stakeholder engagement planning, documentation and reporting templates