



# Grievance Redress Mechanism for the Thai Rice: Strengthening Climate-Smart Rice Farming (Thai Rice GCF) Project

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On behalf of



Funding programme



Implemented by



In cooperation with



**Grievance Redress Mechanism  
for the  
Thai Rice: Strengthening Climate-Smart Rice Farming  
(Thai Rice GCF) Project**

**Version July 2024**

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## Abbreviations and Acronyms

AE	Accredited Entity
BAAC	Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives
BMZ	German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development
DoAE	Department of Agricultural Extension
EE	Executing Entity
E&S	Environmental and Social
EGP	Ethnic Groups Plan
ESM	Environmental and Social Safeguards Management
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESS	Environmental and Social Safeguards
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GCU	Grievance Consideration Unit
GHG	Greenhouse gas
GIZ	Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit GmbH
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
IRM	Independent Redress Mechanism
IRRI	International Rice Research Institute
MoAC	Ministry of Agriculture and Cooperatives
MoNRE	Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment
NDA	National Designated Authority
NGO	Non-Governmental Organisation
ONEP	Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning
PMU	Project Management Unit
PSC	Project Steering Committee
RD	Rice Department
SEAH	Sexual Exploitation, Abuse and Harassment
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan

## 1. Project Information

Rice is deeply ingrained in Thai identity. Over five million households in Thailand are involved in rice farming, which forms the backbone of rural livelihoods and the economy. As one of the world's top rice exporters, Thailand plays a key role in global food security, helping to nourish more than 3.5 billion people worldwide who consume rice as a daily staple.

Rice farming must confront unique challenges in the context of climate change. Covering more than half of Thailand's agricultural land, rice farming accounts for 51% of total greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions in the agriculture sector. The practice of extended flooding of paddy fields leads to emissions of methane, a GHG that is more potent than carbon dioxide. Emissions also result from the inefficient use of fertiliser and mismanagement of biomass residues, among other practices.

The increasing frequency and intensity of extreme weather events, such as droughts and floods, and changes in temperature and rainfall have direct impacts on rice yields, leading to harvest losses and affecting farmers' means of subsistence and livelihoods.

The **Thai Rice: Strengthening Climate-Smart Rice Farming** (Thai Rice GCF) project brings together public, private, financial and research institutions to scale solutions that tackle these challenges. Through a paradigm shift to make climate-smart agricultural practices the norm, we can increase productivity and reduce GHG emissions from rice farming while increasing incomes and strengthening the livelihoods of smallholder farmers.

The project will work to:

- strengthen extension services and build know-how for smallholder farmers to manage rice farming operations and inputs more efficiently and sustainably, to achieve more with less;
- expand the availability and support the matching of farmers with climate-smart service providers and financial products to meet the needs of farmers seeking assistance to adopt proven practices; and
- strengthen institutions and market mechanisms that encourage rice value chain actors to support and scale climate-smart rice farming, including beyond the project duration.

The project is funded by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), German Federal Ministry for Economic Cooperation and Development (BMZ) through the develoPPP programme, international private sector partners, and through in-kind contributions from the project's Accredited Entity (AE)<sup>1</sup> and Executing Entities (EE)<sup>2</sup>.

Learn more at <https://www.asean-agrifood.org/thai-rice-gcf/>

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<sup>1</sup> The Accredited Entity is Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH.

<sup>2</sup> The Executing Entities are: Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit (GIZ) GmbH, Rice Department (RD), Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC), Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP), and International Rice Research Institute (IRRI).

## 2. Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) Context

The Green Climate Fund (GCF)<sup>3</sup> seeks to ensure that the climate finance it allocates does not harm the people or environment where its projects are implemented. Grievance Redress Mechanisms are a crucial element of the GCF's Environmental and Social Policy<sup>4</sup>. Their purpose is to handle and resolve issues and complaints related to the potential environmental and social impacts of activities sponsored by the GCF.

**The primary goal of the Thai Rice GCF Project Grievance Redress Mechanism (Project GRM) is to establish a means of communication for various stakeholders to express concerns related to project implementation.** This mechanism aims to create a transparent and timely procedure for addressing grievances, documenting both the grievances and the actions taken to resolve them. Additionally, it aims to efficiently and sensitively handle grievances related to general issues as well as those related to sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH), with the goal of resolving these issues amicably and transparently, ultimately minimizing the involvement of legal proceedings.

Specific objectives of the Project GRM are to:

- Provide a communication channel to receive feedback and grievances from project stakeholders (including, but not limited to, farmers, service providers, local authorities, non-governmental organizations (NGO) and others) related to project implementation, with the goal of resolving those grievances amicably where possible and minimizing the use of the legal system.
- Establish a procedure with clear responsibilities and reporting lines to process grievances of project stakeholders in a timely and transparent manner.
- Establish a system for recording grievances and the measures (if any) put in place to respond to those grievances.
- Provide a single GRM for general and SEAH-related grievances.

The Project GRM is predicated upon the following principles:

- **Transparency:** The receipt and processing of grievances will be conducted transparently, in a culturally appropriate and gender-sensitive manner, and in the appropriate language.
- **Consistency:** Open channels of communication will be maintained between the complainant and the GRM for the duration of the grievance process.
- **Accessibility:** All (potentially) affected persons will be able to freely access the GRM.
- **Disclosure:** All grievances will be recorded and archived, regardless of whether the grievances are justified or not (a screening process will determine if the grievances are justified).
- **Discussion:** All justified grievances will be followed up by one or more discussions with the complainant – accompanied, if useful or relevant, by a site visit by a project representative.
- **Privacy:** The GRM will be consistent with Thai data protection law and will respect complainant confidentiality and privacy. If the complainant wishes to remain entirely anonymous or not to be contacted, it is possible to deviate from these basic principles (e.g., no discussion).

Stakeholder consultations during preparation of the Thai Rice GCF project identified potential grievances related to rice cultivation, such as disputes over machinery, air pollution, water contamination, and conflicts with services providers.

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<sup>3</sup> <https://www.greenclimate.fund/>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.greenclimate.fund/document/environmental-and-social-policy>

Grievances are categorized into two main types:

(1) grievances outside of the project's scope, which involve issues that may occur in the same geographical area or timeframe as the project but are not directly or indirectly caused by project implementation (for example, disputes over land boundaries between farmers, or complaints about water distribution from irrigation channels managed by government agencies unrelated to the project), and

(2) grievances related to project implementation, which arise from project outputs, activities, or failures that negatively impact stakeholders. These grievances can be either direct or indirect. Direct grievances arise when project-delivered interventions fail to meet the expectations of beneficiaries, such as farmers not receiving the quality of training promised by the project or experiencing delays in receiving project support, if individuals feel they have been wrongly excluded from the project, if the farmer has concerns about her/his data being shared to an entity without her/his consent. Indirect grievances occur when project-established conditions lead to negative impacts on stakeholders, such as when a service provider who received technical training from the project subsequently delivers substandard services to farmers, or when project-promoted farming techniques fail to deliver the expected benefits. The specific actions taken will depend on the nature of the grievance and the project's involvement.

The first type of grievance is unrelated to the project and falls outside the scope of the Project GRM. These grievances, often stemming from pre-existing issues, will be investigated and if the complainant agrees, the grievance will be forwarded (where relevant) to the appropriate institution to be dealt with according to that institution's own processes.

The second type of grievance is directly related to project implementation and falls within the scope of the Project GRM. Grievances that fall within the project's purview are processed through a hierarchical structure involving local, national, and potentially GIZ levels, with clear responsibilities, timelines, and actions for each level.

### **SEAH-Related Grievances**

For the Thai Rice GCF project, SEAH risks may arise in contexts including project-supported training and extension services, interactions with agricultural service providers, and access to financial support. These situations may create opportunities for potentially exploitative relationships or inappropriate contact with community members.

In response, the project adopts a survivor-centered and gender-responsive approach, recognizing the unique sensitivity and seriousness of such complaints. SEAH-related grievances are submitted through the same channels as the Project GRM; however, they are handled with stricter confidentiality and sensitivity. The process emphasizes understanding the complainant's needs and wishes to guide appropriate investigation and response strategies, with compassion and care.

### 3. Governance and Management Structure of the Project GRM

#### Accredited Entity

As the AE in the Thai Rice GCF project, GIZ is required to establish a Project GRM to ensure accountability, transparency, and responsiveness to concerns raised by stakeholders. By establishing a robust Project GRM, the AE can contribute to the GCF's mission of promoting sustainable development and climate resilience while protecting the rights of affected communities and promoting accountability and transparency.

#### Executive Entities

There are five EEs in the Thai Rice GCF project: GIZ, Rice Department (RD), Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperative (BAAC), Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP), and International Rice Research Institute (IRRI). There are additional implementing partners, notably Department of Agricultural Extension (DoAE). EEs and implementing partners play a crucial role in overseeing and implementing the Project GRM; they contribute to the effectiveness and credibility of the GRM, ensuring that the rights of affected communities are protected and that activities are implemented in a responsible and sustainable manner.

#### Project GRM Management Structure

The Thai Rice GCF project Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) Manager is responsible for the day-to-day management of the Project GRM and for maintaining systematic records of grievances received and how they are addressed. The ESS Manager collaborates with EEs to establish an ESS Team to support the Project GRM and other safeguards measures. The ESS Team is tasked with the following responsibilities:

- *Receiving and Registering Grievances:* Provide a clear and accessible process for individuals and groups to submit grievances related to the project's potential or actual negative impacts.
- *Investigating Grievances:* Conduct thorough and impartial investigations into all grievances, gathering evidence and interviewing relevant parties.
- *Mediation and Facilitation:* Strive to resolve grievances through mediation or other forms of facilitation, promoting dialogue and finding mutually acceptable solutions.
- *Providing Remedies:* If a grievance is found to be valid, recommend appropriate remedies, which may include corrective actions or changes to the project's design or implementation.
- *Monitoring and Reporting:* Track the progress of grievance resolution and report regularly to the project team, the AE, and the GCF on the status of grievances and the effectiveness of the Project GRM.
- *Capacity Building:* Provide training and support to project staff and stakeholders on the Project GRM process, ensuring that they understand their rights and responsibilities.
- *Advocacy and Awareness-Raising:* Raise awareness of the Project GRM process among project-affected communities.

All grievances are recorded in writing by the recipient of the grievance and are forwarded to the ESS Manager. The ESS Manager screens grievances for scope eligibility and, if found to be in scope, delegates the grievance to the appropriate Grievance Consideration Unit (GCU). GCUs are temporary bodies formed to address specific grievances with relevant expertise, then dissolved after resolution or escalation.

There are three hierarchical levels in the Project GRM and complementarity with a fourth level at the GCF:



**Figure 1** Hierarchy level of Project GRM

### Linkages with Existing Grievance Mechanisms

The Project GRM is designed to operate in coordination with existing grievance mechanisms at local, national, and international levels. This leverages established structures while providing a project-specific channel for stakeholder concerns.

The Project GRM follows an escalatory model with three main hierarchical levels, plus complementarity with a fourth level. At all stages of this process, complainants will be informed of the individuals chosen to review and address their case. The complainants may communicate concerns about the individuals chosen, if any.

1. *Local Level:* The first point of contact for grievances is a local-level GCU. This temporary committee consists of at least three local stakeholders, such as village heads, district-level extension officials, Damrongdhama Centre representatives, or local civil society members. The composition varies based on the nature of the grievance, ensuring appropriate expertise for each case. The ESS Manager or a delegated Project Management Unit (PMU) member participates as an observer.
2. *National Level:* If a grievance cannot be resolved at the local level, it is escalated to a national-level GCU. This committee, chaired by the ESS Manager, includes at least five national stakeholders, potentially from government ministries, the Damrongdhama Centre, and the private sector. This level provides a broader perspective and additional resources for more complex cases.
3. *GIZ Level:* If the grievance remains unresolved, it is escalated to the GIZ Thailand Country Office, which follows GIZ's standard grievance procedures. In particularly challenging situations, the case may be transferred to the international GIZ Ombudsman.
4. *GCF Level:* As a complementary measure, grievances can also be addressed through the GCF's Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM). This mechanism handles complaints related to potential failures in implementing GCF's operational policies and procedures, including on ESS.

This multi-tiered approach ensures that grievances are addressed efficiently and effectively, leveraging existing structures while maintaining the project's specific accountability mechanisms. The system aims to resolve issues at the lowest appropriate level while providing clear pathways for escalation when necessary.

## Ensuring Accessibility of the Project GRM

The Thai Rice GCF project is committed to making the Project GRM accessible to all stakeholders, regardless of their physical abilities, literacy levels, or technological access. To achieve this, the project will implement the following measures:

1. *Multiple Submission Channels*: Grievances can be submitted through various means, including in-person, by phone, by email, through website contact forms, or through project or community representatives.
2. *Language Considerations*: All GRM materials will be available in Thai and local ethnic languages (based on need). Interpreters will be provided when necessary.
3. *Assistance for Written Submissions*: For individuals with limited literacy, staff will be available to transcribe oral grievances into written form (based on need).
4. *Physical Accessibility*: In-person grievance submission points will consider their accessibility to people with mobility challenges.
5. *Outreach and Education*: Community sessions held will include explanation of the Project GRM process, with a focus on reaching marginalized groups. GRM contact details will be shared during project events and through public notice boards, local government offices, and community fora.
6. *Proxy Submissions*: The Project GRM will allow for grievances to be submitted by a nominated representative, caregiver, or family member on behalf of an affected individual.

## Human Resources Arrangements – ESS Team

GIZ, as the AE, will develop an ESS Management and Monitoring System to outline procedures, plans, organizational structure, activities, and resources for managing and monitoring ESS requirements. GIZ will recruit one ESS Manager to coordinate all ESS-related activities, including the implementation of the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), Environmental and Social Monitoring Framework (ESMF), and Project GRM.

All EEs are responsible for mitigating ESS risks. Each EE will nominate one ESS focal point to support the planning, implementation, and monitoring of the ESMP and ESMF.

The ESS Team, overseen by the ESS Manager and comprising the ESS focal points, will deliver all ESS-related outputs of the Thai Rice GCF project, including their ongoing monitoring and evaluation.

The Thai Rice GCF Project Steering Committee (PSC) will oversee the implementation and provide strategic advice on ESS matters.

Full Terms of Reference (ToR) for the ESS Manager and ESS focal points are included in Annex 3.

## 4. Operating the Project GRM

### 4.1 Process

The Project GRM design incorporates defined protocols for each step. It provides the public with access to those procedures in order to improve the transparency and predictability of the mechanism.

Grievances can be submitted through various channels as follows.

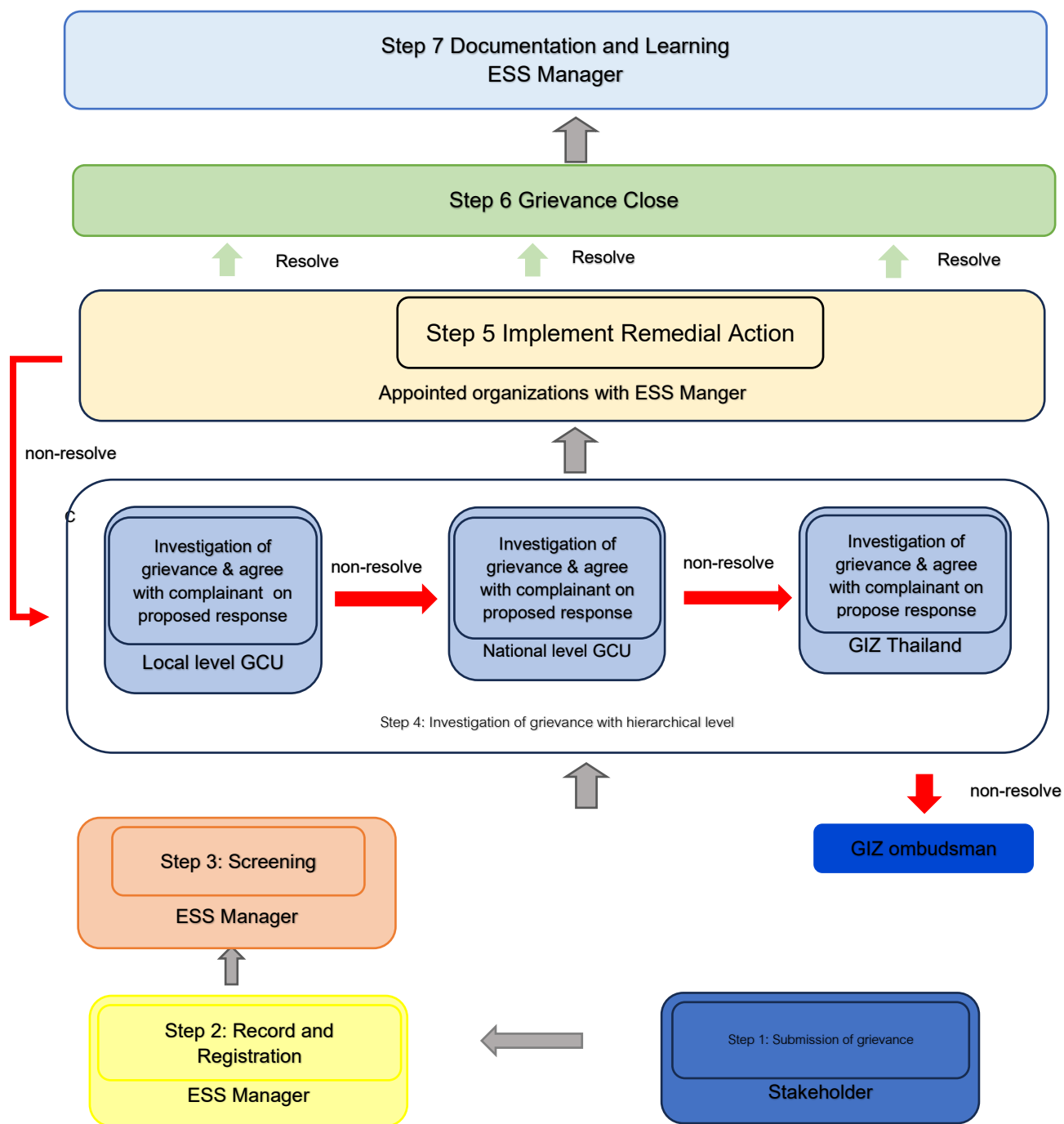
Primary channels:

- Dedicated Project GRM mailbox: [RiceGRM@giz.de](mailto:RiceGRM@giz.de) (email)
- Project main office to “ATTN: Thai Rice GCF project ESS Manager”: 39/1 Soi Sukhumvit 13, Sukhumvit Road, Klongtoey Nua, Wattana, Bangkok 10110 Thailand (mail)
- Project events: e.g., at a project-organized meeting, workshop, or training (in-person, in written or verbal format)

Supplementary channels:

- Local project representative: e.g., project staff, extension officer
- Local leader coordinating with the project: e.g., village head, lead farmer
- Existing channels provided by EEs: e.g., Environmental Fund website at <https://envfund.onep.go.th/>
- A grievance box located at a nearby location: e.g., at EEs’ national and regional offices
- The local Damrongdhama Centre, located in the provincial offices in the project area. The Damrongdhama Centres fall under the authority of the Ministry of Interior, which was established in 1994 as a de facto GRM for members of the public. The Centre has officials located in all provincial government offices throughout the country and has the following 4 missions:
  1. To promote fairness and facilitate justice to citizens. As part of this mission, the Centre is empowered to gather public complaints and to support dispute resolution among community members.
  2. To enable citizens to ask for help from the government.
  3. To enable private sector engagement and support for the work of the Centre.
  4. To promote good citizenship and provide moral knowledge and ethics for the general public.

The Figure 2 provides an overview of the Thai Rice GCF project GRM process.



**Figure 2** Thai Rice project procedure to solve grievances

Source: Adapted from FP 214 Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

### The Project GRM Process Instruction

1. *Step 1 Intake*: Stakeholders initiate the process by submitting their grievances through a designated channel (e.g., [RiceGRM@giz.de](mailto:RiceGRM@giz.de), in person, etc.)
2. *Step 2 Record and Registration*: The ESS Manager receives the grievance and formally records it in the project's grievance log.

3. **Step 3 Screening and Planning:** The ESS Manager reviews the grievance to determine its eligibility and appropriate handling. They will decide on the appropriate investigation level based on the grievance's complexity and severity. The goal is to resolve the complainant's concerns effectively.
4. **Step 4 Investigation:** This step involves a tiered approach to investigation and resolution:
  - 4.1 Level 1 GCU Local level: GCU Local level investigates the grievance and decides on remedial action together with the complainant at the local level. If both parties agree on the solution, the process moves to Step 6. If no agreement is reached or the grievance remains unresolved, it is escalated to the next level for further review.
  - 4.2 Level 2 GCU National level: GCU National level investigates the grievance and decides on remedial action together with the complainant. If both parties agree on the solution, the process moves to Step 6. If no agreement is reached or the grievance remains unresolved, it is escalated to the next level for further review.
  - 4.3 Level 3 GIZ Thailand country office: GIZ Thailand country office investigates the grievance and decides on remedial action together with the complainant. If both parties agree on the solution, the process moves to Step 6. If no agreement is reached or the grievance remains unresolved, it is escalated to the GIZ Ombudsman.
  - 4.4 Level 4 GCF level: At this level, the Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM) reviews grievances related to GCF-financed activities that may have failed to meet GCF's policies or ESS standards. GIZ, as the AE, cooperates with the IRM and GCF to ensure the grievance is appropriately reviewed and addressed.
5. **Step 5 Implement Remedial Action:** The agreed-upon remedial action is put into effect to resolve the grievance. The goal is to ensure that the solution addresses the complainant's concerns effectively while aligning with the organization's policies and objectives.
6. **Step 6 Grievance Closed:** Once a resolution is reached at any level of the grievance process, the ESS Manager is responsible for determining if a case is successfully resolved by confirming with the complainant that the agreed remedial action has been completed and meets their expectations. Once the complainant agrees that the issue is resolved, the ESS Manager will document the outcome, notify relevant stakeholders, and formally close the case. If the complainant provides positive feedback and no further action is required, the case will be considered closed. Before closing, the ESS Manager will also invite the complainant to evaluate the grievance process—whether it was accessible, transparent, and responsive; whether they felt heard and informed throughout; and whether they were satisfied with the resolution and any suggestions for future prevention (if applicable).
7. **Step 7 Documentation and Learning:** The ESS Manager is responsible for documenting the grievance process, from the initial complaint to the final resolution. All relevant information, including the nature of the grievance, investigation details, actions taken, and the final outcome, must be recorded and stored in the appropriate system. This ensures that a complete and transparent record is maintained for future reference and accountability. Furthermore, the ESS Manager must analyze the documented information to identify patterns or recurring issues, assess the need for further preventive remedies to prevent similar incidents, and implement corrective actions where necessary. This continuous improvement process helps strengthen the grievance management framework and reduces the likelihood of similar grievances arising in the future. The analysis of individual cases will be systematically documented and consolidated for review on a quarterly to twice a year basis. This periodic review supports the continuous improvement of grievance procedures and helps prevent the recurrence of similar issues.

**Table 1** Steps to resolve grievance with responsible entity

Step to resolve grievance	Responsible entity	Timeline from submission of grievance
Step 1: Submission of grievance to the project	Stakeholders	
Step 2: Registration of grievance	ESS Manager records the claim and confirms receipt to the complainant	Within 5 working days of Step 1
Step 3: Screening for scope eligibility	ESS Manager conducts screening	Within 10 working days of Step 1 Within 15 working days of Step 3 completion
Step 4: Investigation of grievance by hierarchical levels	- Investigation - Consider and propose remedial actions by local-level GCU or national-level GCU or GIZ Thailand country office or GCF	(Total duration for this step is up to 15 working days. If the grievance cannot be resolved at a lower level, it must be promptly referred to the next level without waiting for the full 15 working days.)
Step 5: Implement remedial actions	Appointed organization oversees implementation of remedial action	Within 15 working days of Step 4 completion
Step 6: Closure of grievance	ESS Manager documents and formally closes grievance case ESS Manager analyzes grievance cases to identify patterns, implement systemic improvements, and develop preventive remedies that address root causes to prevent similar incidents in the future.	Within 15 working days of Step 5 completion Within 15 working days of Step 6 completion
Step 7: Documentation and learning		

**Remark:** If more time is needed to resolve the grievance, the complainant(s) need to agree with the adjusted timeline.

While the GRM follows a standard timeline, adjustments may be made by the ESS Manager and investigation team depending on the urgency and complexity of the case

**Table 2** Grievance analysis according to degree of severity

Level of grievance in relation to project activities	Description	Actions
Not justified	Grievance or concern is not related to the project.	Communicate and explain rationale to complainant. Register as not justified. Suggest alternative resources to support the complainant in solving the concern or forward with consent of the complainant.
Negligible	Grievance is related to project with no damage. Resolution can be done immediately.	Communicate and explain rationale to complainant. Solution will be considered based on the grievance treatment system.
Minimal	Grievance is related to project and causes small damage and/ or over small area. Negotiation is required.	Communicate, explain rationale, and disclose data and information if needed. Discuss with complainant for solution. Solution will be considered based on the grievance treatment system.

Level of grievance in relation to project activities	Description	Actions
Moderate	Grievance is related to project and causes moderate damage with expansion of area. Negotiation and consultation are required.	Communicate, explain rationale, and disclose data and information if needed. Discuss with complainant and any other stakeholder(s) involved for solution. Solution will be considered based on the grievance treatment system.
Serious	Grievance is related to project and causes large damage and/or over vast area with difficulty to control.	Communicate, explain rationale, and disclose data and information if needed. Discuss with complainant and any other stakeholder(s) involved for solution. If necessary, nominate local-level GCU to resolve the issue. Solution will be considered based on the grievance treatment system.
Catastrophic	Grievance is related to project and damage cannot be controlled; typically requires complicated resolution.	Consult national-level GCU authority for solution if grievance cannot be addressed by local-level GCU.

## 4.2 Risk Assessment for Project GRM Implementation

Implementing an effective GRM involves various risks that could impact its functionality and stakeholder trust. This section outlines potential risks and corresponding mitigation strategies to ensure successful implementation and operation of the Project GRM.

**Table 3** Identified Risks and Mitigation Strategies

No	Topic	Risk	Mitigation
1	Low Awareness or Utilization of GRM	Stakeholders may be unaware of the GRM or hesitant to use it.	Implement outreach programs, including community meetings, informational materials in local languages, and regular reminders about the GRM during project activities.
2	Lack of Trust in the GRM Process	Stakeholders may not trust the GRM to fairly address their concerns.	Ensure transparency in the GRM process, regularly communicate outcomes, and involve trusted community leaders in the local-level GCUs.
3	Insufficient Capacity to Handle Grievances	Personnel involved in GRM processes may lack the skills or resources to address complex grievances effectively.	Provide ongoing training for personnel involved in GRM processes, establish clear escalation procedures, and ensure access to technical experts when needed.
4	Delays in Grievance Resolution	Slow response times may discourage use of the GRM and erode trust.	Implement and strictly adhere to timeline commitments for each stage of the grievance process. Regularly monitor and report on resolution times.
5	Cultural or Language Barriers	The GRM may not be accessible or understandable to all stakeholder groups.	Provide multi-lingual services, use culturally appropriate communication methods, and ensure diverse representation in GCUs.
6	Retaliation Against Complainants	Fear of retaliation may prevent stakeholders from using the GRM.	Establish and enforce a strict non-retaliation policy. Provide options for anonymous complaints and protect complainant identities.

7	Recurring or Systemic Issues Not Addressed	Focus on individual grievances may overlook patterns of recurring problems.	Regularly analyze grievance data to identify trends. Use this information to address root causes and improve project implementation.
8	Political Interference	Local or national political interests may attempt to influence GRM outcomes	Clearly document all GRM processes and decisions. Involve stakeholders in GCUs to ensure checks and balances

## Risk Monitoring and Review

The ESS Manager will be responsible for continuously monitoring these risks throughout the project lifecycle. A risk assessment review will be conducted annually, with findings and updated mitigation strategies reported to the PSC. This ongoing process will ensure that the Project GRM remains robust, responsive, and aligned with stakeholder needs and project realities.

## 4.3 Training and Capacity Building on the Project GRM

Effective implementation of the Project GRM requires all ESS team, project staff and key stakeholders to have a thorough understanding of processes, their roles, and responsibilities. The Thai Rice GCF project is committed to providing necessary training and ongoing capacity building to ensure the Project GRM functions as intended.

### 1. Training Objectives

The main objectives of the training are to:

- Ensure all relevant parties understand the purpose and importance of the GRM
- Familiarize participants with the step-by-step GRM procedures
- Clarify roles and responsibilities within the GRM process
- Develop skills in handling grievances sensitively and effectively
- Promote a culture of accountability and responsiveness

### 2. Target Groups for Training

Training will be tailored for different groups involved in the GRM process:

- Project Management Unit (PMU) staff
- Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) team
- Local-level and National-level Grievance Consideration Unit (GCU) members
- Executing Entity (EE) staff
- Community representatives and local leaders

### 3. Training Content

The training program will cover the following key areas:

- Overview of the Thai Rice GCF Project GRM
- Types of grievances and their classification
- Step-by-step GRM procedures
- Roles and responsibilities in the GRM process
- Communication and conflict resolution skills
- Documentation and reporting requirements
- Ethical considerations and confidentiality
- Special procedures for SEAH-related grievances
- Cultural sensitivity and working with diverse communities

### 4. Training Methods

A variety of training methods will be employed to ensure effective learning:

- Interactive workshops and seminars
- Role-playing exercises and case studies
- Online learning modules for remote participants
- Field visits to demonstrate practical application
- Peer-to-peer learning sessions

## **5. Training Schedule**

- Initial training: Training sessions will be conducted during the project inception phase for all relevant staff and stakeholders.
- Refresher courses: Annual refresher training will be provided to reinforce knowledge and address any changes in the GRM process.
- Ad-hoc training: Additional training sessions will be organized as needed, especially when new staff join or significant changes are made to the GRM.

## **6. Monitoring and Evaluation of Training Effectiveness**

To ensure the training program's effectiveness:

- Pre and post-training assessments will be conducted to measure knowledge gain
- Participant feedback will be collected after each training session
- The ESS Manager will conduct periodic evaluations of GRM implementation to identify any gaps in knowledge or skills that need to be addressed through further training

## **7. Resources and Materials**

- A GRM Manual will be developed and regularly updated
- Online resources including videos, infographics, and modules will be made available
- A dedicated section on the project website will host all GRM-related materials for easy access

By implementing this training and capacity building program, the Thai Rice GCF project aims to ensure that all parties involved in the Project GRM process are well-equipped to handle grievances effectively, efficiently, and sensitively.

## 5. SEAH Related Grievances

The Thai Rice GCF project recognizes the importance of preventing and addressing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH) in all aspects of its operations. To this end, a Project GRM has been established to address SEAH-related concerns from project stakeholders.

SEAH-related grievances follows the same process and channels as the standard Project GRM, but with enhanced confidentiality and specialized handling of sensitive cases, with particular attention to the needs of women, ethnic groups, and indigenous peoples. Women may be disproportionately affected by SEAH issues, while ethnic minorities might face additional cultural and linguistic barriers in accessing the Project GRM. Specialized handling aims to create a safe, confidential, and culturally sensitive environment for reporting and addressing SEAH concerns, ensuring that these key stakeholder groups feel empowered to come forward without fear of retaliation or stigma.

SEAH-related grievances present distinct challenges that require careful consideration:

- **Potential Conflicts of Interest:** The complainant may relate to the behaviour of a project stakeholder who might normally be involved in the consideration of grievances.
- **Privacy Concerns:** The sensitive nature of SEAH grievances requires strict confidentiality measures to protect complainants' identities and personal information.
- **Gender and Cultural Sensitivity:** Complainants may be traumatized and vulnerable, requiring specialized support and a culturally appropriate, safe environment for discussion.

These unique challenges require a careful and thoughtful approach, with clear policies and procedures to address potential conflicts of interest, protect privacy, and ensure that complainants feel safe and supported.

### SEAH Grievances

The Thai Rice GCF project implements enhanced measures for SEAH-related grievances received through the Project GRM. **While SEAH cases follow the general GRM structure, the process is adapted to ensure sensitivity and discretion. Specialized handling ensures the safety, confidentiality, and dignity of all stakeholders.** The ESS Manager will design the handling procedure and select involved personnel on a case-by-case basis, depending on the nature of the complaint. Although SEAH grievances can be submitted through standard GRM channels, additional safeguards are in place to protect the privacy and well-being of the complainant.

The process involves tailored response development, with a nominated Grievance Focal Point leading confidential investigations. The complainant will be given the option to choose a male or female focal point to ensure comfort and trust. To further build trust, the names and contact details of designated grievance handlers will be shared with the complainant in advance. The mechanism emphasizes understanding the complainant's preferences and developing a response approach based on the nature and seriousness of the allegations.

The mechanism offers diverse response options, including referrals to appropriate entities, training and education, personnel actions, awareness-raising, and potential involvement of regulatory or law enforcement authorities when necessary. Throughout the process, the focus remains on handling grievances with compassion.

SEAH grievances are addressed using the same mechanism and procedural steps as outlined in the general project GRM (see Figure 2 and Table 2 in Chapter 4). However, due to the

sensitive nature of SEAH cases, additional safeguards and survivor-centered adaptations are applied to ensure confidentiality, safety, and dignity throughout the process.

The step-by-step procedures and designated responsible entities are detailed in the following instructions.

### The Thai Rice Project SEAH Grievance Process Instruction

1. *Step 1 Intake*: Stakeholders initiate the process by submitting their grievances through designated channels. (e.g., RiceGRM@giz.de, in-person etc.)
2. *Step 2 Record and Registration*: The ESS Manager receives the grievance and formally records it in the project's grievance log.
3. *Step 3 Screening and Planning*: The ESS Manager reviews the SEAH grievance to confirm eligibility and plan a suitable response. Given the sensitive nature of SEAH cases, the investigation process will be carefully designed to ensure confidentiality, safety, and dignity, and tailored to the case's complexity and severity.
4. *Step 4 Investigation*: This step involves a tiered approach to investigation and resolution:
  - 4.1 Level 1 GCU Local level: GCU Local level investigates the grievance and decides on remedial action together with the complainant at the local level. If both parties agree on the solution, the process moves to Step 6. If no agreement is reached or the grievance remains unresolved, it is escalated to the next level for further review.
  - 4.2 Level 2 GCU National level: GCU National level investigates the grievance and decides on remedial action together with the complainant. If both parties agree on the solution, the process moves to Step 6. If no agreement is reached or the grievance remains unresolved, it is escalated to the next level for further review.
  - 4.3 Level 3 GIZ Thailand country office: GIZ Thailand country office investigates the grievance and decides on remedial action together with the complainant. If both parties agree on the solution, the process moves to Step 5. If no agreement is reached or the grievance remains unresolved, it is escalated to the GIZ Ombudsman.
  - 4.4 Level 4 GCF level: At this level, the Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM) reviews grievances related to GCF-financed activities that may have failed to meet GCF's policies or ESS standards. GIZ, as the AE, cooperates with the IRM and GCF to ensure the grievance is appropriately reviewed and addressed.
5. *Step 5: Implement remedial action*: In this step, the agreed-upon remedial action is put into effect to resolve the grievance. The goal is to ensure that the solution addresses the complainant's concerns effectively while aligning with the organization's policies and objectives.
6. *Step 6 Grievance Closed*: Once a resolution is reached at any level of the grievance process, the ESS Manager is responsible to determine if a case is successfully resolved by confirming with the complainant that the agreed remedial action has been completed and meets their expectations. Once the complainant agrees that the issue is resolved, ESS Manager will document the outcome, notify relevant stakeholders, and formally close the case. If the complainant provides positive feedback and no further action is required, the case will be considered closed. Before closing, the ESS Manager will also invite the complainant to evaluate the grievance process—whether it was accessible, transparent, and responsive; whether they felt heard and informed throughout; and whether they were satisfied with the resolution and any suggestions for future prevention (if applicable).
7. *Step 7 Documentation and Learning*: The ESS Manager is responsible for documenting the grievance process, from the initial complaint to the final resolution. All relevant information, including the nature of the grievance, investigation details, actions taken, and the final outcome, must be accurately recorded and stored in the appropriate system. This ensures that a complete and transparent record is maintained for future

reference and accountability. Furthermore, the ESS Manager must analyze the documented information to identify patterns or recurring issues, assess the need for further preventive remedies to prevent similar incidents, and implement corrective actions where necessary. This continuous improvement process helps strengthen the grievance management framework and reduces the likelihood of similar grievances arising in the future.

For SEAH grievances from ethnic groups, the process incorporates additional measures to ensure accessibility, cultural appropriateness, and effectiveness. To overcome language barriers, interpretation and translation services are provided (as needed) in the complainant's preferred local language. The mechanism allows for multiple submission options, including in written form, in-person reporting, or through a freely chosen representative.

In line with the project's Ethnic Groups Plan (EGP), when necessary, ethnic group representatives may be included in the Grievance Coordination Units to ensure cultural sensitivity. A specially trained Grievance Focal Point, chosen based on factors such as gender or linguistic ability, leads the investigation under strict confidentiality requirements. This tailored approach aims to create a safe, accessible, and culturally appropriate system for ethnic minorities to report SEAH concerns, ensuring that these sensitive grievances are addressed effectively and respectfully throughout the project lifecycle.

## 6. GRM Evaluation and Continuous Improvement

To ensure the effectiveness, accountability and continuous improvement of the Project GRM, the following monitoring and evaluation process will be implemented:

1. **Regular Monitoring Performance Reviews:** The ESS Manager will conduct quarterly reviews of the GRM's system, key indicators include:
  - Number of grievances received, resolved, and pending
  - Average time taken to resolve grievances
  - Types of grievances received
  - Satisfaction levels of complainants with the GRM process and outcomes
2. **Post-Resolution Feedback:** After the resolution of each grievance, the complainant will be invited to provide feedback on the process, including accessibility, fairness, and timeliness. Feedback will be used to inform process refinement
3. **Annual Stakeholder Engagement:** The project will organize annual workshops with key stakeholders, such as community representatives, the ESS Team, and Gender Focal Points. These workshops will review GRM performance and generate recommendations for system improvement.
4. **Continuous Improvement Process:** Feedback and review results will be compiled into an Annual GRM Improvement Report by the ESS Manager. This report will:
  - Highlight strengths and weaknesses of the GRM, including analysis of whether low complaint numbers may indicate barriers to access or lack of awareness, rather than the absence of issues.
  - Incorporate stakeholder recommendations.
  - Set measurable improvement targets for the coming year.
5. **Implementation and Oversight:** The PSC will review and approve recommended changes. Once approved, the ESS Manager will coordinate the implementation of improvements, ensuring actions are tracked and reported.
6. **Transparency and Accountability:** A summary of the Project GRM's performance and improvements will be made accessible to stakeholders, reinforcing transparency and accountability.

By implementing this evaluation and improvement process, the Thai Rice GCF project seeks to ensure that the Project GRM remains responsive to stakeholder needs, aligns with best practices, and continually enhances its effectiveness throughout the project lifecycle.

Annexes

Annex 1 Grievance Forms and GRM Process

Documentation of Thai Rice GCF Project – Grievance Form

1. Complainant Information

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ (Leave blank if you wish to remain anonymous)

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Preferred method of contact:  Phone  Email  Mail

2. Grievance Details

Date of Incident: \_\_\_\_\_

Location: \_\_\_\_\_

Category of Grievance:

- Social
- Environmental
- Resettlement
- Community, Security, Health and Safety
- Human Right
- SEAH

Description of the grievance:

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Parties involved (if applicable):

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Supporting documents attached:  Yes  No

3. Desired Outcome

What solution would you like to see?

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4. Previous Attempts to Resolve

Have you previously tried to resolve this issue?  Yes  No

If yes, please describe:

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5. Consent and Acknowledgment

I give permission for my personal information to be used for the purpose of investigating and documenting this grievance.

I understand the GRM process as explained in the project documentation.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Privacy Statement

Your personal information will be kept confidential and used only for the purpose of addressing your grievance.

## Need Help?

For assistance in filling out this form or for more information about the grievance process, please contact the ESS Manager.

## For Official Use Only

- Grievance ID: \_\_\_\_\_

- Date Received: \_\_\_\_\_

- Receiving Officer: \_\_\_\_\_

- Priority Level:  Low  Medium  High

- Status:  Received  Under Investigation  Resolved  Closed

Documentation of Thai Rice GCF Project – GRM Log

Grievance Information

ID : .....

Sub-categories:

Categories:

- Social
- Environmental
- Resettlement
- Community, Security, Health and Safety
- Human Right
- SEAH

- General information about project
- Cultural heritage Procurement
- Employment
- Workers' Health and Safety
- Community trust
- Damage to Animal
- Damage to House
- Damage to Land&Crop
- Access to the Lands and Resources
- SEAH

Reason for initiation of the GRM process

Identification of GCUs (People who involve to this process)

Result of investigation

Action to be taken

Closing Date

Follow-up date Was the action \_\_\_\_\_ (Month / Year)  
can solve the issue?

No follow-up was set, because

Recommendation from the complaints

## Annex 2 Contact Information

Contact:

Thai Rice GCF Project ESS Manager

Ms. Ketpharima Sansud

Email : [ketpharima.sansud@giz.de](mailto:ketpharima.sansud@giz.de)

Tel : +669 2897 8232

Email Address :

[RiceGRM@giz.de](mailto:RiceGRM@giz.de)

Mailing Address :

ATTN: "Thai Rice GCF project ESS Manager"

39/1 Soi Sukhumvit 13, Sukhumvit Road, Klongtoey Nua, Wattana, Bangkok 10110 Thailand

## Annex 3 Terms of References (ToR)

### Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Thai Rice: Strengthening Climate-Smart Rice Farming Project Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) Manager

The “Thai Rice: Strengthening Climate-Smart Rice Farming” project aims to promote low-emission and climate-resilient rice farming. It aims to benefit more than 250,000 smallholder farmers – strengthening their yields, livelihoods, food security, and ability to cope with climate risks. It also has potential to mitigate 2.4 million tonnes of CO2 equivalent. The project follows a bottoms-up logic: empower vulnerable smallholder farmers to make improved decisions in the face of climate change and scale access to climate-smart farming technologies. Policy-makers will be supported with technical assistance, monitoring tools, and organizational support to achieve a more ‘joined up’ institutional and policy environment for climate-smart rice. Governments across the region will benefit through knowledge sharing and peer-to-peer learning.

#### Tasks and responsibilities:

The ESS Manager will lead the development and implementation of an effective *Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) Management and Monitoring System* to manage environmental and social risks and impacts effectively and equitably. S/he will serve as focal point, coordinator, and resource person for all ESS processes within the project and will ensure the delivery of all ESS-related outputs.

The **ESS Manager** will carry out the following tasks:

#### Responsibilities

- Establish and operationalize the project’s *Environmental and Social Safeguards Management and Monitoring System*, to include:
  - a procedure for identifying and updating of risks, impacts, and mitigation measures;
  - active monitoring and assessment of effectiveness of each mitigation measure;
  - ensuring that all requirements of the project, the GIZ and the GCF are met in the *Environmental and Social Safeguards Management and Monitoring System* database and/or in the project monitoring (M&E) system;
  - preparation of update reports; and
  - participation in risk dialogues.
- Provide management and overall guidance of the ESS Management Team, to include:
  - defining capacity needs for ESS Team and project staff;
  - providing (or organizing) on-the-job capacity building to address gaps;
  - planning ESS measures to be implemented by each team member within his/her organization and in the project activities to be implemented by his/her organization;
  - supporting the integration of safeguards tools in project activities;
  - reporting by ESS Team to the ESS Manager on progress of implementation.
- Initiate, lead, implement, and monitor the:
  - Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF)
  - Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), including updating prior stakeholder identification, analysis, and mapping
  - Grievance Redress Mechanisms (GRM)
  - procedures for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH)-related grievances
  - Gender Action Plan (GAP)
- Liaison with the GIZ and the Project Steering Committee for strategic advice on ESS matters.
- Participate in a proactive way in the prevention and resolution of conflict.

#### Qualifications:

- Master’s Degree in a relevant field

- Knowledge and experience in safeguards management
- Experience working with development projects
- Proven work experience with government agencies, local communities and NGOs
- Experience in community outreach and participatory approaches
- Experience coordinating field teams
- Strong background in Information Management
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills
- Fluent command of Thai and English both spoken and written is absolutely required
- Excellent command of MS Office package (Word, Excel and PowerPoint) and Microsoft Teams
- Thai nationality only

**Personal attributes and competencies:**

- Self-motivated, flexible and resourceful
- Good organizational and conceptualization skill
- Hands-on mentality and detail-oriented work ethics
- Ability to work independently and in a team
- Ability to work under time pressure and meet deadlines with strong attention to consistency, detail, and quality
- Interest and desire to work in a cross-cultural context, climate change mitigation and adaptation and sustainable agriculture value chains.
- Ability to work with several partners and actors.

**Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Thai Rice: Strengthening Climate-Smart Rice Farming Project Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) Focal Points within Executing Entities**

The “Thai Rice: Strengthening Climate-Smart Rice Farming” project aims to promote low-emission and climate-resilient rice farming for over 250,000 smallholder farmers. The project, financed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), is implemented by GIZ as the Accredited Entity in collaboration with four Executing Entities (EEs): Rice Department (RD), Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC), Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP), and International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), and additional Implementing Partners such as Department of Agricultural Extension (DoAE).

To ensure environmental and social risks are adequately managed and monitored, the project will establish an Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) Management and Monitoring System. The ESS Team, led by the ESS Manager and comprising ESS Focal Points, will play a critical role in ensuring compliance with GCF and GIZ safeguards standards.

**Objectives of the ESS Focal Points**

- To manage, implement, and monitor all Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) processes under the Thai Rice GCF Project.
- To ensure effective integration of safeguards measures into project activities and communications.
- To support their own institution in applying and adapting safeguards tools and best practices.

**Key Responsibilities**

- Integrate safeguards principles, tools, and processes into activities and communications of the EE under the Thai Rice GCF project.
- Lead effective planning, implementation, and monitoring of Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) and Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) within the EE.

- Facilitate operationalization, local-level implementation and monitoring of the Project Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), including for sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment (SEAH)-related grievances; Identify and assign Grievance Consideration Unit (GCU) members as required by the Project GRM.
- Facilitate local-level implementation and monitoring of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and Ethnic Groups Plan (EGP).
- With the Gender Focal Points, support planning, implementation, and monitoring of GAP actions under the responsibility of the EE.
- Collate and submit safeguard-related progress updates and data to the Thai Rice GCF project's ESS Manager.
- Support development, updating, and localization of safeguard guidelines and training materials.

#### Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in a relevant field.
- Relevant mandate and/or authority within their institutional roles and responsibilities.
- Experience in safeguards or related project implementation.
- Familiarity with ESS frameworks and stakeholder processes.
- Good communication and reporting skills.
- Proficiency in Thai and working knowledge of English.

#### Personal attributes and competencies:

- Self-motivated, flexible and resourceful
- Good organizational and conceptualization skill
- Hands-on mentality and detail-oriented work ethics
- Ability to work independently and in a team
- Ability to work under time pressure and meet deadlines with strong attention to consistency, detail, and quality
- Interest and desire to work in a cross-cultural context, climate change mitigation and adaptation and sustainable agriculture value chains.
- Ability to work with several partners and actors.

#### Terms of Reference (ToR) for the Thai Rice: Strengthening Climate-Smart Rice Farming Project Gender Focal Points (GFP) within Executing Entities

The "Thai Rice: Strengthening Climate-Smart Rice Farming" project aims to promote low-emission and climate-resilient rice farming for over 250,000 smallholder farmers. The project, financed by the Green Climate Fund (GCF), is implemented by GIZ as the Accredited Entity in collaboration with four Executing Entities (EEs): Rice Department (RD), Bank for Agriculture and Agricultural Cooperatives (BAAC), Office of Natural Resources and Environmental Policy and Planning (ONEP), and International Rice Research Institute (IRRI), and additional Implementing Partners such as Department of Agricultural Extension (DoAE).

Gender Equality and Social Inclusion (GESI) is a core priority in the project. A comprehensive Gender Action Plan (GAP) has been developed to ensure gender is effectively mainstreamed across all activities. To support GAP implementation, each EE will appoint a suitable number of Gender Focal Points (GFP) to support necessary works.

#### Objectives of the GFPs

- Successfully implement the GAP within their respective agency.
- Mainstream GESI into the planning, delivery, and evaluation of project activities.

- Coordinate gender-related awareness raising, capacity building, and action across internal departments.
- Coordinate with GFPs in other agencies on cross-cutting works.

#### Key Responsibilities

- Lead the planning, implementation, and monitoring of GAP actions under the responsibility of the EE.
- Integrate GESI considerations into planning, reporting, communication, and outreach activities of the EE under the Thai Rice GCF project.
- Advise colleagues on applying gender-sensitive approaches to strengthen project results; this may include, for example, coordinating capacity-building activities on GESI and gender-sensitive communication for colleagues.
- Document success stories, lessons learned, and key progress on gender actions for internal and external communication.
- Collect and report gender-disaggregated data and information, especially regarding women and vulnerable groups, to support overall monitoring and evaluation of the Thai Rice GCF project.
- Support the implementation of the Project Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), especially regarding addressing Sexual Exploitation, Abuse, and Harassment (SEAH)-related concerns.
- Contribute to the development and review of gender-responsive project materials (e.g., training) to be used by all EEs, such as training and awareness-raising campaigns.
- Participate in regular coordination meetings with GFPs across EEs.

#### Qualifications

- Bachelor's degree in gender studies, social sciences, development, or related fields.
- At least 2 years of experience working on gender or social inclusion issues within development projects or government programs.
- Familiarity with gender mainstreaming in agriculture, climate change, or rural development is an asset.
- Good understanding of monitoring systems, reporting processes, and stakeholder engagement tools.
- Proficiency in Thai and working knowledge of English.

#### Personal attributes and competencies:

- Demonstrated commitment to gender equality and women's empowerment.
- Strong interpersonal, facilitation, and communication skills.
- Ability to work proactively, independently, and in coordination with teams across sectors.
- Cultural sensitivity and ability to work with diverse groups including vulnerable populations.
- Attention to detail, accountability, and good documentation skills.

## References

FP059: Procedures and Guidelines of the GRM

FP189: Procedures and Guidelines of the GRM

FP214: Thai Rice Funding Proposal

FP214: Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Environmental and Social Management Plan Environmental and Social Management Framework

FP214: Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) Thai Rice GCF project

GCF iLearn Online Training Basic Online Training on Grievance Redress Mechanisms