

Brief on Grievance Redress Mechanism for Buikwe District Local Government

1. Background

The planning and design of the Buikwe community service and development projects and programs such as the BDFCDP is a fully participatory exercise involving central government, civil society organisations, district local governments, faith-based organisations, and the people living in beneficiary communities. These stakeholders get affected by the program in several different ways and it is prudent that the district has a mechanism through which they can raise grievances and expected redress. This helps to prevent negative forces that can interrupt the smooth running of the program.

2. Objective

- i) To address complaints and grievances and enhance conflict resolution arising from the program and provide feedback to stakeholders
- ii) Ensure transparency and accountability throughout the implementation of projects and programmes.
- iii) Resolve any emerging environmental and social grievances in project areas.
- iv) To promote relations between the community and the district

3. Scope

The GRM provides a channel for dispute resolution during execution of services and specifically address grievances relating to all government and development partners-funded programs implemented at community level including the BDFCDP and not the activities of the target beneficiaries in the area of implementation.

It is designed to improve outcomes by creating public awareness about the project and its objectives, deterring fraud and corruption, mitigating socio-economic and environmental risks, and providing the practical suggestions and feedback during programme implementation.

The grievances broadly categorised into,

- 1) Inadequate stakeholders' involvement at any stage of project implementation,
- 2) Negative social and environmental impacts arising from the implementation of projects,
- 3) Concerns on prioritisation and allocation of interventions,
- 4) Concerns on social and environmental safeguards,
- 5) Economic impacts and concerns arising from or related to project interventions; and
- 6) Gender and inclusivity related concerns.

4. Grievance Handling Structure

a. First Level of Redress: Community Level

The targets the civil servants, politicians, and the communities. All projects, both planned and implemented, undergo thorough community mobilisation and sensitization. This is made to root the ownership of the program and projects into the community. The village unit (also known as Local Council I – LC-I) is the basic unit of GRM and is headed by the LC I Chairperson. During implementation, all project beneficiaries are informed of the recipients of complaints. These community level leaders dedicate days when they are available to receive and resolve complaints. Once they receive a complaint, they are mandated to register the complaint, investigate, and recommend an action.

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b. Second Level of Redress: Lower and Higher Local Government

If the complainant is not satisfied with the recommendation, they shall be advised to report to the second level of redress i.e., the Parish (LC II) through to Subcounty (LC III) and finally to the District (LC IV).

5. Grievance Handling Focal Persons

1. Local Council V (District) - Chief Administrative Officer
2. Local Council III (Subcounty) – Sub-County Chief
3. Local Council II (Parish) - Parish Chief
4. Local Council I (Village) – Village Chairperson

6. Points of receipt of complaints at community level

Community members are advised to register their complaints at the Complaints focal person at any of the tiers of local government.

7. Mode of receipt and recording of Complaints

The complaints can be made in writing, verbally, over the phone, or emails. The officer receiving the complaints must obtain relevant basic information regarding the grievance. At this level, most complaints are made formal. After registering the complaint, the Grievance Handling Team under the guidance of the focal person sets a date to investigate the matter, after which they provide action recommendation. If necessary, meetings must be held between the complainants and the concerned officer.

8. Timeline

The resolution at the first level is done within 14 or 30 working days depending on the time for investigation time.

9. Grievance Handling Process for Community members

- 1) Complainant submits written complaint.
- 2) Complaint is assessed for compliance with Mandate.
- 3) If within mandate, complaint focal person commences inquiries and complainant is issued with copy of communication.
 - a. If a response is not received from the respondent after 14 working days, complainant focal person sends a first reminder giving the respondent 7 days to comply.
 - b. If no response is received after this, a final reminder of 7 days is sent.
- 4) Conduct investigations.
- 5) Demand and obtain information or documents.
- 6) Conduct an inquiry.
- 7) Undertake mediation, negotiation, and conciliation
- 8) Refer matter to higher authority for redress

10. Grievance Handling Process for Local Government Personnel

- 1) Complainant submits written complaint to Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) of Buikwe District.
- 2) Complaint is assessed for compliance with Mandate.
- 3) If within mandate, CAO commences inquiries and complainant is issued with copy of communication.

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- a. If a response is not received from the respondent after 14 working days, complainant focal person sends a first reminder giving the respondent 7 days to comply.
 - b. If no response is received after this, a final reminder of 7 days is sent.
- 4) Conduct investigations.
 - 5) Demand and obtain information or documents.
 - 6) Conduct an inquiry.
 - 7) Undertake mediation, negotiation, and conciliation
 - 8) Refer matter of the errant Public Servant(s) to District Service Commission (DSC) or Inspectorate of Government through the Inspector General of Government (IGG) for disciplinary hearing, action, and further prosecution as appropriate.

Criminal cases at any level of local government, are received and prosecuted through the mandated state organs of police, the judiciary, and prisons.