THE KINGDOM OF LESOTHO

MINISTRY OF ENERGY AND MINING

ACCELERATING SUSTAINABLE AND CLEAN ENERGY ACCESS TRANSFORMATION (ASCENT) PROJECT (P513939) LESOTHO

RESETTLEMENT POLICY FRAMEWORK

AUGUST 2026

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Abbreviations and Acronyms

Abbreviation	Full Form
BOS	Bureau of Statistics
CERC	Contingency Emergency Response Component
CLO	Community Liaison Officer
COMESA	Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa
CPLO	Community Participation and Liaison Officer
DA	District Administrator
DoE	Department of Energy
DRE	Distributed Renewable Energy
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
ESIA	Environmental and Social Impact Assessment
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESS	Environmental and Social Standard
GoL	Government of Lesotho
GRC	Grievance Redress Committee
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
HIV/AIDS	Human Immunodeficiency Virus / Acquired Immunodeficiency Syndrome
IAP	Interested and Affected Party
LAA	Land Administration Authority
LEC	Lesotho Electricity Company (Pty) Ltd
LEWA	Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority
LRP	Livelihood Restoration Plan
LREEAP	Lesotho Renewable Energy and Energy Access Project
M	Maloti (Lesotho currency)

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Abbreviation	Full Form
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MEM	Ministry of Energy and Mining
MPA	Multi-phase Programmatic Approach
MV	Medium Voltage
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
PAC	Project Affected Communities
PAP	Project Affected Person
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
RAP	Resettlement Action Plan
RIC	Resettlement Implementation Consultant
RPF	Resettlement Policy Framework
RWG	Resettlement Working Group
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SHS	Solar Home System
TU	Technical Unit
VGC	Village-level Grievance committee
USD	United States Dollars
WB	World Bank

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Executive Summary

The Government of Lesotho is implementing the Lesotho Accelerating Sustainable and Clean Energy Access Transformation (ASCENT) Project, which supports the country's commitment under the World Bank's Mission 300 initiative to achieve universal access to electricity by 2030.

This Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) has been prepared in line with international good practice and the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework, specifically Environmental and Social Standard 5 (ESS5) on Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement. It also takes into consideration Lesotho's national environmental legislation.

The ASCENT Lesotho Project is structured around four core components:

- Component 1: Increasing Access to On-Grid Electrification (US$40 million)
- Component 2: Off-Grid Energy Access Pilot (US$5 million)
- Component 3: Technical Assistance and Project Management (US$5 million)
- Component 4: Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC)

The project will be implemented under the Ministry of Energy and Mining (MEM), with a single Project Implementation Unit (PIU) hosted within the Department of Energy (DoE). The Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) will operate through a dedicated Technical Unit (TU) for grid extension activities.

This RPF is designed to:

- Establish the resettlement and compensation goals and principles for the ASCENT project;
- Describe the applicable legal and administrative framework;
- Define the approach to be taken for resettlement and compensation where applicable;
- Identify categories of Project Affected Persons (PAPs) and define eligibility criteria;
- Develop an entitlement framework defining types of compensation and resettlement assistance;
- Describe requirements for consultation with PAPs and other stakeholders, including a grievance mechanism; and
- Set out organizational arrangements and institutional responsibilities.

The overall RAP implementation budget is estimated at M27,391,652.96 (approximately USD 1,677,382.3), covering 18 ARAPs or a Generic RAP for 18 sub-projects.

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1. Introduction

Lesotho is a small, landlocked country in Southern Africa, entirely surrounded by South Africa, with a land area of about 30,355 square kilometres and a population of approximately 2.3 million people. Much of the country lies above 1,400 meters above sea level, and a large share of the population lives in dispersed rural and highland settlements, making infrastructure provision and service delivery costly and technically challenging.

Poverty remains significant in Lesotho. The World Bank reports a poverty headcount ratio of 41.9% at the international poverty line of US$3.00 per day. National poverty indicators also confirm the continued relevance of poverty-sensitive resettlement planning, particularly in rural areas where livelihoods are more dependent on land, livestock, remittances, and small-scale enterprises.

Land tenure in Lesotho is characterized by a dual system of statutory and customary tenure, with extensive use of communal or customary land arrangements in rural areas. Land governance in Lesotho notes that customary tenure remains important for access to land and grazing, while land administration is shaped by local and traditional structures. This is particularly relevant where grazing land or other communal resources may be affected, because loss of access may translate directly into livelihood disruption for livestock-dependent households.

Gender dynamics are also important for resettlement planning. Women in Lesotho often face weaker tenure security and may be disproportionately affected by land acquisition, household displacement, and livelihood disruption, especially where land rights are mediated through customary practice. For this reason, the RPF and subsequent RAPs/ARAPs shall include gender-disaggregated baseline data, ensure equal participation of women in consultations and decision-making, and incorporate targeted measures to support women's access to compensation, livelihood restoration, and project benefits.

Electricity access in Lesotho remains a critical component of the country's socio-economic development and modernization agenda. Over the past two decades, the country has made significant progress in expanding electrification through hydropower development, rural electrification initiatives and renewable energy programs. National electricity access has increased considerably, improving living standards, supporting healthcare and education and creating opportunities for economic growth. Despite these achievements, major challenges persist particularly in rural and mountainous regions where difficult terrain, poverty and high infrastructure costs continue to limit universal access. The continued dependence on imported electricity and the need for more reliable and affordable energy services further highlight the importance of sustained investment and policy reform. Moving forward, Lesotho's success in achieving universal electricity access will depend on strengthening energy infrastructure, expanding renewable energy solutions and improving affordability and enhancing regional

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cooperation. Ensuring equitable and sustainable electricity access is therefore essential not only for economic development but also for improving the overall quality of life of the Basotho people.

In this context, the Government is implementing the Lesotho Accelerating Sustainable and Clean Energy Access Transformation (ASCENT) Project, which supports Lesotho's commitment under the World Bank's Mission 300 initiative to achieve universal access to electricity by 2030.

The Project Development Objective (PDO) of the ASCENT Lesotho Project is to increase access to electricity in Lesotho. The project supports Lesotho's commitment under the World Bank's Mission 300 initiative to achieve universal access to electricity by 2030. The project is structured around four components: (1) Increasing Access to On-Grid Electrification (US$40 million), financing priority grid expansion, densification, and last-mile connections; (2) Off-Grid Energy Access Pilot (US$5 million), financing off-grid solar solutions for remote communities; (3) Technical Assistance and Project Management (US$5 million), supporting institutional strengthening and sector development; and (4) a Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC). The project will be implemented under the Ministry of Energy and Mining (MEM), with a single Project Implementation Unit (PIU) hosted within the Department of Energy (DoE). The Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC) will implement grid extension activities through a dedicated Technical Unit.

The project has prepared a Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) for ASCENT MPA, consistent with requirements of the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework and national legislation.

A RPF has been prepared as, the exact location, final design of proposed structures, land needs, etc., has not yet been confirmed. Consequently, it is not yet possible to prepare detailed Resettlement Action Plans (RAPs), which specify the detailed mitigation measures and develop strategies for livelihood restoration program. The RPF is not a resettlement plan for the project, but a framework to guide the development of subsequent RAPs. The RPF provides guidance on how to assess the displacement related impacts of sub-project activities, and how to manage the displacement and resettlement of the project affected persons.

The RPF is intended to avoid or minimize any adverse impacts associated with physical or economic displacement, and to ensure arrangements are in place to mitigate any adverse impacts that may occur.

The RPF establishes the principles and procedures to be used in subsequent preparation of a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) or Resettlement Action Plans (RAPs), or Livelihood Restoration Plan(s) (LRPs), as applicable. Project activities that will cause physical and/or economic displacement need to be based on management plans approved by the World Bank. Possession of

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acquired land and/or assets in the affected areas, and impacts on livelihoods will only take place after compensation has been paid or made otherwise available, or when applicable PAPs have been resettled in line with the RAP and the applicable provisions of Environmental and Social Standard (ESS)5.

This RPF is intended to utilize the existing legal and policy framework of the Kingdom of Lesotho, incorporating any supplementary measures necessary to achieve consistency with ESS5 principles and standards. Where there is a difference in the standards whichever is higher (most beneficial to affected people) will be applied.

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2. Project objectives and Description

ASCENT Lesotho will improve access to electricity for households, social infrastructure (including schools, health facilities, and community facilities), and productive users such as small businesses and aggro-based enterprises. The project is expected to enhance service delivery, stimulate local economic development, improve livelihoods, and create an enabling environment for private sector participation in electricity service provision.

Primary beneficiaries include:

- Rural and peri-urban households currently without electricity access;
- Public institutions such as schools, health facilities, and agricultural resource centres;
- Small and medium enterprises and productive users of energy;
- Women and youth, through targeted employment, entrepreneurship, and productive use of energy initiatives.

2.1 Components Requiring Land Acquisition or Displacement

The project entails infrastructure development activities that will necessitate the acquisition of land and may result in both physical and economic displacement of individuals, households, and communities situated within or adjacent to the project footprint. The primary project components likely to trigger land acquisition and resettlement include the following:

On-Grid Infrastructure Components

- Transmission line corridors and rights-of-way (wayleaves) for the installation od poles, requiring permanent land sterilisation along defined linear alignments;
- Access roads, both temporary (for construction) and permanent (for operation and maintenance), traversing farmland, communal grazing areas, and settled areas;
- Contractor camps, lay-down and storage areas, borrow pits, and other ancillary construction facilities that require temporary land occupation;
- Safety buffer zones along energised lines and around substations, within which certain land uses will be restricted or prohibited.

Off-Grid Infrastructure Components

Solar home systems are generally installed on existing household structures or within household plots and therefore are not expected to require land acquisition, cause physical displacement or result in loss of assets of livelihood.

2.1.1 Likely Scale of Land Required

The scale of land requirements will vary significantly across project components and sub-project locations. The cumulative land requirement will be determined during the detailed engineering design phase and field-based socioeconomic surveys. Early estimates suggest that the project corridor and associated infrastructure could affect land holdings of varying sizes across multiple

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communities. Where multiple land parcels are partially affected, the residual land will be assessed to determine whether it remains viable for its intended use. In cases where residual plots are rendered non-viable, full acquisition will be treated as the appropriate entitlement basis.

2.2 Resettlement Impacts

Resettlement impacts will arise from both temporary and permanent land acquisition, as well as restrictions on land use, associated with the construction and operation of on-grid and off-grid project components. These impacts encompass physical displacement, where affected persons are required to relocate their place of residence, and economic displacement, where livelihoods, assets, or access to productive resources are curtailed or lost without necessarily requiring a change of residence. The following categories of resettlement impact have been identified as likely to occur across the project area.

2.2.1 Loss of Residential Structures and Physical Displacement

Full or partial loss of residential structures, including primary dwellings and ancillary structures such as kitchens, storage rooms, bathing enclosures, and pit latrines, may result where infrastructure alignment or footprints intersect with settled areas. Affected households may be required to relocate entirely (full physical displacement) or to rebuild portions of their homestead (partial physical displacement). Both scenarios trigger the obligation to restore living standards and housing quality to at least pre-project levels, in accordance with applicable national legislation and international performance standards on involuntary resettlement.

2.2.2 Loss of Non-Residential Structures

Structures used for economic activities, including business premises, market stalls, workshops, and storage facilities, as well as structures associated with livestock keeping such as kraals, chicken runs, and feed stores, may be partially or fully lost. Such losses constitute economic displacement and require compensation at full replacement cost as well as support to re-establish livelihoods. Where structures belong to groups or associations rather than individuals, collective compensation and consultation mechanisms will need to be applied.

2.2.3 Loss of Land for Residential and Economic Purposes

Land plots used for housing, subsistence and commercial agriculture, communal grazing, business operations, or investment purposes may be fully or partially lost. Partial losses will be evaluated on the basis of the viability of the residual land: where the remaining portion is insufficient in size or configuration to support its intended use, for example, where a cultivated plot is reduced below the minimum area viable for cultivation, the entire plot will be treated as fully lost for compensation purposes. Land held under customary tenure, which is prevalent in rural areas of Lesotho, will be afforded the same recognition and compensation treatment as formally titled land.

2.2.4 Loss of Crops and Agricultural Productivity

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Standing crops, both subsistence and commercial, on affected land parcels will be subject to loss at the time of site clearance. Compensation will be calculated on the basis of market value for the anticipated yield of the crop season affected, with particular attention to multi-season impacts where land is permanently acquired. Households dependent on affected land for food security will require additional support to restore agricultural productivity through the provision of replacement land or livelihood restoration measures.

2.2.5 Loss of Trees and Perennial Vegetation

Productive trees, including fruit trees, nut-bearing trees, and trees cultivated for timber or charcoal production, as well as shade trees with economic or cultural significance may be lost within the construction corridor and cleared areas. Given the long maturation periods associated with many productive trees, compensation will reflect not only the replacement cost of the tree itself but also the income foregone during the period required to establish a replacement tree to productive maturity.

2.2.6 Loss of Community and Public Assets

Community assets such as schools, health care facilities, boreholes, communal water points, places of worship, and cultural or heritage sites may be impacted where project footprints intersect with community land. Impacts on such assets affect entire communities rather than individual households and require community-level consultation to determine appropriate replacement, restoration, or compensation measures. Religious or privately owned community structures will be treated with particular sensitivity in line with local norms and applicable performance standards.

2.2.7 Loss of Business Income and Employment

Displacement of business premises or interruption of business operations will result in economic losses for business owners and, where applicable, for employees who derive their income from affected enterprises. Temporary income losses during the construction period and permanent losses arising from relocation or closure will both require assessment and compensation. Where agricultural employers or business operators are affected, losses of employment income for labourers and employees will similarly be documented and addressed through the livelihood restoration programme.

2.2.8 Loss of Access to Natural Resources

Project construction activities and the establishment of permanent infrastructure may restrict or entirely sever community and household access to natural resources, including water sources, fuelwood, medicinal plants, wild foods, and communal grazing areas. Such access restrictions may be temporary, limited to the construction period, or permanent where infrastructure corridors or safety buffers create ongoing exclusion zones. Both temporary and permanent restrictions on natural resource access are recognised as forms of economic displacement and will be addressed through appropriate mitigation and compensation measures within the project's Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) or Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plan (ARAP), as applicable.

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3. Key Principles and Definitions

In World Bank-assisted projects, borrowers are expected to take all feasible measures to avoid or minimize adverse impacts from land acquisition and restrictions on land use associated with project development. The fundamental objective of ESS5 is to ensure that, if physical or economic displacement cannot be avoided, displaced persons (as defined below) are compensated at the replacement cost for land and other assets, and otherwise assisted as necessary to improve or at least restore their incomes and living standards.

Other ESS5 objectives include:

- To avoid forced eviction;
- To improve living conditions of poor or vulnerable persons who are physically displaced, through provision of adequate housing, access to services and facilities, and security of tenure;
- To conceive and execute resettlement activities as sustainable development programs, providing sufficient investment resources to enable displaced persons to benefit directly from the project, as the nature of the project warrants; and
- To ensure that resettlement activities are planned and implemented with appropriate disclosure of information, meaningful consultation, and the informed participation of those affected.

Replacement cost is defined as a method of valuation yielding compensation sufficient to replace assets, plus necessary transaction costs associated with asset replacement. Where functioning markets exist, replacement cost is the market value as established through independent and competent real estate valuation, plus transaction costs. Where functioning markets do not exist, replacement cost may be determined through alternative means, such as calculation of output value for land or productive assets, or the undepreciated value of replacement materials and labor for construction of structures or other fixed assets, plus all transaction costs associated with asset replacement. In all instances where physical displacement results in loss of substandard shelter, replacement cost must at least be sufficient to enable purchase or construction of housing that meets minimum community standards of quality and safety.

ESS5 also establishes key principles to be followed in resettlement planning and implementation. These include:

a) All displaced persons are entitled to compensation for land and attached assets, or to alternative but equivalent forms of assistance in lieu of compensation; lack of legal rights to the assets lost will not bar displaced persons from entitlement to such compensation or alternative forms of assistance.

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b) Compensation rates refer to amounts to be paid in full to the eligible owner(s) or user(s) of the lost asset, without depreciation or deduction for fees, taxes, or any other purpose.
c) Compensation for land, structures, unharvested crops, and all other fixed assets should be paid prior to the time of impact or dispossession.
d) When land-based livelihoods are to be impacted for project purposes, the PIU seeks to provide replacement land of equivalent productive value with a combination of productive potential, location advantages, and other factors at least equivalent to that being lost, if that is the preference of the displaced persons.
e) Community services and facilities will be repaired or restored if affected by the project.
f) Displaced persons should be consulted during preparation of the RAP, so that their preferences are solicited and considered.
g) The RAP (in draft and final versions) is publicly disclosed in a manner accessible to displaced persons.
h) A grievance mechanism by which displaced persons can pursue grievances will be established and operated in a responsive manner.
i) Negotiated settlement processes are acceptable as an alternative for legal expropriation in line with ESS5 if appropriately implemented and documented.
j) Land donation is acceptable only if conducted in a wholly voluntary manner and appropriately documented .
k) The PIU bears official responsibility for meeting all costs associated with obtaining project sites, including compensation and other considerations due to displaced persons. The RAP includes an estimated budget for all costs, including contingencies for price inflation and unforeseen costs, as well as organizational arrangements for meeting financial contingencies.
l) Monitoring arrangements will be specified in the RAP, to assess the status and effectiveness of RAP implementation.

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4. Legal and Regulatory Framework

The Kingdom of Lesotho agrees to take all actions necessary to ensure full and effective implementation of RAPs/ARAPs prepared in accordance with this RPF, and to otherwise take actions necessary to achieve all relevant provisions of ESS5.

4.1 National Legislation

In Lesotho, land and resettlement are governed by statutory law alongside customary tenure administered through traditional authorities.

Table 1: National Legislation

Legislation / Policy	Relevance to the ASCENT Project
Constitution of Lesotho (1993)	Section 17 protects property rights and mandates prompt payment of full compensation when land is compulsorily acquired for public purposes.
Environment Act No. 10 of 2008	Requires preparation of Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs) and environmental management plans. Section 95 mandates public information dissemination.
Land Act No. 8 of 2010	Principal legislation governing land administration and compensation. Sections 53–60 establish procedures for compulsory acquisition, payment of market value, and establishment of servitudes. Section 10(1) confers joint title to both spouses.
Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act (2006)	Confers equal powers on both spouses in land transactions, requiring mutual consent for any agreements concerning the joint estate.
Gender and Development Policy (2003)	Requires equal opportunities for males and females in development processes, including land access, compensation, and participation.
Energy Policy (2015–2025)	Supports universal, affordable, sustainable energy access with minimal environmental impact and poverty alleviation goals aligned with the ASCENT project.
Local Government Act (1997)	Provides for community consultations and awareness processes required by local government authorities.

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Legislation / Policy	Relevance to the ASCENT Project
Historical, Monuments, Relics, Fauna and Flora Act (1967)	Prohibits destruction of historical monuments; requires protection of cultural heritage including graveyards.

4.2 ESS5 – Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use, and Involuntary Resettlement

ESS5 recognizes that program-related land acquisition and restrictions on land use can have adverse impacts on communities and persons. Program-related land acquisition or restrictions on land use may cause physical displacement (relocation, loss of residential land or loss of shelter), economic displacement (loss of land, assets or access to assets, leading to loss of income sources or other means of livelihood), or both. The term "involuntary resettlement" refers to these impacts. Resettlement is considered involuntary when affected persons or communities do not have the right to refuse land acquisition or restrictions on land use that result in displacement.

Where there are customary land rights, ESS5 also applies, where 'restrictions on land use and access to natural resources that cause a community or groups within a community to lose access to resource usage where they have traditional or customary tenure, or recognizable usage rights.'[1] It further applies in cases of 'restriction on access to land or use of other resources including communal property and natural resources such as marine and aquatic resources, timber and non-timber forest products, fresh water, medicinal plants, hunting and gathering grounds and grazing and cropping areas'[2].

In addition, communal decision on customary land should be taken with evidence that the 'community decision making process is adequate and reflects voluntary, informed consensus, and that appropriate measures have been agreed and put in place to mitigate adverse impacts, if any, on the vulnerable members of the community.' [3]

The following tables summarizes the key requirements of national legislation and ESS5 in relation to key areas and how these issues will be addressed in this Project.

[1] The World Bank, Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), ESS 5, 2018, p. 54
[2] The World Bank, Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), ESS 5, 2018, p. 54
[3] The World Bank, Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), ESS 5, 2018, p. 54

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4.3 Gap Analysis: National Framework vs. ESS5

In principle, Lesotho laws and regulations relevant to land acquisition and resettlement adhere to the objective of compensation for affected families or persons. Where a discrepancy exists between national laws and ESS5, the policy or legal provision offering the higher or better compensation shall prevail.

Table 2: Gap Analysis

Topic	National Framework	WB ESS5	How the Gap is or will be bridged
Resettlement Planning	The Environment Act No. 10 of 2008 (Sections 19–27) requires ESIAs and environmental management plans. The Land Act No. 8 of 2010 (Sections 53–60) governs land acquisition and compensation procedures.	The development of resettlement and land acquisition plan or framework is obligatory in case of involuntary resettlement.	**This document** (the RPF) is planning the resettlement process. Resettlement Action Plans will then be prepared which will aim to minimize involuntary resettlement.
Avoidance and Minimisation of Displacement	No explicit national requirement to minimize displacement, though Land Act 2010 requires expropriation to be justified in the public interest.	The first objective of the WB ESS5 is to avoid involuntary resettlement or, when unavoidable, minimize involuntary resettlement.	During the Basic design and the Detailed design, further effort will be implemented to continue to avoid and minimise involuntary resettlement impacts.
Eligibility	Land Act 2010 and Constitution (1993, Section 17) protect registered and customary landholders. Informal occupants	Three categories of affected persons shall be considered: 1)Those who have formal legal rights to the land and assets; 2)Those who do not have formal legal rights to land or assets, but have a	The World Bank standards require inclusion of those without formal legal rights and those with no rights. The

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Topic	National Framework	WB ESS5	How the Gap is or will be bridged
	without legal title are not explicitly protected under national law.	claim to land or assets that is recognized or recognizable under national law (including claims derived from adverse possession or from customary or traditional tenure arrangements); or 3) Those who have no recognizable legal right or claim to the land or assets they occupy or use. Lack of formal ownership does not preclude compensation to bona fide occupants or affected parties. Displaced persons without titles to land or any recognizable legal rights to land are eligible for resettlement assistance sufficient for them to restore their standards of living at an adequate alternative site, and compensation for loss of non-land assets. Those without legal rights to the land should have their livelihoods and standards of living restored as along with the other categories of PAP.	project will apply the World Bank ESF eligibility criteria.
Census and Socioeconomic Surveys	No specific census requirement in national law. Land Act 2010 requires asset valuation; Environment Act 2008 Guidelines	The Resettlement Action Plan shall present the results of a household-level census identifying and enumerating affected persons, and, with the	A census and socioeconomic surveys will be performed for all RAP(s).

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Topic	National Framework	WB ESS5	How the Gap is or will be bridged
	require baseline socio-economic data as part of ESIA.	involvement of affected persons, surveying land, structures and other fixed assets to be affected by the Project, economic resettlement, and restrictions on land use or access to land.	
Cut-Off Date	No specific cut-off date provision under Lesotho national law. Land Act 2010 addresses timing of compensation payment relative to acquisition.	The establishment of a cut-off date is required. Information regarding the cut-off date should be well documented and will be disseminated throughout the project area at regular intervals in written and (as appropriate) nonwritten forms and in relevant local languages. This will include posted warnings that persons settling in the project area after the cutoff date may be subject to removal.	The cut-off date to be used in the RAP(s) will be at the end of the census and inventory of affected assets. The cut-off date will be disseminated within the affected communities. Inquiries about inclusion after the cutoff date can be managed via the GRM.
Valuation and Full Replacement Cost	Land Act 2010 (Section 56) requires compensation at market value, assessed by a panel of valuers including the Government Valuer (Section 58), considering present and future replacement value.	PAPs should be compensated at full replacement cost in real terms. The replacement cost is a method of valuation yielding compensation sufficient to replace assets, plus necessary transaction costs associated with asset replacement.	The Valuation Methodology to be applied for the RAPs considers the full replacement cost.

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Topic	National Framework	WB ESS5	How the Gap is or will be bridged
		The valuation method used for determining replacement cost should be transparent and documented.	
Payment of Compensation	Land Act 2010 (Section 60) requires that compensation be paid prior to conclusion of expropriation.	The Project will take possession of acquired land and related assets, cause economic displacement, or restrict land use or access to land in the affected areas only after compensation in accordance with ESS5 has been made available and, where applicable, displaced people have been resettled and moving allowances have been provided to the displaced persons in addition to compensation.	Payment of compensations will be made in compliance with the World Bank requirements i.e. prior to taking possession of the land or removing assets from the land (in the affected areas).
Resettlement Assistance	Not specifically addressed in national legislation beyond physical asset compensation.	The project should offer to displaced persons choices among feasible resettlement options and provide relocation assistance suited to the needs of each group of displaced persons.	The Resettlement Assistance to be provided by the Project is described as part of the entitlement matrix. Special measures are included for vulnerable groups
Livelihood Restoration	Not specifically addressed. NSDP 2012/13–2016/17 and Energy Policy 2015–2025 provide general guidance on poverty alleviation and livelihood improvement.	The project should assist displaced persons in their efforts to improve, or at least restore, their livelihoods and living standards, in real terms, to pre-displacement levels or to levels prevailing prior to the beginning of	A Livelihood Restoration Programme will be implemented as described in the RAP(s).

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Topic	National Framework	WB ESS5	How the Gap is or will be bridged
		project implementation, whichever is higher.	
Vulnerable Groups	Gender and Development Policy (2003), Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act (2006), Land Act 2010 (Section 10), and Decentralization Policy (2014) address women's rights and equal participation. No specific vulnerable group provisions in resettlement law.	Vulnerable people must be identified and those who warrant specific assistance must be supported throughout the resettlement and compensation process.	Vulnerable Groups will be identified as part of RAP(s) preparation and measures for Vulnerable groups are defined in the Entitlement Matrix.
Gender	Constitution (1993), Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act (2006), and Land Act 2010 (Section 10) confer joint title and equal rights on both spouses. Gender and Development Policy (2003) promotes equality.	The consultation process should ensure that women's perspectives are obtained, and their interests factored into all aspects of resettlement planning and implementation. Documentation of ownership or occupancy and compensation payments should be issued in the names of both spouses or single heads of households as relevant, and other resettlement assistance, such as skills training, access to credit, and job opportunities, should be equally available to women and adapted to their needs.	Women and vulnerable groups will be consulted throughout project implementation and measures will be put in place to ensure women have access to compensation.

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Topic	National Framework	WB ESS5	How the Gap is or will be bridged
Consultation with Affected Persons	Environment Act (2008) and National Environmental Policy (1998) require public participation. EIA Guidelines (2009) prescribe consultation procedures. Local Government Act (1997) requires community consultation.	Resettlement activities need to be planned and implemented with appropriate disclosure of information, meaningful consultation, and the informed participation of those affected.	Consultation of and engagement with the Project affected persons will be undertaken throughout RAP preparation and implementation.
Grievances Management	Constitution Section 17(2) entitles affected parties to seek court redress. No specific project-level GRM requirement under national law; environmental guidelines reference the need for complaint management.	The Project owner should establish a grievance mechanism as early as possible in the process to receive/ address in a timely manner the concerns related to physical/ economic displacement. There must be an independent objective appeal mechanism that is open to the public and reported openly.	A Grievance Redress Mechanism will be developed and operationalized throughout preparation and implementation.
Monitoring and Evaluation	Environment Act (2008) requires environmental audits. No specific resettlement M&E requirements under national law.	Monitoring, evaluation and reporting of resettlement plan implementation measures are required. Monitoring and evaluation shall be clearly defined in the resettlement planning instrument.	Monitoring and Evaluation activities will be implemented in line with the RPF requirements and detailed in the RAPs.

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5. Eligibility Criteria and Entitlement Matrix

5.1 Eligibility Criteria

Project Affected Persons (PAP), who are affected by physical or economic displacement either temporarily or permanently, are entitled to compensation, in accordance with the provisions of national law and ESS5.

Displaced persons (ESS5, Para. 10) are defined as any persons subjected to project-related adverse impacts who:

(a) have formal legal rights to land or assets;
(b) have a claim to land or assets that is recognized or recognizable under national law; or
(c) who have no recognizable legal right or claim to the land or assets they occupy or use.

The term incorporates all potential categories of persons affected by land acquisition and associated impacts; all of those adversely affected are considered “displaced” under this definition regardless of whether any relocation is necessary.

Under the Legal Capacity of Married Persons Act (2006) and Land Act 2010 (Section 10), compensation agreements must be signed by both spouses where land is held in joint name. Joint title holders must both provide consent for any land transaction. This applies regardless of civil, customary, or any other form of marriage.

5.2 Entitlements Matrix

Compensation is established according to ESS5 and applicable national laws. In the event of discrepancies, the most beneficial requirement to the PAP will prevail. The following entitlement matrix indicates the different categories of affected people and the compensation to which they are entitled depending on the types of losses.

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Table 3: Entitlement Matrix (ASCENT Lesotho)

Land and Assets	Types of Impact	Person(s) Affected	Compensation/Entitlement/Benefits
Loss of Agricultural land including grazing land	Less than 20% of land holding affected - Land remains economically viable.[4]	Title holder/ owner	Land for land replacement where feasible, or cash compensation for affected land equivalent to replacement value
		Tenant/ lease holder	Cash compensation for the harvest or product from the affected land or asset, equivalent to average market value of last 3 years, or market value of the crop for the remaining period of tenancy/ lease agreement, whichever is greater. Advance notice to leave land – not less than 3 months or as per legal agreement
	Greater than 20% of land holding lost - Land does not remain economically viable	Title holder / owner	Land for land replacement where feasible, or compensation in cash for the entire landholding equal to replacement cost according to PAP's choice
			Land for land replacement will be in terms of a new parcel of land of equivalent size and productivity with a secure tenure status at an available location which is acceptable to PAPs. Transfer of the land to PAPs shall be free of taxes, registration, and other costs.
			Relocation assistance (costs of shifting + assistance in re-establishing economic trees + livelihood rehabilitation assistance+ assistance to identify replacement land+ transactional costs).
		Tenant/Lease holder	Cash compensation equivalent to average of last 3 years' market value for the mature and harvested crop, or market value of the crop for the remaining period of tenancy/ lease agreement, whichever is greater. Advance notice to leave land – not less than 3 months or as per legal agreement
			Relocation assistance (costs of shifting + assistance in re-establishing economic trees + livelihood rehabilitation assistance

[4] The evaluation of resettlement impacts will need to ensure that land remains economically viable. If this were not the case, apply compensation for land that is no longer economically viable.

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Land and Assets	Types of Impact	Person(s) Affected	Compensation/Entitlement/Benefits
Land users	Impact on livelihood	Landless, encroachers	Compensation at replacement cost for the loss of assets other than land, such as dwellings and other improvements to the land. Relocation assistance, in lieu of compensation for land, sufficient for them to restore their standards of living, to restore livelihood and ensure they will not be worse off as a result of the investments' activities.
Residential Land	Land used for residence partially affected, limited loss - Remaining land viable for present use.	Title holder	Cash compensation for affected land in line with market value for the specific residential area
		Rental/lease holder	Cash compensation equivalent to 10% of lease/ rental fee for the remaining period of rental/ lease agreement (written or verbal)
	Land and assets used for residence severely affected - Remaining area insufficient for continuing use or become smaller than minimally accepted under zoning laws	Title holder	Land for land replacement or compensation in cash according to PAP's choice, based on the replacement cost.
			Land for land replacement shall be of minimum plot of acceptable size under the zoning laws or a plot of equivalent size, whichever is larger, in either the community or a nearby resettlement area with adequate physical and social infrastructure systems as well as secured tenure status.
			When the affected holding is larger/more valuable than the relocation plot, cash compensation to cover the difference in value.
			Transfer of the land to the PAP shall be free of taxes, registration, and other costs.
			Relocation assistance (costs of shifting + allowance)
	Land and assets used for residence severely affected - Remaining area	Rental/lease holder	Refund of any lease/ rental fees paid for time/ use after date of removal
			Cash compensation equivalent to 3 months of lease/ rental fee
			Assistance in rental/ lease of alternative land/ property
			Relocation assistance (costs of shifting + allowance)

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Land and Assets	Types of Impact	Person(s) Affected	Compensation/Entitlement/Benefits
	insufficient for continued use or becomes smaller than minimally accepted under zoning laws		
Decrease of land value due to permanent restriction of use on the land (easement in wayleave)	Restriction on land use	Title holder / owner	Easement Agreement: Compensation proportional to the adverse impacts caused by the restrictions on the affected lands. For LEC distribution line wayleaves and servitude corridors: where the line passes overhead and some agricultural use remains possible (e.g., low crops), compensation shall be proportional to the area affected and restriction imposed. Where a tower or pole base fully excludes use, full replacement cost for that land parcel applies. LEC servitude clearance procedures shall be followed in all cases.
			Disturbance allowance
			Livelihood Restoration support including transitional support
Buildings, structures and fixtures	Structures are partially affected - Remaining structures viable for continued use	Owner	Cash compensation for affected building and other fixed assets Or/ Reconstruction of the structure by the Project Or/Support for reconstruction of structure. Right to salvage materials without deduction from compensation.
			Cash compensation to cover costs of restoration of the remaining structure
		Rental/lease holder	Cash compensation for affected assets (verifiable improvements to the property by the tenant).

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Land and Assets	Types of Impact	Person(s) Affected	Compensation/Entitlement/Benefits
			Disturbance compensation equivalent to three months rental costs
	Entire structures are affected or partially affected - Remaining structures not suitable for continued use	Owner	Cash compensation for entire structure and other fixed assets without depreciation equal to replacement cost, or alternative structure of equal or better size and quality in an available location which is acceptable to the PAP.
			Right to salvage materials without deduction from compensation
			Relocation assistance (assistance to find replacement housing + costs of shifting + allowance)
		Squatter/ informal dweller	Cash compensation for affected structure without depreciation
			Right to salvage materials without deduction from compensation
Partial or complete loss of other property or secondary structure (i.e., fences, drainage channels, etc.)		Owners of structures (regardless of if the land is owned or not)	Replace or repair structure to original or better condition. Right to salvage materials without deduction from compensation
		Owners of structures (regardless of if the land is owned or not)	Cash compensation for affected structure without depreciation Right to salvage materials without deduction from compensation
			Relocation assistance (costs of shifting + assistance to find alternative secure accommodation preferably in the community of residence through involvement of the project)
			Alternatively, assistance to find accommodation in rental housing or in a squatter settlement scheme, if available)
			Rehabilitation assistance if required assistance with job placement, skills training)
		Street vendor (informal without title or	Opportunity cost compensation equivalent to 2 months net income based on tax records for the previous year (or tax records from comparable business, or estimates), or the relocation allowance, whichever is higher.

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Land and Assets	Types of Impact	Person(s) Affected	Compensation/Entitlement/Benefits
		lease to the stall or shop)	Relocation assistance (costs of shifting)
			Assistance to obtain alternative site to re-establish the business.
Standing crops	Crops affected by land acquisition or temporary acquisition or easement	PAP (whether owner, tenant, or squatter)	In cash or in kind compensation equivalent to the average of the last 3 years market value for the mature and harvested crop, plus the labor cost. Livelihood restoration support
Trees	Trees lost	Title holder	Cash compensation based on type, age and productive value of affected trees plus 10% premium Right to salvage trees without deduction from compensation Livelihood restoration support
Loss of access to water sources	Loss of access to water for household use, for household plots, etc.	Affected households	Replace water access: Provide alternate access to water sources in the interim period. Ensure that the investments' design takes into consideration different uses and needs for water and accommodate the users accordingly and provide permanent replacement.
Loss of community properties such as burial grounds, sacred trees, irrigation facilities, water wells etc.	Loss of access	Communities affected	Consultation: Undertake consultation with community/ users to determine appropriate arrangements (e.g. relocation of graves, traditional ceremonies etc.). Compensation in kind: provision of replacement assets at agreed locations to re-provide asset/ service. Compensation in cash should be avoided for community assets.
	Temporarily or permanently, loss of investment made or damage to facility	Communities affected	

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Land and Assets	Types of Impact	Person(s) Affected	Compensation/Entitlement/Benefits
Loss of livelihoods (e.g. extraction of river sand, kiosks, shops, etc.)	Loss of means of livelihoods	Small dependent jobs on affected assets	Livelihood restoration measures- land or non-land based: Undertaken to help the affected persons restore their livelihood.
			Opportunity cost compensation equivalent to 3 months net income on tax records for previous year (or tax records from comparable business, or estimates), or the relocation allowance, whichever is higher
			3 months salary based on pay slips or minimum wage for employees who lose income
Temporary Acquisition	Temporary acquisition	PAP (whether owner, tenant, or squatter)	Cash compensation or reinstatement for any assets affected (e. g. boundary wall demolished, trees removed)
Additional support to vulnerable people		PAP	Additional financial assistance of 20% on the base compensation amount payable.
			Provision of livelihood support if eligible as per criteria.
			Provision of financial literacy training as given to all PAPs taking into account specific needs (language, support to understand etc.)
			This amount will be in addition to other compensation and assistance amounts given above per type of loss

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5.3 Vulnerable Groups — Special Measures

RAPs/ARAPs will contain specific measures to assist vulnerable people (elderly people, disabled people, illiterate people, people without identification documents, households headed by women, etc.) guided by the following principles:

a) Among those affected, vulnerable people will be clearly identified;
b) Elderly and disabled people must be given the opportunity to be represented free of charge by a third person for the recovery of compensation and for the monitoring of administrative and other procedures;
c) Concerning people without identity documents, the local authorities will be called upon to recognize them or support them at no cost to the individual to get identity documents. In addition, these people must have the possibility of choosing a person with legal identity documents to receive, on their behalf, the compensation;
d) Persons who cannot read or write will be given the opportunity to sign the documents in a manner that takes into account their condition and level of literacy to ensure their full understanding and acceptance;
e) Where possible, consultations will be undertaken with vulnerable individuals/families, particularly female-headed households to find appropriate solutions for specific cases;
f) In certain cases, social services or NGOs will be called upon to support vulnerable cases, while also facilitating their access to social services they may be eligible for;
g) A participatory mechanism bringing together the implementing agency, local and religious authorities, and NGOs will make it possible to manage other cases of vulnerability.

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6. Preparing a Resettlement Action Plan

6.1 RAP Requirements

All projects causing physical or economic displacement through land acquisition or project-related restrictions on resource access or use are required to prepare a resettlement action plan (RAP) for World Bank approval. Responsibility for preparation and implementation of the RAP (or RAPs) rests with the Project Implementation Unit (PIU), hosted within the Ministry of Energy and Mining (MEM). As necessary, the PIU will exercise its authority to coordinate actions with any other involved agencies, jurisdictions, or project contractors to promote timely and effective planning and implementation.

RAP/ARAP preparation begins once the physical footprint of a proposed investment has been determined, establishing that a particular site (or sites) must be acquired for project use. The PIU initially screens proposed sites to identify current usage and tenurial arrangements (see Annex A). and as needed identify the site (or sites) that will minimize physical and economic displacement. Sub-project screening is used to identify the types and nature of potential impacts related to the activities proposed under the project and to provide adequate measures to address the impacts. Screening for resettlement issues shall be part of the environmental and social screening under the ESMF. The required information shall include a description of the nature, scope and location of the proposed project impacts, accompanied by location maps and any other details as may be required. The PIU subsequently carries out, a census and an asset survey to identify and enumerate all displaced persons on the selected site (or sites) and to inventory and valuate land and other assets that are to be acquired for project use.

Each RAP is based on the principles, planning procedures, and implementation arrangements established in this RPF, and normally includes the following contents[5]:

a) Description of the project (with appropriate maps and illustrations), including explanation for the necessity of acquiring particular sites for project use and efforts undertaken to avoid or minimize the amount of land acquisition or other potential impacts deemed necessary.
b) Description of investment/project components or activities which would trigger resettlement; the cultural, social, economic and environmental impacts envisioned; and the alternatives considered to avoid or minimize resettlement.
c) Review of relevant laws and regulations pertaining to acquisition, compensation, and other assistance to displaced persons, and identification of gap-filling measures needed to achieve ESS5 requirements (as per this RPF).
d) Results of a census (socio-economic) survey of displaced persons and inventory and valuation of affected land and assets.

[5] Refer to ESS 5 Guidance Note for Borrowers: https://thedocs.worldbank.org/en/doc/f25263d7a7f5415b79b69c5cc65a96cf-0290012025/original/ESS5-Land-Acquisition-Restrictions-on-Land-Use-and-Involuntary-Resettlement-English.pdf

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e) Description of tenure arrangements, including collective, communal, or customary use or ownership claims.
f) Eligibility criteria for compensation and all other forms of assistance, including a cutoff date for eligibility.
g) Description of land and asset valuation procedures and compensation standards for all categories of affected assets.
h) Identification of alternative sites, selection of resettlement site(s), site preparation and relocation (where applicable).
i) Measures for integration with host communities (where applicable).
j) Description of programs for improvement and restoration of livelihoods and standards of living of the affected people. The programs aimed at improving and restoring the livelihoods and standards of living of the affected people should in line with the Resettlement Policy Framework.
k) Description of stakeholder engagement including consultation and participation with PAPs and vulnerable groups.
l) Description of procedures for grievances redress by affected people throughout the planning and implementation period.
m) Organizational arrangements and responsibilities for RAP implementation.
n) Implementation timetable
o) Estimated budget and financial contingency arrangements
p) Monitoring requirements and arrangements for monitoring implementation progress.

The RAPs/ARAPs should be complemented by a separate set of individual compensation files for each displaced household or person. These files are to be handled confidentially by the borrower to avoid any prejudice to displaced persons. In fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) environments, RAPs/ARAPs should also clarify procedures to be applied to ensure the security of displaced persons when they receive compensation payments.

The project recognizes that the preparation, consultation, disclosure, approval and implementation of a RAP/ARAP are prerequisites for the commencement of physical works on any sub-project that triggers land acquisition of involuntary resettlement under applicable environmental and social requirements. If not managed proactively, these requirements may delay sub-project implementation.

To minimise the risk, the project will adopt a sequencing strategy that integrates resettlement planning into the early stages of sub-project preparation. Environmental and Social screening, including screening for potential land acquisition and resettlement impacts, will be undertaken as soon as subporjects are identified. Sub-projects that are likely to trigger the ESS 5 will be prioritized for early socio-economic surveys, assets inventories and RAP/ARAP preparation. RAP/ARAP development will proceed in parallel with detailed engineering design, allowing the

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design to be refined to avoid or minimise resettlement impacts where feasible while ensuring that resettlement planning is completed in sufficient time.

The Project implementation schedule will incorporate key resettlement milestones, including RAP/ARAP preparation, stakeholder consultation, disclosure, approval, budget allocation, compensation payments and livelihood restoration activities before any site handover to contractors. This integrated sequencing approach is intended to reduce implementation delays while ensuring full compliance with project commitments and safeguarding the rights and livelihoods of affected persons.

6.2 Valuation Methodology

Compensation and resettlement assistance paid to PAPs will be calculated based on full replacement cost principles. The valuation shall be: (i) certified by an independent registered valuer; (ii) based on updated property value rates reflecting current full replacement cost; and (iii) compatible with international good practices.

- Agricultural land: market value (or reproduction cost where no active market exists) plus all transaction and registration costs.
- Urban/peri-urban land: market value of equal-size land with similar infrastructure and services, plus transaction costs.
- Structures: replacement cost based on construction type, materials, labour, transport, and registration costs; no deduction for depreciation or salvage.
- Crops: gross market rates at farm gate for one year (or number of years affected).
- Fruit/productive trees: net present value of annual income multiplied by years to maturity, plus planting costs and 3 replacement saplings.
- Non-fruit trees: based on age, productive life, and current timber market value.
- Community/sacred assets: determined through consultation; replacement in kind preferred.

Rates for compensation items and allowances will be adjusted quarterly for price escalation using the Consumer Price Index (CPI). Compensation rates will be established not more than six months prior to property acquisition.

6.3 Allowances

The following allowances shall apply under the ASCENT Lesotho Project, based on Land Act 2010 provisions and ESS5 requirements: (1) Disturbance Allowance: equivalent to 10% of the total assessed compensation, payable to all PAPs experiencing permanent displacement; (2) Relocation Allowance: a lump-sum transport assistance covering reasonable costs of moving household goods and assets, to be determined at replacement cost through RAP preparation; (3) Transitional Support: a minimum of three months' equivalent income or rental subsidy for households that must physically relocate, to cover the period until they are re-established; (4)

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Vulnerable Group Supplement: an additional 20% on base compensation, payable to elderly, female-headed, disabled, or otherwise vulnerable households as identified through the RAP socio-economic survey; (5) Crop Compensation: payment based on average market value of the last three years' harvest, plus labour costs, for standing crops or trees affected during construction. All allowance rates shall be confirmed and updated through the individual RAP preparation process to reflect current market conditions.

6.4 Voluntary Land Donation

Voluntary land Donation (VLD) may be accepted only in circumstances where individuals or communities freely choose to donate land for the project without any form of pressure, coercion, manipulation or expectation of compensation. VLD shall not result in significant adverse impacts on the livelihoods, income, shelter or productive assets of the donor. The donor has to be a legitimate landholder and has the legal or customary right to make decisions regarding the land. Furthermore, the land should be free from disputes. For land donated voluntarily, the following conditions must be met per ESS5:

- Potential donors have been appropriately informed and consulted about the project and available choices;
- Donors are aware that refusal is an option, and have confirmed willingness in writing;
- The donated land is minor (less than 20% of the donor's holding) and will not reduce the donor's remaining land below livelihood support level;
- No household relocation is involved;
- The donor is expected to benefit directly from the project; and
- Written documentation and consent are obtained.

To ensure that land donation is genuinely voluntary:

- Project staff, contractors, traditional authorities, local leaders and government officials shall not exert pressure or influence landholders to donate land;
- Refusal to donate land shall not affect eligibility for project benefits, services, employment opportunities or participation in project activities;

All potential donors shall receive clear information regarding:

- The purpose of the project;
- The land requirements;
- Potential impacts of the donation;
- Available alternatives;
- Their right to decline the donation

Donors shall be given adequate time to consider their decisions and seek independent advice if desired. Special attention shall be given to women, youth, elderly persons, persons with disabilities and other vulnerable groups to ensure their views are considered and their rights protected. Where

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land is jointly owned or subject to customary tenure, consent shall be obtained from all affected rights holders, including spouses where applicable.
It is the responsibility of the social safeguards specialist to conduct validation of land donation before acceptance. This social safeguards specialist will:

- Verify the ownership and status of the land;
- Confirm that the donor understands the implications of the donation;
- Confirm that the donor is aware of the right to refuse;
- Assess whether any form of coercion, intimidation, manipulation or undue influence is present;
- Verify that vulnerable persons are not adversely affected;
- Confirm that the donation will not cause significant livelihood impacts;
- Prepare a validation report documenting findings and recommendations
  Documentation and Recording of Consent

All voluntary land donations shall be formally documented and maintained in project records. Documentation shall include:

- A voluntary Land donation Form signed or thumb-printed by the donor
- Evidence of land ownership of recognized customary use rights.
- A description and map/sketch of the donated land, including size and boundaries.
- Records of consultations conducted with the donor and affected household members
- Written confirmation that the donor was informed of the right to refuse donations.
- Signatures of spouses and other legitimate rights holders where applicable.
- The independent third-party validation report
- Photographic records where appropriate
- Witness signatures from community representatives and local authorities.

Voluntary land donation will not be accepted from households considered vulnerable or having small plots. For community or collective land, donation can only occur with the consent of individuals using or occupying the land. The PIU will document all voluntary land donation due diligence and submit records to the World Bank for review.

6.5 Livelihood Restoration

The Project will assist displaced persons to restore, and where possible improve, their livelihoods and living standards to pre-displacement levels or to levels prevailing prior to project implementation, whichever is higher.

Livelihood restoration measures will be designed through consultation with affected households and communities and will reflect the nature of impacts experienced. They will address:

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- **Land-based livelihoods**, including replacement or restoration of productive land and grazing resources;
- **Wage-based livelihoods**, including employment support and skills development; and
- **Enterprise-based livelihoods**, including business development training, start-up support, and market linkage assistance.

In Lesotho, where rural livelihoods are closely linked to livestock rearing and communal grazing, the Project will give particular attention to households affected by grazing land loss or restriction. Where relevant, livelihood restoration measures will consider the wool and mohair economy and may include support for flock productivity, animal health, pasture management, shearing and grading services, cooperative development, financial literacy, and access to alternative grazing arrangements. These measures will be designed in consultation with affected communities, including herder households, women, and other vulnerable groups.

Compensation and allowances alone may not be sufficient to restore livelihoods in cases of economic displacement. Each Subproject RAP will therefore include, where needed, a livelihood restoration/improvement program that provides additional support during the transition period and longer-term measures to re-establish sustainable income sources. Options may include agricultural intensification, support to existing enterprises, alternative livelihood activities, and training in the sustainable management of compensation funds.

The Project will ensure gender-disaggregated data and measures to promote equal access and participation by women in consultations, training, compensation use, and livelihood support programs. Each RAP will also include arrangements for monitoring the effectiveness of livelihood measures during implementation and completion audits to confirm that affected persons have received all eligible assistance and have had adequate opportunity to restore their livelihoods.

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7. Consultation and Disclosure Arrangements

The Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF), together with the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), was disclosed in draft on the websites of the Department of Energy (www.doe.gov.ls) and the World Bank (www.worldbank.org) in April 2026 to facilitate stakeholder review and comment prior to finalisation.

A formal Stakeholder Engagement Workshop was convened on 2 February 2026 at Avani Lesotho, Maseru, drawing 52 participants from government, development partners, civil society, private sector, and academic institutions. Women constituted approximately 40% of attendees, reflecting a deliberate commitment to gender inclusion from the outset of preparation. The table below summarises the stakeholder groups engaged.

Table 4: Stakeholder Groups Engaged

Category	Key Representatives	Role / Interest
National Government	Dept. of Energy, REU, LEWA, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Law & Justice, Dept. of Labour, Bureau of Statistics, Petroleum Fund	Policy oversight; land access; environmental permitting; labour standards; compensation procedures
Development Partners	EU Delegation, UNDP, GIZ GET.transform	Safeguards alignment; coordination with parallel programmes; avoid duplication
Civil Society & NGOs	LENASO, GIZ GET.transform	Social inclusion; protection of vulnerable groups; transparency and grievance redress
Private Sector	Mahlaseli Energy, African Clean Energy, KC Energy, MR Construction, Lehloa Global Venting	Implementation; OHS compliance; labour management; land access
Academic Institutions	NUL – Energy Research Centre	Technical and research perspectives; energy access data; sustainability
Vulnerable Groups (identified)	Women, PWDs, low-income households, remote highland communities, youth	Disproportionate exposure to land and livelihood impacts; barriers to participation

Consultations were structured across the following phases: a national workshop during preparation (February 2026); community meetings and focus group discussions including separate sessions for women, persons with disabilities (PWDs), and other vulnerable groups (March–April 2026); bilateral meetings with implementing agencies to confirm geographic boundaries (April–May

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2026); ongoing village-level consultations and grievance mechanism (GM) awareness campaigns throughout implementation (2026–2030); and post-construction beneficiary satisfaction surveys during the operational phase.

7.1 Key Feedback Received During Stakeholder Consultations

The February 2026 workshop generated substantive feedback through plenary sessions, Q&A, and structured group exercises. Key themes are summarised below.

7.2 Land Access, Displacement, and Resettlement

Concerns were raised regarding the treatment of displaced persons where infrastructure is installed. The E&S Specialist confirmed that no significant physical displacement is anticipated; however, grazing land and agricultural fields may be temporarily or permanently affected by poles, distribution lines, substations, and access roads. Preparation of Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plans (ARAPs) and ESMPs was confirmed as the mechanism for identifying, managing, and compensating affected persons.

7.3 Affordability, Tariffs, and Market Considerations

Multiple stakeholders raised concerns about the affordability of electricity services for rural and low-income households. Stakeholders recommended establishing community affordability bands before finalising financing models. The risk of market distortion, where project pricing undercuts existing private sector operators of solar home systems and clean cooking appliances, was flagged. It was confirmed that LEWA-regulated tariffs apply to grid and mini-grid systems, and that financial modelling would address market distortion risks for unregulated products.

Socioeconomic baseline surveys required under the RPF will include a dedicated Private Sector Market Mapping component to identify existing operators, their product ranges, pricing structures, and customer bases in project-affected areas. Where project activities are found to directly overlap with or undercut active private sector operators, the PIU, in coordination with LEWA, will apply the following sequential mitigation measures: (i) adjust project product scope or geographic targeting to avoid direct competition where feasible; (ii) engage displaced operators through preferential partnership or last-mile distribution agreements under the project; and (iii) where economic displacement of a private operator is unavoidable and directly attributable to project activities, document the impact and assess eligibility for livelihood restoration support under the project's Entitlement Matrix.

7.4 Geographic Coordination and Duplication

The EU Delegation flagged the risk of overlap with other rural electrification programmes. The Project Coordinator confirmed that bilateral meetings would be held with UNDP and other agencies to delineate project boundaries, with ASCENT focusing on highland areas and REU on lowlands.

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7.5 Labour, OHS, and Workforce Management

The Ministry of Labour raised concerns about OHS budgeting and workmen's compensation requirements for rotating local labour across communities. The E&S Specialist confirmed that all contractors must comply with OHS standards and hold valid workmen's compensation policies prior to mobilisation, governed by the project's Labour Management Procedures (LMP).

7.6 Vulnerable and Marginalised Groups

LENASO emphasised the need for targeted engagement to address knowledge gaps and fear of technology in rural communities, and sought clarification on the treatment of gender-diverse individuals. The E&S Specialist confirmed that local-level engagement would address such gaps, and that gender-diverse and other marginalised persons would be accommodated within the existing vulnerable groups framework. Newly formed community groups emerging from the closure of programmes such as LMDA were also flagged for inclusion in consultations.

7.7 Sustainability, Quality Assurance, and Post-Project Handover

Concerns were expressed about product quality and long-term system sustainability after project closure. It was confirmed that grid assets would be transferred to LEC, while mini-grid and solar systems would be formally handed over to designated receiving ministries with maintenance budgeted in advance. Quality assurance is supported by the Ministry of Energy, the World Bank, and supervising consultants.

7.8 Incorporation of Feedback into the Resettlement Policy Framework

Stakeholder feedback has been systematically incorporated into the RPF. The table below summarises how each key theme has been addressed.

Table 5: Stakeholder Feedback Incorporated into the RPF

Feedback Theme	How Incorporated into the RPF
Land displacement - grazing and agricultural land may be affected by infrastructure	RPF confirms no involuntary resettlement is expected but provides a clear ARAP framework. Eligibility criteria and entitlements for temporarily affected landowners, farmers, and herders are explicitly defined.
Affordability barriers for low-income and rural households	RPF incorporates livelihood restoration provisions consistent with ESS5. Vulnerable and low-income affected persons receive priority in livelihood restoration plans; community consultations on affordability are embedded in preparation requirements.
Disproportionate impacts on women, PWDs, and remote communities	RPF includes gender-disaggregated census data collection, tailored consultation methods for women and PWDs, priority resettlement assistance, and use of female interviewers in socioeconomic surveys.

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Feedback Theme	How Incorporated into the RPF
Market distortion risks for unregulated off-grid products	Socioeconomic baseline surveys required under the RPF include assessment of existing livelihood and productive activities to identify and mitigate market distortion risks prior to compensation design. Baseline surveys under the RPF will map private sector operators in affected areas. If project activities overlap with them, the PIU and LEWA will: (i) adjust scope or targeting to avoid competition; (ii) partner with affected operators through preferential agreements; and (iii) if displacement is unavoidable, document impacts and assess livelihood restoration under the Entitlement Matrix
Need for inter-agency coordination to avoid duplication	RPF requires footprint delineation and census surveys prior to ARAP preparation, with inter-agency coordination to confirm boundaries and prevent double-counting of affected persons.
OHS and labour management responsibilities between contractors and PIU	RPF cross-references the LMP requiring contractor OHS compliance and workmen's compensation prior to mobilisation. ARAP screening includes assessment of construction workforce deployment and labour influx risks.
Inclusion of emerging and informal community organisations	RPF requires inclusive stakeholder mapping prior to each ARAP, explicitly identifying all community-based organisations including newly formed or informal groups. GM Focal Points maintain updated local organisation registers.
Sustainability and post-project asset handover	RPF clarifies that grid infrastructure transfers to LEC and mini-grid/SHS systems to designated receiving ministries. ARAP livelihood restoration plans include monitoring provisions extending into the early operational phase.

7.9 Cut-off date

A census and household survey will be conducted as soon as the list of sub-projects have been confirmed. Care will be taken to set cut-off dates immediately after the sub-projects final design and location are confirmed and the respective census is completed. The household survey will be used to develop an inventory of losses so as to assess the potential impact. A binding legal instrument will be used to record all loss of assets which will be signed by PAP and representatives of local government.

It will be necessary to publicly declare a cut-off date to determine eligibility and thus entitlements to resettlement compensation and assistance including livelihood restoration for each component of the Project as it enters the RAP preparation stage. The PIU will ensure that the cut-off date is well-known by PAPs as well as the broader community that lives in the sphere of project impact. This must be accommodated with clear demarcation of areas of impact and

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the process will be documented, with records retained by the PIU. Public notices of the cut-off date shall be displayed in the respective community council offices notice board(s), chiefs' offices and the local LEC offices following completion of the adjudication exercise on affected land and assets. A notice with the cut-off date will be provided in letters to PAPs and announced through community meetings which will be organized by the PIU. the community councils or Chief.

7.10 Disclosure arrangement.

The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) will disclose draft RAPs and Livelihood Restoration Plans (LRPs) to project-affected persons and the public following World Bank review, and will solicit comments from displaced persons on the proposed plans. Final disclosure of the RAP or LRP will occur after consideration of comments received and following Bank acceptance.

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8. Grievance Redress Mechanism

The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) will ensure a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) is operational as early as possible in project development, in accordance with ESS10 of the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). The GRM provides a structured, transparent, and culturally appropriate channel through which project-affected persons (PAPs) and communities can raise concerns about compensation, relocation, livelihood restoration, or any other environmental and social matter. Use of the GRM does not preclude PAPs from pursuing formal legal remedies at any stage.

8.1 Objectives

The GRM is designed to:

- Provide a structured, accessible channel for PAPs to communicate grievances at no cost and without fear of retribution;
- Accommodate all complaints arising from project activities in a systematic and timely manner;
- Enable joint problem-solving between PAPs and the project on compensation, resettlement, and environmental and social issues;
- Ensure all complaints are acknowledged, investigated, and resolved within defined timeframes; and
- Capture citizen feedback to continuously improve project performance.

8.2 Submission Procedures and Registration

Points of Access

Grievances may be lodged through the Community Participation Liaison Officer (CPLO) and/or social safeguards specialists in the. Submissions may be made in writing (using the GRM or Grievance Resolution Form), verbally, or anonymously via phone or written correspondence. Upon receipt, the CLO forwards the complaint to the Social Safeguards Officer within 24 hours. The complaint is registered with a unique reference number, entered into the central grievance log, and the complainant is acknowledged within 2 working days with the reference number and an outline of the resolution process. Anonymous complaints are automatically referred to the PIU Coordinator.

Grievance Log

The implementing agency maintains a comprehensive grievance log recording, for each complaint: the date reported and logged; unique reference number; description of issues and parties involved; dates of key events (investigations, interviews); proposed corrective action communicated; status and outcome; and date formally closed.

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8.3 Organisational Arrangements: Four-Tier Structure

Table 6: Four-Tier GRM Escalation Structure

Tier	Body	Composition / Role	Timeframe
1 GRC	Grievance Redress Committee (established per subproject by PIU)	Area Chief (Chair); Social & Environmental Safeguards Officers; Community Councillors & CLOs; PAP representatives (men, women, youth, minorities). First point of entry; uses existing community and traditional authority structures.	Within 28 days of receipt
2 PIU	Project Implementation Unit	ASCENT Project Coordinator; Project Engineer (Chair); CLO; E&S Safeguards Specialists (Secretariat). Uses an independent evaluator for impartiality; reviews claims against the RAP, RPF, and ESS5.	Upon escalation from GRC
3 PSC	Project Steering Committee	DoE Director (Chair); ASCENT Project Coordinator (Secretariat); LEC MD; Ministry of Finance; Ministry of Local Government; LEWA, REU, MEM, NUL-ERC representatives.	Upon escalation from PIU
4 Courts	Formal Legal System (last resort)	Magistrate Courts; High Court of Lesotho; Supreme Court of Lesotho. Handles compensation disputes, property matters, and criminal issues arising from resettlement.	After all GRM tiers exhausted

The GRM operating on a two-tier structure can assist PAPs in raising concerns at the level closest to them in the first instance, with a clear pathway to escalate unresolved or more complex matters. Tier 1 comprises Village-Level Grievance Committees, and Tier 2 comprises the Project Implementation Unit (PIU)-level Grievance Redress Committee. Both tiers are free of charge to PAPs and do not require legal representation or prejudice a PAP's right to pursue matters through the formal courts or other statutory channels at any time.

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Tier 1: Village-Level Grievance Committees (VGC)

Tier 1 is the first point of contact for PAPs and is intended to resolve the majority of grievances quickly, at minimal cost, and within the community setting. A Village-Level Grievance Committee (VGC) is established in each affected village or settlement cluster along the project footprint, comprising:

- The village chief, headman, or chairperson of the local council;
- The Community Participation Liaison Officer (CPLO) assigned to that village or cluster;
- At least two community representatives nominated by the affected community, including one woman;
- A representative of vulnerable or disadvantaged groups (e.g. elderly, disabled, female-headed households, or ethnic minority representatives) where present in the village;
- A representative of the project contractor, where the grievance relates to construction activities.

PAPs can access the Village-Level Grievance Committee through any of the following entry points, all of which are publicised to PAPs during community consultation meetings and displayed on notice boards at village offices and project sites:

In person at village meetings	PAPs may raise grievances verbally at regular village or community meetings, where the VGC records the grievance on the spot using the Grievance Resolution Form.
Village grievance drop-box	A lockable suggestion/complaint box is placed at the village office or another accessible public location for written or anonymous submissions, checked by the CPLO at least weekly.
Direct contact with the CPLO	PAPs may approach the CPLO directly, in person, by phone, or via a local contact number displayed at the village office and on project information boards.
Community liaison and outreach visits	CPLOs conduct periodic village outreach visits, particularly to reach PAPs who are elderly, disabled, or otherwise unable to travel to a fixed location.
Verbal or anonymous reporting	PAPs who are unable to read or write, or who prefer not to be identified, may report grievances verbally to the CPLO or a VGC member, who transcribes the complaint on their behalf.

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Tier 2: PIU-Level Grievance Redress Committee

Tier 2 is the escalation level for grievances that cannot be resolved at village level, that involve complex compensation, land, or resettlement issues, or that the PAP is not satisfied were

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adequately addressed by the VGC. The PIU-level Grievance Redress Committee is chaired by the PIU Coordinator and includes:

- The PIU Coordinator (Chair);
- The Social Safeguards Officer;
- Relevant technical specialists (e.g. resettlement, environmental, or engineering specialists) as required by the nature of the grievance;
- A representative of the affected community or CPLO who escalated the case.

A grievance reaches Tier 2 either through automatic referral by the VGC or the CPLO, or directly where a PAP chooses to bypass the village level. Access points include:

Escalation from the VGC	Grievances unresolved at village level after 5 working days, or involving matters beyond the VGC's authority, are formally referred to the PIU by the CPLO, together with the village-level record.
Direct submission to the PIU office	PAPs may submit a completed Grievance Resolution Form, or lodge a grievance verbally, in person at the PIU office.
PIU grievance hotline / phone line	A dedicated phone number is publicised to PAPs for verbal or anonymous complaints, answered or returned by the Social Safeguards Officer.
Written correspondence and email	PAPs, or organisations assisting them, may submit written grievances by letter or email addressed to the Social Safeguards Officer or PIU Coordinator.
Anonymous referral	Anonymous complaints received at village level, or submitted directly, are automatically referred to and handled by the PIU Coordinator
Mobile/outreach clinics	Where PAPs face access constraints (distance, mobility, literacy), the Social Safeguards Officer conducts periodic outreach visits to affected villages to receive grievances directly.

In addition to the project-level GRM, PAPs may access the World Bank Grievance Redress System (www.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/products-and-services/grievance-redress-service) and the World Bank Inspection Panel (www.inspectionpanel.org) at any time.

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8.4 Response Timelines

Table 7: Response Timeline

Stage	Required Action	Timeframe
Receipt	CLO forwards complaint to Social Safeguards Officer	Within 24 hours
Registration	Complaint registered; unique reference number assigned	Upon receipt
Acknowledgement	Complainant notified of reference number and process	Within 2 working days
Assessment	Grievance assessed and referred for mediation	Within 2 working days
Resolution	Proposed resolution / mediation provided to PAP	Within 14 days
Documentation	Complaint and resolution fully documented	Within 21 days
Monitoring	Officer meets PAP to verify resolution and assess progress	Within 28 days
Reporting	Unresolved grievances reported in PIU and World Bank reports	Monthly / Quarterly

The overall target resolution period is 4 weeks. Grievances not resolved within this timeframe are reported in detail in monthly PIU reports and quarterly World Bank submissions. Where remediation extends beyond standard timelines, the Social Safeguards Officer conducts regular revisits until completion. All grievances are aggregated and analysed to track trends and enable proactive management response.

8.5 Community Awareness, Gender, and Vulnerable Groups

The implementing agency shall ensure all households in the project area understand the GRM and how to access it. Information will be disseminated through community consultations during RAP preparation and implementation; the broader SEP; distribution of grievance forms and information materials in locally accessible formats; notices at community centres, local depots, and traditional authority offices; and culturally appropriate communication channels sensitive to literacy levels and local languages.

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Key information communicated to all PAPs includes: what the GRM can and cannot deliver; who can raise complaints; where, when, and how to file; who is responsible at each tier; expected response timelines; the anonymous reporting option; and other legal rights and protections.

The GRM places special emphasis on equitable access: equal representation of men, women, youth, and minorities is required in GRC composition; outreach is specifically designed for vulnerable and disadvantaged groups; each sub-project ESIA includes a detailed gender analysis; and any person may submit a complaint verbally or in writing.

8.6 Guiding Principles and Monitoring

The GRM is governed by the principles of fairness, accessibility, transparency, respect for human rights, compliance with national regulations, equality, consistency, honesty, mutual respect, and cultural appropriateness. It combines legal requirements with socially and customarily acceptable practices, ensuring alignment with World Bank ESS5 and applicable national legislation of Lesotho.

The Social Safeguards Officer shall: maintain a complete and up-to-date grievance log tracking all complaints from registration to closure; provide monthly summaries of grievance trends and resolution status to technical units in DoE and LEC; submit quarterly reports to the World Bank including on unresolved cases; identify common or recurrent claims requiring structural solutions; document lessons learned for continuous improvement; and evaluate the overall effectiveness and accessibility of the GRM on a regular basis.

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9. Implementation Arrangements

Overall institutional responsibility for the preparation and implementation of Resettlement Action Plans (RAPs) and Livelihood Restoration Plans (LRPs), including the delivery of all entitlements to project-affected persons (PAPs), lies with ASCENT Lesotho, operating through its Project Implementation Unit (PIU). The PIU carries primary accountability for ensuring that resettlement activities are conducted in accordance with the Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF), applicable national legislation, and World Bank Environmental and Social Standard 5 (ESS5). Implementation, however, is a shared undertaking requiring coordinated engagement across multiple government agencies, private sector contractors, civil society organisations (CSOs), and non-governmental organisations (NGOs).

9.1 Specific Agencies Involved in Implementation

The following agencies carry defined responsibilities across the RAP/LRP cycle, from preparation and entitlement delivery through to monitoring and post-implementation review.

Table 8: Agency Roles in RAP/LRP Implementation

Agency	Primary Role	Specific Responsibilities in RAP/LRP Implementation
ASCENT PPIU (DoE PIU / LEC TU)	Lead implementing agency	Overall RAP/LRP preparation, approval, and implementation oversight; entitlement delivery coordination; budget management; World Bank reporting; GRM oversight; disclosure of RAP/LRP to PAPs and the public.
Ministry of Lands, Survey and Physical Planning	Land administration and acquisition	Formal land acquisition procedures under the Land Act 2010; cadastral surveys and land registration; valuation of land assets for compensation; processing of title transfers and lease adjustments; confirmation of tenure status of affected parcels.
Ministry of Local Government and Chieftainship	Local governance and community liaison	Coordination with District Councils and Area Chiefs serving on Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs); facilitation of community-level consultations; support to resettlement site identification and community acceptance processes; engagement of traditional authorities in dispute resolution.
Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC)	Grid infrastructure operator	Coordination on land access for grid extension works; clearance of wayleaves and rights-of-way in

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Agency	Primary Role	Specific Responsibilities in RAP/LRP Implementation
		consultation with PIU; receipt and long-term management of transferred grid assets; support to community engagement in LEC operational areas.
Rural Electrification Unit (REU)	Off-grid infrastructure operator	Land access coordination for off-grid subprojects in lowland areas; liaison with district authorities on temporary and permanent land requirements; support to off-grid asset handover to designated receiving ministries.
Lesotho Electricity and Water Authority (LEWA)	Regulatory oversight	Regulatory compliance oversight for grid and mini-grid tariff structures; monitoring of market distortion risks arising from project activities; liaison with PIU on regulated energy service delivery.
Department of Labour and Employment	Labour standards compliance	Oversight of contractor compliance with labour laws and OHS standards; enforcement of workmen's compensation requirements; support to Labour Management Procedure (LMP) implementation; labour inspection in project areas.
Ministry of Finance	Compensation financing	Disbursement of government compensation contributions where applicable; financial oversight of RAP budget execution; representation on the Project Steering Committee (PSC) for unresolved grievances.
District Councils and Area Chiefs	Community-level governance	Chairing of local GRCs; certification of affected household lists; witness to compensation agreements; facilitation of community acceptance of resettlement sites; customary dispute resolution in the first instance.
Project Steering Committee	Provides strategic Oversight and governance	A Project Steering Committee, chaired by the Principal Secretary of Energy will meet twice a year to review progress, provide policy guidance, and resolve any high-level challenges facing the project. The Committee should be comprised of MEM, DoE, LEC, LEWA, LNDC,

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Agency	Primary Role	Specific Responsibilities in RAP/LRP Implementation
		and Ministry of Finance and Ministry of Development Planning.

NB: The ASCENT PIU is yet to be recruited

9.2 Assessment of Institutional Capacity

Implementation of this Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) will be embedded within the overall institutional structure established for the ASCENT–Lesotho Project under the Ministry of Energy and Mining (MEM). The Project Implementation Unit (PIU), hosted within the Department of Energy (DoE), will hold overall responsibility for coordinating, financing, and overseeing all resettlement planning and implementation activities, including the preparation, disclosure, and execution of Resettlement Action Plans (RAPs) and Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plans (ARAPs).

The Lesotho Electricity Company (LEC), through its dedicated Technical Unit (TU), will be responsible for resettlement activities associated with grid extension and rehabilitation works, working in close coordination with the DoE TU to ensure consistent application of this RPF across all sub-projects. Key institutional actors and their roles are summarized below:

- PIU/DoE Social Safeguards Specialist(s): day-to-day management of RPF implementation, RAP/ARAP preparation and supervision, and quality assurance;
- LEC Technical Unit: implementation of resettlement measures linked to grid-related sub-projects, in coordination with the PIU;
- Community Liaison Officers (CLOs): stakeholder engagement, grievance intake and follow-up, and support to vulnerable project-affected persons (PAPs);
- Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs): community-level receipt, registration, and resolution of resettlement-related grievances, including referral of sensitive cases (e.g., SEA/SH);
- District and Community Councils and traditional/local authorities: local-level facilitation of consultations, land identification, and dispute resolution; and
- Department of Environment (DoEnv): regulatory oversight, ensuring alignment with the Environment Act of 2008 and related national requirements.

9.2.1 Assessment of Institutional Capacity

Both DoE and LEC have prior experience implementing donor-funded infrastructure projects, however, capacity to manage involuntary resettlement in line with World Bank ESS5 and broader

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Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) requirements remains limited and requires deliberate strengthening. Specific capacity gaps identified include:

- limited prior experience preparing and implementing RAPs/ARAPs to World Bank standards, including asset inventories, replacement-cost valuation, and livelihood restoration planning;
- constrained capacity for grievance management at community level, particularly for handling sensitive cases such as SEA/SH;
- Systems for monitoring and reporting on resettlement implementation and verifying outcomes against agreed indicators; and
- limited coordination experience between PIU, LEC/DOE TU, District Land Officers, and traditional authorities on land identification and compensation processes.

At the national level, Lesotho's legal framework for land and environmental management, anchored in the Land Act and the Environment Act of 2008, and supported by DoEnv oversight, provides a reasonable enabling foundation; the gap to be addressed is primarily operational capacity to apply these frameworks consistently with the RPF and World Bank requirements. To address these gaps, dedicated PIU Social Safeguards Specialists have been recruited, and a structured, time-bound capacity-building program will be implemented throughout the project lifecycle, supplemented by external technical assistance where required.

9.2.2 Capacity-Building Plan

The capacity-building plan below translates the gaps identified above into concrete, resourced actions. It targets the PIU safeguards teams as primary duty-bearers, while also building capacity among Community Council Officers, CLOs, GRC members, and community representatives who play a direct role in RPF implementation. The plan will be reviewed and updated annually, including following any independent monitoring or audit findings, and progress will be reported through the Project's regular environmental and social performance reporting to the World Bank.

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Table 9 (a): Capacity Building Plan

#	Capacity-Building Action / Activity	Responsible Party	Timeline	Budget (US$)
1	Recruit PIU Social Safeguards Specialist(s) and Community Liaison Officers (CLOs)	PIU (DoE), with MEM approval / MEM–PIU Coordinator	Pre-effectiveness; retained throughout implementation (must be in place before Months 1–2 activities begin)	120,000/year (PIU operating budget)
2	ESS5 Orientation (scope, triggers, eligibility categories, cut-off date procedures) and training on World Bank ESS5 / RPF-RAP-ARAP preparation requirements	PIU Staff, LEC Technical Unit, DoE focal points; PIU with World Bank E&S team support	Month 1 (refresher once every two years)	25,000
3	Screening tools and site footprint identification methodology training; field equipment and logistics for social safeguards teams (GPS units, survey tools, data collection devices, transport)	PIU Safeguards Team	Month 1	60,000
4	Sub-project screening and site identification may commence	PIU Safeguards Specialist sign-off	Month 2 (ESS5 orientation + screening training confirmed complete)	—
5	Sub-project screening and site identification for first batch of sub-projects	PIU / LEC Technical Unit	Month 2–3	—
6	Land valuation, compensation procedures and replacement-cost methodology training	PIU Safeguards Team, in coordination with Ministry responsible for Lands and DoEnv	Month 3	20,000

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#	Capacity-Building Action / Activity	Responsible Party	Timeline	Budget (US$)
7	PAP asset inventory data collection tools training and database set-up	PIU Safeguards Team, M&E Officer	Month 3	—
8	Vulnerable group identification and gender-disaggregated data collection training	PIU Safeguards Team, CLOs	Month 3	—
9	Census, asset inventory and valuation work may commence	PIU Safeguards Specialist sign-off	Month 4 (valuation + inventory + vulnerability training confirmed complete)	—
10	Household census, asset inventory and replacement-cost valuation for first batch of sub-projects	PIU Safeguards Team / Independent Valuer	Month 4–6	—
11	Consultation skills and inclusion training (women, youth, persons with disabilities, vulnerable households)	PIU, CLOs, District and Community Councils, with specialized facilitators	Month 4 (Once a year)	12,000
12	SEA/SH awareness and safe referral pathways training	PIU, CLOs, GRC members	Month 4	—
13	GRC establishment, roles, procedures and escalation pathways training; establishment and training of community-level Grievance Redress Committees, including SEA/SH referral pathways	CLOs, GRC members, PIU / CLO, with GBV service providers	Month 4 (annual refresher thereafter)	20,000

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#	Capacity-Building Action / Activity	Responsible Party	Timeline	Budget (US$)
14	Training on livelihood restoration and economic displacement planning	PIU Safeguards Team, with technical assistance consultants	Month 4 (once every two years)	18,000
15	Community consultation for resettlement purposes may commence	PIU Safeguards Specialist sign-off	Month 5 (consultation + SEA/SH + GRC training confirmed complete)	—
16	Community consultations with PAPs — disclosure of entitlements, cut-off date, grievance process	PIU, CLOs, GRC members	Month 5–7	—
17	Technical assistance for preparation, review and quality assurance of RAPs/ARAPs	PIU, with World Bank no-objection	Throughout sub-project preparation (Months 1–9)	150,000
18	RAP/ARAP drafting — incorporating census data, valuation, entitlements, livelihood restoration plans	PIU Safeguards Team	Month 6–8	—
19	Design and roll-out of resettlement monitoring and information management system (asset/PAP database, indicators, grievance log)	PIU M&E Officer; safeguards team	Month 7	30,000
20	Engagement of independent external monitor for RAP/ARAP	PIU, with World Bank oversight	Month 8 onward; annually from Year 1; completion audit at RAP closure	60,000 (20,000/year)

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#	Capacity-Building Action / Activity	Responsible Party	Timeline	Budget (US$)
	implementation and completion audits			
21	Draft RAP/ARAP submitted to World Bank for review and approval	PIU Coordinator	Month 8–9 (World Bank no-objection required)	—
22	World Bank review, feedback and no-objection	World Bank Task Team	Month 9–10	—
23	Compensation payments made to all PAPs — cash, in-kind, or livelihood restoration as applicable	PIU / MEM / LEC	Month 10–11 (all compensation must be paid before site handover)	—
24	Site handed over to contractor, physical works may commence	PIU Coordinator + World Bank sign-off	Month 12 full compensation paid + RAP approved)	—
25	Peer learning / study visit to a comparable World Bank-financed resettlement operation in the region	PIU senior management and safeguards specialists, with World Bank facilitation	Yearly, ongoing	20,000
26	GRC refresher training, external monitoring visits, ESS5 refresher (every two years)	PIU / World Bank	Year 1 onwards — annual (ongoing throughout implementation)	—

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9.2.3 Budget Summary

Table above translates into the following indicative budget summary by category. Costs are preliminary estimates for planning purposes and will be refined during detailed RAP/ARAP costing and annual work planning; they will be financed from the Project budget and, where applicable, co-financed through World Bank technical assistance.

Table 9 (b): Budget line

Budget Line	Estimated Cost (US$)
PIU staffing (Resettlement & Social Safeguards Specialist and Community Particiaption Officers)	120,000/year
Training and workshops (ESS5, valuation, livelihoods, GRM, inclusion)	95,000
Technical assistance – RAP/ARAP preparation and review	150,000
M&E system development and independent monitoring	90,000
Peer learning and study visit	20,000
Field equipment and logistics	60,000
Estimated Total (excluding annual PIU staffing, recurring)	415,000

9.2.4 Monitoring of Capacity-Building Outcomes

Implementation of the capacity-building plan will be tracked by the PIU M&E Officer as part of the broader resettlement monitoring and information management system, using indicators such as: number of staff and committee members trained (disaggregated by sex and institution), training completion and post-training assessment scores, timeliness of RAP/ARAP preparation against the schedule above, and grievance resolution timeliness. Results will be reported in semi-annual progress reports to the World Bank and reviewed during implementation support missions, with adjustments made to the plan as needed to address persistent capacity gaps.

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10. Monitoring and Evaluation

ASCENT will make arrangements for monitoring implementation and will provide periodic monitoring reports to the Bank regarding the status of land acquisition and implementation of the RAPs/ARAPs. For projects with significant impacts, competent resettlement monitoring professionals will monitor implementation progress and provide advice on any necessary corrective actions and will conduct an implementation audit when all mitigation measures in the RAPs/ARAPs are substantially complete. The implementation review evaluates the effectiveness of mitigation measures in achieving RAPs/ARAPs and ESS5 objectives and recommends corrective measures to meet objectives not yet achieved. The implementation of the RAPs/ARAPs is not considered completed until all corrective measures have been addressed.

10.1 Internal Monitoring

Internal monitoring will be carried out routinely by the ASCENT PIU, either directly through its Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists or through an appointed Local RAP Monitoring Consultant. Results will be communicated to the World Bank through established reporting channels, with a dedicated section in each report addressing the progress of resettlement and land acquisition activities.

The PIU is responsible for maintaining a live monitoring system that tracks progress against RAP/LRP commitments from the commencement of land acquisition through to the completion of livelihood restoration. Specific monitoring benchmarks to be tracked include:

- Status of land acquisition and payments of land and asset compensation;
- Completion of census, asset inventories, valuations, and socioeconomic baseline studies;
- Compensation delivered for affected structures, crops, trees, and other assets;
- Relocation of physically displaced PAPs and adequacy of replacement housing;
- Public consultations and community meetings held, with attendance records;
- Functioning of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) and status of resolutions;
- Income and livelihood restoration activities initiated and their progress; and
- Submission of monitoring and evaluation reports to the World Bank on schedule.

Information will be collected through the following instruments: review of census data and PAP registers; consultation and informal interviews with PAPs; in-depth case studies of selected households; sample surveys of the broader PAP population; key informant interviews with community leaders, local authorities, and NGO partners; and community public meetings. The PIU will provide monthly reports and consolidated quarterly reports on RPF implementation, with content and format agreed with the World Bank.

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10.2 External Monitoring

The World Bank will perform external monitoring periodically throughout project implementation. In addition to verifying the findings of internal monitoring reports, the external monitoring function will:

- Evaluate the social and economic impact of resettlement activities on PAPs;
- Verify whether the objective of enhancement, or at least restoration, of income levels and living standards has been achieved; and
- Provide recommendations for improving resettlement implementation where required, to ensure the principles and objectives of the RPF and individual RAPs are achieved.

The principal indicators for external monitoring investigations include: socioeconomic conditions of PAPs after project implementation compared to baseline; communications and reactions from PAPs regarding entitlements, compensation options, and relocation timetables; changes in housing quality and income levels; socioeconomic conditions of informal landowners and customary land users; effectiveness of property valuation methods for rehabilitation purposes; effectiveness of grievance procedures; level of satisfaction of PAPs in the post-resettlement period; and income levels of PAPs following implementation of livelihood restoration measures.

In addition to World Bank oversight, the PIU should engage an independent NGO or CSO monitor to conduct periodic field-based verification of RAP/LRP implementation. This independent monitor should report directly to the PIU and the World Bank, providing an impartial check on project-reported data. Such a monitor can also play a facilitation role in reaching remote or vulnerable PAPs who may not engage proactively with PIU-led monitoring processes.

10.3 Completion Audit

An independent Completion Audit must be conducted at the conclusion of each sub-project's resettlement programme, once the agreed monitoring period has been completed. ESS5 requires that the audit determine whether the project's efforts to restore the living standards of affected populations have been properly conceived and executed. The audit must verify that all physical inputs committed in the RAP have been delivered, all services provided, and that displaced persons have been given adequate opportunity and assistance to sustainably restore their livelihoods.

The audit will be undertaken by a competent and independent resettlement professional not previously involved in the project's implementation. It will involve a more in-depth assessment than routine monitoring, including a comprehensive review of all physical and economic displacement mitigation measures implemented. The overall aim is to verify that all resettlement implementation activities have been conducted in compliance with the objectives and principles of the ASCENT Lesotho RPF and the relevant RAP/ARAPs.

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Specific aims of the audit are to:

- Confirm that all physical and monetary inputs committed in the RAP have been delivered in full;
- Confirm all outputs achieved under the resettlement and livelihood restoration programme; and
- Assess whether the outcomes of the programme have produced the desired beneficial impacts on PAPs' living standards and livelihoods.

The audit will assess whether the criteria for completion of resettlement and livelihood restoration have been met in accordance with ESS5 objectives and describe any outstanding issues requiring attention before the sub-project's resettlement programme is formally closed.

10.4 Monitoring and Evaluation Indicators

Each RAP/ARAP will include a minimum set of Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to evaluate achievement of its objectives, for which baseline data will be established through the socioeconomic survey. Indicators are organised into three tiers: output, impact, and sustainability. Gender and vulnerable group disaggregation is required across all indicator categories.

Table 10: Summary M&E Indicator Framework by Tier

Tier	Component	Key Indicators
Output	Land & Structures	Area of land acquired (public, private, communal); number, type and size of buildings and structures acquired; number of PAPs compensated by type of loss and amount.
	Compensation Delivery	Number of PAP households electrified; number of people compensated; number of PAPs benefitting from livelihood restoration; number of replacement structures constructed; timely acquisition of land.
	Trees & Crops	Number, type and ownership of productive trees acquired by area; number, type and ownership of crops destroyed by area.
Impact	Livelihood & Income	Number of households whose income streams have been restored or improved; earnings by source (agricultural and non-agricultural) pre- and post-disturbance, by gender; employment status of economically active household members.
	Living Conditions	Quality of replacement housing and related services; access to water supply and electricity; nutritional and

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Tier	Component	Key Indicators
		health status; access to education and school enrolment rates; distance/travel time to schools, health centres, markets.
	Social & Demographic	Household size (births, deaths, migration); gender and age distribution; status of vulnerable households; GBV and SEA/SH reported cases and referrals; changes in women's participation in project activities, landholding status and income-earning capacity.
Sustainability	Grievance & Consultation	Composition of GRC by gender; number and dates of committee meetings; status of grievance cases; effectiveness of grievance resolution procedures; level of satisfaction of PAPs in the post-resettlement period.
	Institutional	Staffing of ASCENT PIU for resettlement; effectiveness of compensation delivery system; number of land transfers effected; coordination between PIU, government agencies and NGO/CSO partners; timely submission of monitoring reports.

10.5 Monitoring and Evaluation Reporting

All monitoring and evaluation findings must be documented in formal reports and submitted to stakeholders — including PAPs, affected communities, the World Bank, and other relevant parties — to assess adherence to the RAP and achievement of project objectives. M&E reporting serves to document completion of activities; identify significant deviations from plans; reveal problems to appropriate stakeholders; support corrective decision-making; monitor implementation of corrective actions; and provide reference material for the planning of subsequent sub-projects.

The PIU will submit monthly reports and consolidated quarterly reports on RPF and RAP/LRP implementation to the World Bank. Report content and format will be agreed with the Bank prior to the commencement of implementation. Unresolved grievances and any instances where resettlement activities have fallen behind the agreed implementation schedule must be highlighted in all reports with a corrective action plan. Project supervision — both internal and external — must continue for a reasonable period after all resettlement, livelihood restoration, and related development activities have been completed, to ensure that outcomes are sustained.

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11. Budget

The budget for compensation, livelihood restoration and resettlement assistance will be developed based-on subproject(s) impacts on properties and livelihoods. Field assessments, and information on prevailing asset shall be used to ensure reliable estimation of cost and allocation of adequate funds for resettlement implementation.

At this stage, it is not possible to estimate the exact number of people who may be affected since the technical designs and details of the ASCENT sub-projects have not yet been developed. When subproject locations are known, and after the conclusion of the site-specific screening and socio-economic study, information on specific impacts, individual and household incomes and numbers of affected people and other demographic data will be available, a detailed and accurate budget for each RAP will be prepared.

Disbursement for compensation and resettlement assistances shall be authorized by the PIU coordinator and will be channeled through existing payments processing and approval arrangements. Each RAP must include a detailed budget, using the indicative template provided as annex to this RPF. The RAP will include a detailed budget for the payment of compensation and implementation of the various resettlement aspects for a particular subproject, including amongst others, costs of surveys, third party validations of voluntary land donation, land acquisition, loss of livelihood and livelihood restoration, loss of crops and other property, and allowances/in-kind assistance for the vulnerable members of the community and the implementation of the GRM. This would enable facilitating the preparation of a detailed and accurate budget for all resettlement assistance (including livelihood restoration and compensation. ASCENT will prepare the resettlement budget for each sub project and will finance this budget through the administrative and financial management rules and manuals like any other activity eligible for payment under the project. This budget will be subject to the approval of the World Bank.

With regard to budget, some of the costs of resettlement (e.g. professional services, site preparation, construction, etc.) can be financed from the Bank loan, while other costs (e.g. compensation payments, acquisition of land) cannot be financed from the Bank loan and must be borne out of counterpart (GoL) funds.

While the budget to implement RAPs/ARAPs, at this stage, is not possible to estimate with 100% certainty, it is estimated that about eighteen (18) RAPs or a Generic RAP for 18 Sub-projects will be prepared and is essential that financial resources are made available to ensure the preparation and implementation of this RPF and subsequent RAPs Thus, the following upfront budget or financial provision will be made in the PIU accounts to ensure the implementation of this RPF and the preparation of the relevant safeguards planning instruments.

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Table 11: Provisional RPF implementation and RAP Preparation Budget

Ref	Cost Item	Cost in Local Currency Maluti (M)	Cost in USD (16.33)
RAPs Preparation and Implementation Costs:			
A	Consultation Costs (18 consultation @ USD3,500)	1, 028,790.00	63,000.00
B	GRCs Running Costs (18 GRCS@USD3,800)	1,116,972.00	68,400.00
C	Supervision and Administrative Costs (18 RAPs @USD3,449.48)	720,000.00	44,090.6
D	RAP Preparation Costs (18 RAPs @USD6,123.70))	1,800,000.00	110, 226.58
E	Publication and Disclosure Costs (18 RAPs @USD333)	97,882.02	5,994.00
F	Capacity Building Plan	7,756,750.00	475,000.00
G	Total Cost (A+B+C+D+E=F)	12,520,394.20	766,711.18
H	Contingency 10%	1,252,039.42	76,671.12
Compensations and Resettlement Assistances Costs:			
I	Implementing 10 RAPs (18 RAPS@USD50,000.00)	14,697,000.00	900,000.00
J	**Grand Total (G+H+I)**	**M28,469,433.62**	**1,743,382.20**

As shown in the above table the overall RAPs/ARAPs cost is estimated at M28,469,433.62 or USD 1,743,382.20.

All RAPs preparation and implementation costs, including cost of compensation, LRP implementation, will be considered an integral part of Project cost and will be contributed as a section indicating (i) unit compensation rates for all affected items and allowances, (ii) methodology followed for the computation of unit compensation rates, and (iii) a cost table for all compensation and livelihood restoration expenses including administrative costs and contingencies.

As sub-projects are identified and prepares, the adequacy of the budget for land acquisition, compensation, livelihood restoration and other resettlement- related activities will be verified through the project planning and approval process. The Government of Lesotho will confirm the availability of counter funding for all resettlement obligations before the commencement of civil works. No civil works will process until sufficient funds have been allocated, approved and made available to fully implement the Resettlement Action Plan, including the payment of compensation

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and provision of requires resettlement assistance.

Based on the completed RAP, the ASCENT PIU will submit to the World Bank a detailed cost of resettlement and livelihood restoration, with a breakdown by agricultural land, residential land, houses, other assets, and livelihood restoration measures, allowances, transitional costs, etc.The cost estimates will make adequate provision for implementation services, monitoring and supervision and for contingencies.

A separate RAP is required wherever a subproject of the ASCENT program causes displacement of households, or where there is loss of, or loss of access to, assets, loss of income sources or means of livelihood. An outline of a RAP is presented in Annexure F. Each RAP must apply this Policy Framework. The content of each RAP needs not detail the information already covered in this RPF but should detail the characteristics of each subproject, the impacts and the measures to be implemented.

The RAPs will therefore be the vehicles for implementing this RPF, tailored to meet the particular sub-project activity circumstances and aligned to the World Bank ESS 5. RAP requirements and planning and approval procedures have been detailed earlier.

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Annex A: Checklist for Environmental and Social Screening Form

This screening form guides the PIU in assessing environmental and social risks of sub-project activities and selecting the appropriate environmental and social management plans. The form is part of the second stage of screening (the first stage being the Exclusion List in the ESMF).

1. Subproject Information

Subproject Title Subproject Location	
Regional Unit in Charge	
Estimated Cost	
Start/Completion Date	
Brief Description of Subproject	

2. Environmental and Social Screening Questionnaire

Questions	Yes	No	Next Steps
ESS1: Is the subproject likely to have significant adverse environmental impacts that are sensitive and unprecedented?			If Yes: Exclude from project.
ESS1: Does the subproject involve works with significant scope whose E&S impacts are not immediately known?			If Yes: Prepare ES Impact Assessment following TORs provided by ASCENT MPA.
ESS1: Does the subproject involve works with low/moderate foreseeable E&S impacts?			If Yes: Prepare an ESMP for the proposed subproject.
ESS2: Does the subproject involve use of forced labour, child labour, or exploitative forms of labour?			If Yes: Exclude from project.
ESS2: Does the subproject involve recruitment of workforce including direct, contracted, or community workers?			If Yes: Apply Labour Management Procedures.

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Questions	Yes	No	Next Steps
ESS3: Is the project likely to generate solid or liquid waste adversely impacting soil, water, or communities?			If Yes: Prepare site-specific ESMP.
ESS4: Is there a risk of increased community exposure to communicable disease?			If Yes: Apply LMP and relevant measures in SEP.
ESS4: Is there a risk that SEA/SH may increase as a result of project works?			If Yes: Apply LMP.
ESS5: Will the subproject require involuntary acquisition of new land?			If Yes: Apply project RPF.
ESS5: Will the subproject lead to temporary or permanent physical displacement?			If Yes: Apply project RPF.
ESS5: Will the subproject lead to economic displacement (loss of assets or livelihoods)?			If Yes: Apply project RPF.
ESS5: Is private land being voluntarily donated to the project?			If Yes: Apply project RPF voluntary donation provisions.
ESS6: Does the subproject involve activities that may significantly degrade critical habitats?			If Yes: Exclude from project.
ESS7: Are Indigenous Peoples or Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities present and likely to be negatively affected?			If Yes: Prepare Indigenous Peoples Plan.
ESS8: Is the subproject located adjacent to a sensitive historical, archaeological, or culturally significant site?			If Yes: Apply Chance Find Procedures.

3. Conclusion

Based on the screening results, list the E&S risk management instruments to be prepared / adopted and implemented:

a)
b)
c)
d)

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Recommendations:

……
……
……
……

Prepared by: ……
Signature: ……
Date: ……

Approved by: ……
Signature: ……
Date: ……

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Annexure B: Protocol for Voluntary Land Donation (VLD)

Voluntary land donation will be allowed

For small civil works PIU and the Technical Resettlement Committee will follow this Protocol for VLD.

Proposals including voluntary contributions will not be submitted or considered for approval where they would significantly harm incomes or living standards of individual owners or users.

During project implementation, PIU and the Technical Resettlement Committee will form a provincial and district multi-stakeholders committee ("Committee") to oversee the process and ensure that the voluntary land donations process is followed and implemented. The process will include the following protocols:

1. Official information and initial assessment. Determining the appropriateness of VLD in the circumstances of the project. The proponent will inform the village head and villagers or land owners and users through official notification of the areas needed for the project. Record and document the reasons why donation of land is appropriate for the project. The proponent and Technical Committee will take in consideration the following details for such documentation:

- What the land will be used for;
- How much land the project will require on both a permanent and temporary basis;
- How much of the land will be donated;
- What alternatives to donation exist (e.g., right of use, right of way, temporary permission to use);
- The terms of the donation;
- The identities of the parties who intend to donate;
- The beneficiary of the donation; and
- Any details that are relevant to why donation may be appropriate.

2. Verification of voluntary donations. The following conditions will be confirmed by the Multi-stakeholder Committee including the village chief.

- Confirmation that affected people agree to donate land and/or

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asset, based on a face to face meeting without presence of the proponent.

- No individual PAP or household would lose more than 10% of their total productive assets.
- The total land holding of any affected person should be 200m^2 or more.
- No physical relocation will be necessary as a result to the donation.

3. Initial Village Consultation. Under the village head leadership, a consultation process will be launched to invite different interested parties, including land owners and users to discuss and ratify the appropriateness of the voluntary basis of land donation.

4. Transferring and formalizing the land. The proponent shall establish and communicate to the PAPs, including potential donors, a process for land donation that includes very clear procedures that explain the process that should be followed to transfer the land, and appropriate ways to formalize the respective transfer. The process must include consideration of the legal and administrative requirements based on the Lesotho legal framework. The process will describe a clear and transparent decision making process.

5. Verification process (surveys) to identify land ownership and use. The proponent and the Technical Committee will carry out specific surveys to understand the type of land rights and uses that exist in the project area, and to identify any particular issues relating to land ownership and use. Specific surveys must be conducted on each parcel of land proposed for donation to identify:

- The owner or owners of the land;
- The users of the land, or any parties that occupy the land (either physically or through ownership of an asset or conduct of livelihood or business activities or resource use on the land);
- Any competing claims of ownership or use;
- Structures and assets on the land;
- Any encumbrances on the land.

5. Scope of Donation. It is important to: (i) identify the right that is being transferred (an ownership right, a use right, a right of way, etc.); and (ii) check whether the transferor actually has the right s/he claims to have. In many circumstances where careful due diligence is not carried out, significant conflict can arise at a later stage when another party claims that

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they have the same or a competing right. Documentary evidence that the transferor has the necessary rights is highly preferred and it must be validated by the due diligence process. However, where no documentary evidence exists, the due diligence can also establish rights by documenting the results of consultations with local community officials and neighbors. There should be a clear agreement as to whether the donation includes the land and all assets on it, or whether compensation for improvements, crops, trees, and any other standing assets as of the cut-off date is expected.

6. Public consultations and disclosure. The decision to donate must be taken on the basis of a full understanding of the project and the consequences of agreeing to donate the land. Accordingly, the parties that will be affected by the donation (the owners and users of the land) must be provided with accurate and accessible information regarding what the land will be used for, for how long, and the impact the donation will have on them and their families. It is important that prior written notification indicating the location and amount of land that is sought be provided and that its intended use for the project is disclosed.

Where the intention is to deprive the parties affected by the donation of the land permanently, or for a significant length of time, this must be made clear. It should be noted that in many communities the concept of alienation of land is uncommon and difficult to understand, and care needs to be taken to ensure that the implications of this are fully understood. It is also important to decide who else should be consulted about the proposed donation; for example, spouses and older children.

There should be a clear agreement as to which party will pay the costs associated with the transfer of the donated land. This could include measurement costs, documentation and notarial fees, transfer taxes, registration fees. It should also include the costs of re-measuring/re-titling the transferor's remaining land and any new documentation relating to it.

7. Establishing informed consent The proponent and the Committee will verify the informed consent or power of choice by the people who would donate the land/or assets. In particular, the following will be verified and documented in the voluntary donation report:

- What the land is going to be used for, by whom and for how long;
- That the donors and any users will be deprived of the ownership or right to use the land, and what this really means;

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- That the donors have a right to refuse to donate the land and any users have the right to object;
- Whether there are alternatives to using this land;
- What the donors will need to do to donate the land (e.g., execute documents, get spousal consents, pay taxes);
- The effect of the donation on their family, and what they can do if they (or their family or heirs) want the land back.
- All conditions provided in the para. 2 above.

The right to refuse must be a legitimate right, unconditional, and the potential transferor must be capable of exercising it in the local community and political context. For this reason, it is important to be sure that the decision to donate is undertaken without coercion, manipulation, or any form of pressure on the part of public or traditional authorities. For collective or communal land, donation must be based upon the informed consent of all individuals using or occupying the land.

8. Proper documentation. During the VLD process for each project or ancillary area, it is important to distinguish between: (a) the agreement to donate the land; and (b) the document that carries out and evidences the legal transfer of the land. While it is important to have evidence of an intention and agreement to donate the land, it is equally important to ensure, where required and appropriate, that the land is legally transferred. While the process relating to the legal transfer of the land is frequently complicated and time consuming, it must be addressed. In specific circumstances, for example where the land is being transferred to or by a community, experience indicates that lack of formal transfer can create significant uncertainty in the future, which impacts on the sustainability of the infrastructure and services, and can have a negative effect on community relations.

The proponent must:

- Identify the appropriate documentation, including the agreement to make the transfer and any legal documentation that may be required;
- Ensure that the agreement:
  - Refers to the consultation that has taken place;
  - Sets out the terms of the transfer;
  - Confirms that the decision to transfer was freely made, and

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was not subject to coercion, manipulation, or any form of pressure;

- Confirms that the donors are aware of their right not to donate and/or to be compensated;
- Attaches an accurate map of the land being transferred (boundaries, coordinates);
- Sets out who will bear the costs of the transfer (e.g., notarial fees, taxes, title issues) and documenting the residual land rights;
- Ensure that all necessary parties sign the documents, including obtaining consent from spouses and children over a certain age;
- Ensure that the transfer and title is registered or recorded; and
- Ensure that the land remaining after the donated land is excised is properly titled, registered or recorded.

It is also important to maintain a record of the process that has been followed, including:

- The notification indicating the location and amount of land that is sought and its intended use for the project, with a record of when and where this was made public;
- Records of the consultations that were held and what was discussed and agreed;
- Evidence of the due diligence that was conducted, including primary data, photographs, communications interchanged, etc.;
- Copies of each of the formal statements of donation, establishing informed consent as described above, and signed by each owner or user involved;
- Copies of all documents, registrations or records evidencing the legal transfer of the land;
- A map, showing each parcel of land.

The proponent will maintain a record with documentation for each parcel of land donated. Such documentation must be available for World Bank review, and for review in relation to any grievances that may arise.

9. Grievance redress arrangements. The project provides access to a GRM and specifies means by which donors (and, potentially, persons whose use or occupancy was not recognized in the transfer of land) may raise grievances, and measures to ensure consideration of, and timely

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response to, grievances raised. The grievance process includes participation of reviewers not directly affiliated with the proponent. The grievance process imposes no cost upon those raising grievances, and participation in the grievance process does not preclude pursuit of legal remedies under the laws of the country.

FORM for Voluntary Land Donation

Province / Region:	
District:	
Community:	
Sub-project ID:	

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Name of land owner:	ID Number:		Beneficiary of the project: Y/N	
Sex:	Age:		Occupation:	
Address:				
Description of land that will be taken for the project:	Area affected:	Total landholding area:	Ratio of land affected to total land held:	Map code, if available:
Description of annual crops growing on the land now and project impact:				
	Details		Number	
□ Trees that will be destroyed				
□ Fruit trees				
□ Trees used for other economic or household purposes				
□ Mature forest trees				
□ Other				
Describe any other assets that will be lost or must be moved to implement the project:				
Value of donated assets: Landrights- Other assets-				

The land user or donor confirms that he/she received information on the project and understands that the above assets will be (permanently/temporarily) transferred and that he/she will have no access to the land or assets for (specify time or restricted uses).

By signing or providing thumb-print on this form, the land user or owner agrees to contribute assets to the project. The land user or owner confirms that the contribution is voluntary and that he/she understands that he/she

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has the choice to require compensation, and that by signing or providing his/her thumb print he/she agrees not to request any such compensation now or in the future [except as agreed in Annex XX hereto –Note: include an annex with any compensation for assets, transfer costs, etc.— if applicable]

If the land user or owner does not want to contribute his/ her assets to the project, he or she should refuse to sign or provide thumb print[13], and ask for compensation instead.

Date:	Date: .....
District PMO representative's signature	Affected persons signature (both husband and wife)

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Annex c: ASSET INVENTORY

ASCENT PROJECT

Tool No.	**VC**

Inventory of Affected Properties and Services Tool

Coordinates of Homestead	**Degrees South:**
	Degrees East:
Identity Number	
Name of Interviewee/Service Provider	
Contact Details	
Name of Village	
Name of Chief	
Date of Interview	
Name of Interviewer	
Date Checked	
Signature of Supervisor	

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1. **The planned electrification project may use a portion of your property(ies) or service centre if it lies on the line route. Would you object to this?** (**X** in box)

Yes	1	
No	2	

2. **Type of affected Property(ies)/Service Centre(s)**

Type of affected Asset/Service Centre	**Code**	**X** in box
Undeveloped site	1	
Field	2	
Main house	3	
Off-building(s)	4	
Other building	5	
Latrine	6	
Service centre	7	
Backyard garden	8	
Non-fruit-bearing trees	9	
Fruit-bearing trees	10	
Livestock kraal	11	
Graves	12	
Other (Specify)	13	

3. **Main use of Property(ies)/Service Centre(s) to be appropriated:**

Main Use of Asset (Enter code)	**Code**	**X** in box
Unused	1	
Residential	2	
Cropland	3	
Shop	4	
Workshop/storage	5	
Impounding livestock	6	
Business	7	
Waste disposal	8	
Vegetable growing	9	
Other (Specify)	10	

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4. **Do you have proof of ownership of the property (ies) and/or service centre(s) listed above?(X** in box)

Answer	Code	**X** in box
Yes to all	1	
Yes to some	2	
No	3	

5. **If Yes (some or all) in No. 4 above, please specify type of proof**

	Codes for Proof: 1=Lease 2=Form C 3=License 5=Other (Specify)	
Proof of ownership for affected Asset/Service Centre	**Code**	**X** in box
Undeveloped site		
Field		
Main house		
Service centre		
Other Structure (Specify)		

6. **Specify sources of Impact on affected Property(ies)/Service Centre(s)**

Source of Impact	**X** in box	**Number (For poles & stays**	**Total Area (m^2)**
Site Camp		-	
Work site		-	
Transformer		-	
Excavation for 11m pole			
Excavation for 9m pole			
Excavation for 7m pole			

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Excavation for HV stays			
Excavation for LV stays			
Overhead cable line (8m clearance on both sides		-	
Other (Specify)			

7. **If your property(ies/service centre(s) is/are appropriated, what would be your preferred type of compensation?**

Type of Desired compensation	**Code**	**X** in box
Cash compensation	1	
Relocation to alternative property of equal value	2	
None	3	
Other in-kind compensation (Specify.....)	4	

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8. Visual Presentation of Affected properties and Service Centres

1. Facial Photograph of Property Owner/Service Provider	**2. Photograph of Affected Property 1**
3. Photograph of Affected Property 2	**4 Photograph of Affected Property 3**
5. Photograph of Service Centre (With Measurements)	**6. Site Plan of affected property(ies)/Service Centre(s) (With Measurements)**

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ANNEXURE D: ACTUAL COMPENSATION RECEIPT FORM

PAYMENT OF COMPENSATION FOR ASCENT

I _____from the village of _____in the district of _____, hereby confirm that I have received compensation amounting to _____ _____from the ASCENT for all my affected property as per the re – construction form which was completed.

I hereby confirm that I am satisfied with the compensation given and that I am not expecting any other compensation except this one.

Name and Surname: _____

Signature: _____Date: _____

Witness Name and surname: _____

Signature: _____Date: _____

HO LEFSHOA HOA MATŜELISO PROJECT EA ASCENT

'Na_____oa motseng oa _____ seterekeng sa_____ ke bolela mona hore ke amohetse chelete a kaalo ka M600.00 ho tsoa LEC ele matŝeliso a karoloana ea t'simo ea ka e ileng sa angoa ke ho hloma lipalo ha hone ho etsoa tsebetso thepeng ea motlakase.

'Me ke khotsofetse ke matŝeliso ana, ha kea labella a mang.

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Lebitso le fane:

_____

Tekeno: _____ Letsatsi: _____

Paki: _____ Letsatsi: _____

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Project Grievance Register Template	Notes		
	Escalation	Escalation of grievance (e.g. LEC/ PIU)	
	Method of Resolution	Methods of resolution (optional) eg: negotiated, mediated, apology	
	About the Compl	If a resolution was offered please indicate 'accepted' or 'not accepted'.	
		Outcome	
		Root cause of the grievance (see also Explanations tab and List of Root Causes)	
		Type of grievance (administrative or	
		Reporting method (F2F, suggestion box, online, social media, email, in writing,	
	About the PAP	Stakeholder (employee, PAP, community)	
		Community council/village	
		District	
		Name & Surname	

	Identifiers	**Date closed**	
		Date received	
		ID	

ANNEXURE E: GRIEVANCE RESOLUTION FORM

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ANNEXURE E: EXPLANATIONS OF FIELDS IN THE GRIEVANCE REGISTER

Type of grievance (please indicate 'administrative' or 'operational')	Please indicate whether the grievance was classified as 'administrative' or 'operational' in nature, according to the Complaints and Grievances Procedures.
Service provider	LEC/DoE
Root cause of the grievance (if possible please choose cause from list under the Explanations tab)	Please name the process or type of decision that was the root cause of the grievance.
Escalation of grievance (ie: LEC, DoE)	Please indicate if you are aware of the stakeholder pursuing the matter further through other avenues outside the PIU. If not known, indicate 'unknown'. The timelines for external reviews can be lengthy in many cases. Information in this column will only reflect what is known at the time of reporting, either via notification by the external body or stakeholder.

ANNEXURE F: OUTLINE OF THE RAP

Guidance of contents of a RAP

The scope and level of detail of a resettlement plan varies with the magnitude and complexity of the resettlement. RAPs are context and project specific and have to be adapted for each project's circumstance, as there is no "one-size-fits-all" plan. However, there are clear international guidelines as to what a good practise RAP should contain. The RAP must also adhere to the principles and guidelines set out in the RPF including the Entitlement Matrix and take into account all provisions of ESS5.

The table below describes a typical RAP outline and content of such a plan and is intended to be indicative. Each RAP should include the sections indicated in the table below and where a section is not relevant to the project in question (e.g. the project does not result in physical displacement), this should be noted in the document so that there is no room for doubt. Additional elements, as site specific issues may require, should be added.

Section	Section Heading	Content Description
1	Introduction	General description of the project activities and infrastructure (including any ancillary and associated facilities) and identification of the project area. Identify the project component or activities that unavoidably cause land acquisition and resettlement. Outline the main objectives of the resettlement program and a summary of studies undertaken in support of resettlement minimization, planning and implementation, e.g., alternative analyses, census surveys, socio-economic studies, meetings, site selection studies, etc.

2	Potential Project Impacts	Describe and analyse the resettlement impacts. These impacts may involve some or all of the following and may be permanent or temporary: • loss of homes and ancillary structures (houses, chicken coops, stalls, etc.); • loss of agricultural land and possible loss of crops; • Loss of grazing land; • Loss of fruit trees; • Loss of access to communal resources (e.g. foraging, firewood collection, wildlife and the like); • Loss of graves and sacred sites; • Loss of social infrastructure (schools, clinics and water pumps); • Loss or access to markets or services • Disruption of livelihood activities, business or employment including lost income • Temporary loss of access to some resources due to restrictions on access during construction for safety or connectivity reasons; and • Permanent loss of access to some resources as a result of exclusion zones around certain project infrastructure.

		• Transitional and transaction costs Host communities may also experience impacts from receiving resettled communities. These impacts will depend on the nature of the selected replacement sites but may include: • Increased demands on existing social facilities (e.g. schools, clinics, etc.); • Increased demands on existing roads and services (e.g. water, waste management, etc.); • Increased demands on common resources (e.g. foraging, firewood collection, wildlife and the like). Describe efforts made to minimize displacement and the results of these efforts including alternatives considered to avoid or minimize resettlement and why not selected, and the mechanisms established to minimize resettlement and livelihood impacts to the extent possible during project implementation.

3	Census and Socio-economic Surveys	Socio-economic studies and census surveys are conducted of affected households to define pre-project standards of living and livelihoods and to gain an understanding of households' systems of production and income sources. Both quantitative and qualitative survey techniques may be utilized. The socio-economic surveys will contribute to the Resettlement team's understanding of local livelihood systems and the type of mitigation options that would be appropriate. Information needs to be collected about households, number of members and individuals affected by the project, the size of affected land (cultivated land and/or gazing land, improvements to land such as buildings), number of trees, land ownership, land use, occupiers of land and access to natural resources from which people derive their livelihoods. If the land is cultivated, information needs to be gathered on the type of plants, expected yield, and other similar data. The study investigates the patterns of social interaction in the affected communities, the social and cultural characteristics including social networks and social support systems. Data on public infrastructure and social services that will be affected are also gathered. The asset and activity inventory will provide the basis for defining which households are eligible for compensation, the extent of their losses and what their entitlements will be for compensation and other forms of resettlement assistance. The studies will also be tailored to provide baseline information against which the effectiveness of post-resettlement livelihood restoration programs can be monitored.
4	Assistance to Vulnerable Persons and Groups	Vulnerable persons and groups who might require special assistance need to be identified and consulted with. The following criteria for the classification of people/groups as vulnerable may be considered: • Physical disability;

		• Mental disability; • Social handicaps (i.e. albinos); • Ethnic, religious or gender minorities • Those living below the poverty line (ultra-poor) • Single mothers; • Widows; • Female headed households; • Orphans; • Child headed households; • Elderly (above the age of 60); • Persons with chronic/incapacitating disease; and • Any other marginalized group(s) that are identified by census and surveys.
5	Regulatory and Legal Framework	An analysis of the legal framework reflecting the gap analysis presented in this RPF covering the following aspects: • Law governing land tenure, valuation of assets and losses, compensation, and customary law regarding natural resource usage rights. • Law covering rights and obligations regarding consultation. • The legal and administrative procedures available to displaced persons in the judicial process. • The gap;filling measures to fulfill the requirements of ESS 5 It is considered good practice to prepare the RAP also taking into account the norms and practices of the affected communities.

6	Replacement Area selection and Resettlement Sites	Describe the consultation process with affected communities, the Provincial and Local Governments in the identification, evaluation, and selection of preferred replacement land. Activities will include: • Consultation with affected communities to identify their preferences and requirements; • Consultation with affected communities about allocation of agricultural or grazing land; • Identification and evaluation of potential replacement site options; • Description of site investigations to confirm the suitability of the preferred land; • Consultation with any host or receiving communities; • Developing housing designs in consultation with affected communities; • Developing replacement housing construction budgets and schedule.
7	Compensation Framework – valuation,	Define the compensation framework for the Project. This will be developed in accordance with the eligibility matrix included in this RPF and in close consultation with the Affected Community and will define the following:

	eligibility and entitlements	• Valuation basis – the types of assets, land improvements and losses that will be considered for compensation, the basis for their measurement and valuation, and rates for compensation to achieve full replacement cost • Eligibility criteria – to define which categories of displaced land users, occupiers and enterprises will be eligible to receive compensation and resettlement assistance through the application of the Entitlement matrix to the situation on the ground; and • Entitlements – to define the entitlements (compensation, livelihood restoration assistance, and other kinds of resettlement assistance) for each category of eligible user, occupier, etc. • In consultation with affected communities, the Project will develop packages of monetary compensation, in-kind compensation, and other forms of assistance to assist eligible households and individuals to restore or improve their living conditions and livelihoods. These will be documented in signed agreements (including co-signing by spouses and domestic partners or co-owners) at the household level
8	Livelihood Restoration Plan	In consultation with affected persons and communities, develop livelihood restoration plan covering agriculture and non-land based livelihoods to ensure the improvement of productive strategies of physically and economically displaced communities and households. Identify the indicators of success including income HH income streams, food security, better housing and assets; access to markets and services

9	Institutional Arrangements	Describe the organizational framework and arrangements for implementing resettlement, livelihood restoration and all supporting aspects of the RAP: • including identification of agencies responsible for delivery of resettlement and livelihood restoration measures and provision of services; • arrangements to ensure appropriate coordination between agencies involved in implementation; • measures (including technical assistance) needed to strengthen the implementing agencies' capacity to design and carry out resettlement activities; • provisions for the transfer to local authorities or PAPs themselves of responsibility for managing facilities; • Arrangements for services provided under the project and for transferring other such responsibilities from the resettlement implementing agency.
10	Implementation Schedule	Prepare a time bound implementation schedule for land acquisition and resettlement and livelihood restoration in conjunction with the agreed implementation schedule for-project components, showing how PAPs will be compensated
		and receive all relocation related assistance before actual acquisition of the affected land. Describe the implementation schedule covering all resettlement activities from preparation through implementation, including target dates for compensation to PAPs and implementing the various forms of assistance including livelihood restoration The schedule should indicate the linkage between resettlement and initiation of civil works for each of the project components and timelines for deliverables and all post resettlement assistance.

11	Stakeholder Engagement and Affected Community Participation	The participation of the affected communities, as well as host communities, is a vital aspect of the development and communication of the resettlement plan. Resettlement and livelihood restoration will never succeed without the full participation of the affected community. Decisions need to be taken with, and not for, the community. The following is a summary of important aspects regarding stakeholder engagement and community participation: • A strategy for consultation and participation of PAPs, in the design, implementation and monitoring of the resettlement activities, needs to be designed. • Pertinent project impact and resettlement and livelihoods related information is to be disclosed to the affected people at key points, and specific opportunities provided for them to participate in choosing and planning the resettlement options. • Institutional arrangements need to be developed and communicated on how PAPs can communicate their concerns or grievances to project authorities. • Measures to ensure a transparent and fair consultation process should be designed; this implies that vulnerable groups and women are adequately represented. • The resettlement process should be an educational process, which informs people of their rights in a clear and unambiguous manner. • Community leaders should be approached to facilitate access to the community, but consultation and decision-making needs to involve the entire community.
12	Grievance Procedure	Grievance procedures should be developed which incorporates transparent and fair procedures for communication and settlement of disputes. The grievance mechanisms should take into account community and traditional dispute settlement mechanisms. Grievance procedures should describe: • The step-by-step process for registering and addressing grievances and provide specific details regarding a process for registering complaints, response time, and communication modes. • The mechanism for appeal.

		• The provisions for approaching Courts and WBG mechanisms if other options fail. • The mechanism needs to be available from the early stages of RAP preparation
13	Monitoring and Evaluation	Describe the arrangements for monitoring of resettlement activities by the implementing agency, supplemented by community monitoring and independent monitoring to ensure complete and objective information. The objective of Monitoring and Evaluation is to evaluate the impact of resettlement and livelihoods restoration for a reasonable period after all resettlement and related development activities have been completed. The monitoring process should incorporate PAP feedback mechanisms. The system must have indicators of success selected in consultation with PAPs to be measured against pre-resettlement guidelines (such as HH income streams, food security, better housing and assets; access to markets and services, etc.)
14	Costs and Budgets	Prepare budget showing itemized cost estimates for all resettlement and livelihood restoration activities, including allowances for inflation, and other contingencies; timetables for expenditures; sources of funds; and arrangements for flow of funds.
15	Annexes	Provide copies of census and survey instruments, interview formats, and any other data gathering tools. Provide information on all public consultation including announcements and schedules of public meetings, meeting minutes, and lists of attendees and summary of community concerns, how addressed in the RAP and feedback provided