



SECU
Social & Environmental
Compliance Unit

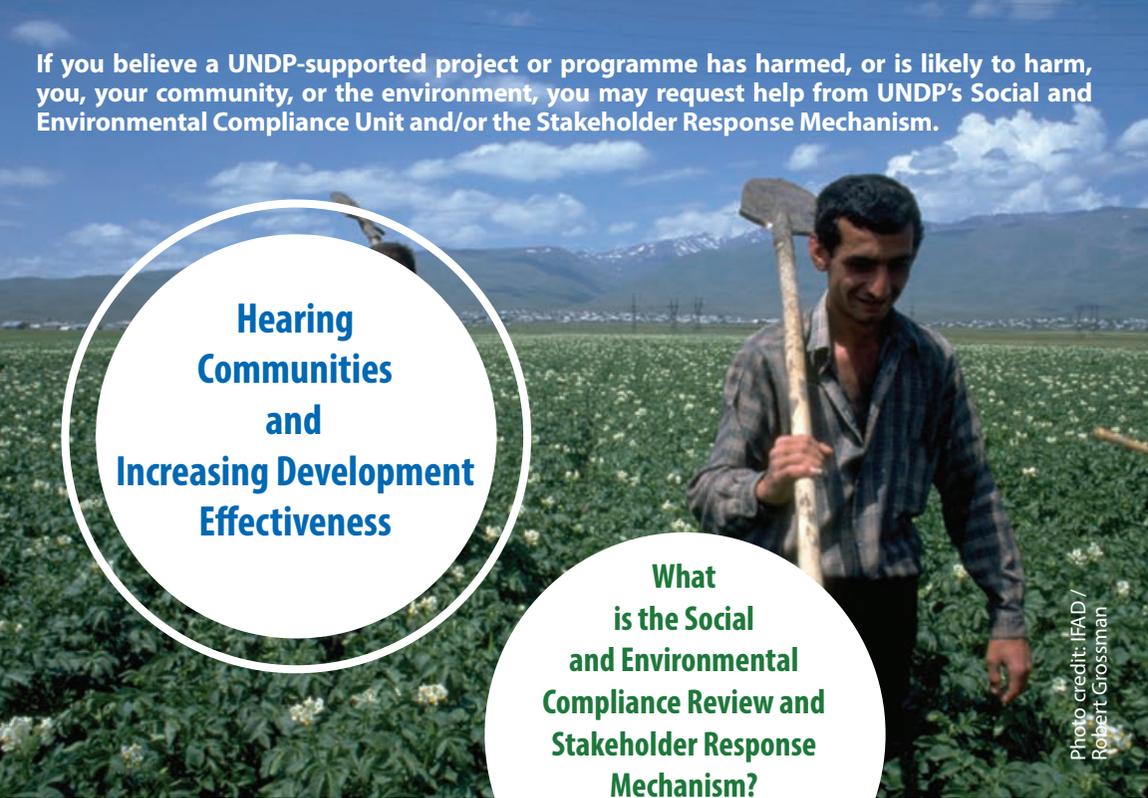
SRM
Stakeholder
Response Mechanism



*Empowered lives.
Resilient nations.*

**Social and
Environmental
Compliance Review
and
Stakeholder Response
Mechanism**

If you believe a UNDP-supported project or programme has harmed, or is likely to harm, you, your community, or the environment, you may request help from UNDP's Social and Environmental Compliance Unit and/or the Stakeholder Response Mechanism.



**Hearing
Communities
and
Increasing Development
Effectiveness**

**What
is the Social
and Environmental
Compliance Review and
Stakeholder Response
Mechanism?**

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Robert Grossman

As of January 1, 2015, the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) provides two new approaches to respond to concerns related to UNDP-supported projects and programmes.

The Social and Environmental Compliance Unit (SECU) investigates alleged non-compliance with UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards and Screening Procedure from project-affected stakeholders and recommends measures to address findings of non-compliance.

The Stakeholder Response Mechanism (SRM) helps project-affected stakeholders, UNDP's partners (governments, NGOs, businesses) and others jointly address grievances or disputes related to the social and/or environmental impacts of UNDP-supported projects.

Affected people have a choice: They can ask SECU to pursue a compliance review examining UNDP's compliance with UNDP social and environmental commitments, they can attempt to resolve complaints and disputes through the Stakeholder Response Mechanism, or they can ask both for compliance review and for an effort to resolve their concerns.

Social and Environmental Compliance Unit's Role – Responding to Concerns Relating to UNDP Social and Environmental Commitments

UNDP established SECU to ensure accountability to individuals and communities. SECU responds to complaints that UNDP may not be meeting its social and environmental commitments.

Policy Basis

Starting on 1 January 2015, SECU ensures compliance with the following commitments:

- [UNDP's Social and Environmental Standards \(SES\)](#);
- [The Social and Environmental Screening Procedure \(SESP\)](#); and
- Social and environmental commitments made by UNDP in the context of a specific funding programme or project.

The compliance review process for pre-2015 projects for which UNDP has committed to provide compliance review will apply to commitments reflected in the project document, and, for projects supported by the Forest Carbon Partnership Facility (FCPF), the [Common Approach to Environmental and Social Safeguards for Multiple Delivery Partners](#).

Who May File a Complaint?

Any person or community who believes the environment or their wellbeing may be affected by a UNDP-supported project or programme may file a complaint. A representative, such as a civil society organization, may also file a complaint on behalf of affected communities. People who file complaints may request that SECU protect their names and identities.

How Does Compliance Review Work?

SECU assesses each complaint in an independent, impartial, and transparent manner, following a specific procedure for every case:

- First, SECU determines if the complaint can be accepted by asking the following questions: Does it relate to a project or programme that is receiving financial or other support from UNDP? Is it submitted by, or on behalf of, people affected by the activity? Does it raise issues relating to compliance with UNDP's social and environmental commitments?





Photo credit: IFAD / Aubrey Wade

- SECU will then investigate whether UNDP is meeting its social and environmental commitments, and recommend measures UNDP can take to meet commitments that have not been met. A report with this information will be provided to project-affected stakeholders and made public.

The Stakeholder Response Mechanism – Helping Parties Resolve Disputes

The Stakeholder Response Mechanism helps project-affected stakeholders, governments and others partners jointly resolve concerns and disputes. It is available when Implementing Partner and UNDP project-level stakeholder engagement processes have not successfully resolved issues of concern. UNDP Country Office management normally leads in Stakeholder Response; a headquarters function will also support the SRM.

The Stakeholder Response Mechanism can help affected people, government agencies, and other project and program stakeholders, start or restart dialogue, facilitate discussions, mediate disputes, enhance understanding of the facts, and undertake other activities that might help resolve concerns and disputes.

Who May Request the Stakeholder Response Mechanism?

Any person or community potentially affected by a UNDP-supported project may file a request for a response from the Stakeholder Response Mechanism, if they have raised their concerns with Implementing Partners and/or with UNDP through standard channels for stakeholder consultation and engagement and have not been satisfied with the response. The request must relate to a UNDP-supported project and a possible environmental or social impact, and identify how the Requestors have been, or may be, adversely affected by the UNDP project or programme. If a person or community has a concern about the ability of the UNDP Country Office to respond fairly and effectively to the request, they have the option to file the request directly with the Stakeholder Response

Mechanism at UNDP Headquarters in New York. Requests can be sent to the SRM through the Internet or through the mail.

Normally, a Country Office Designee will review requests for use of the SRM, and share them with the Headquarters staff supporting the SRM for additional input. When SRM are filed through Headquarters, the Headquarters SRM staff will review any concerns raised about the involvement of the Country Office, and decide how best to proceed with the process.

- **The Country Office Designee (and/or Headquarters SRM staff) will first determine, by asking the following questions, if the request is appropriate for the Stakeholder Response Mechanism:**
 - Does the request relate to a UNDP-supported project?
 - Have the requestors provided enough information to establish the possibility that they may be, or may have been, adversely affected by the project?
 - Have the requestors attempted to resolve issues through Implementing Partner or UNDP project stakeholder engagement processes?
- **If the request appears to be eligible, the appropriate UNDP Stakeholder Response Mechanism staff will then assess the potential for a response process to succeed. The UNDP staff may**
 - Contact the requestor directly to learn more about the situation and issues that have led to the request;
 - Contact other stakeholders within UNDP and among programme and project partners, to ask about issues raised in the request and ways to resolve those issues (maintaining confidentiality of the re-questor's identity if so requested)
 - Suggest specific actions to UNDP and other stakeholders, if it appears that the complaint or dispute may be relatively easy for the stakeholders to resolve.
- **If the assessment suggests the need for a process of dialogue and negotiation among the requestor and other stakeholders through the SRM, the UNDP lead staff will propose such a process, and seek agreement among the primary stakeholders - including the requestors, affected people, project sponsors, the host government, and UNDP – on how to proceed. The process will be tailored to the needs of the requestors and stakeholders.**
- **The involvement of the Stakeholder Response Mechanism will continue as long as the stakeholders believe it is beneficial, or until agreement is reached. One or more stakeholders may decide not to proceed while the process continues. If stakeholders leave, UNDP will decide if and when the process will end.**

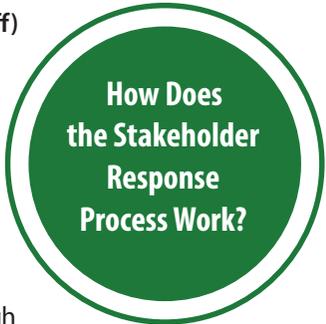




Photo credit: UN Photo

- When agreement is reached among all participating stakeholders, the SRM will submit a report describing this agreement to UNDP staff, the UNDP Administrator, and all participating stakeholders.
- Where appropriate, a plan for monitoring the implementation of the agreement will be part of an agreement, and UNDP will issue a monitoring report at least annually.

What to include in a Request for the SRM:

There are no strict format or language requirements. It is helpful if the request includes the following information:

- Name, address, telephone number, and other contact information.
- Whether the Requestors wish to keep their identity confidential during the initial assessment — the requestors may not remain anonymous while engaged in the dispute resolution process.
- Name, location, and nature of the UNDP project or programme.
- How the Requestors believe they have been, or are likely to be, adversely affected by the UNDP-supported project or programme.
- A description of other efforts, including other dispute resolution processes, the Requestors have undertaken to resolve their concerns.
- The requestors' interest in working with other stakeholders to resolve their concerns.
- If a third party, such as a civil society organization, is filing a request on behalf of an affected individual or community, the request should include evidence the third party is working on behalf of the individual or community.

Where to File the Request:

Requests may be made through the UNDP Country Office in the country where the requestor lives, or through the UNDP SRM at UNDP Headquarters in New York. Requests can be made through an online request form, email, toll-free telephone hotline (in any language), mail, fax, or an in-person meeting with the Country Office Designee, or the Stakeholder Response Mechanism.

Efforts are currently underway to establish an online request form for both SECU and the SRM. In the meantime, please contact SECU at: secuhotline@undp.org and the SRM at: stakeholder.response@undp.org.

For more information, see the below references:

[Social and Environmental Standards](#)

[Social and Environmental Screening Procedure](#)

[Stakeholder Response Mechanism Overview and Guidance](#)

[Standard Operating Procedures for Social and Environmental Compliance Unit](#)

[FCPF/UN-REDD Guidance Note for REDD+ Countries: Establishing and Strengthening Grievance Redress Mechanism](#)

[Public website](#)

[Toolkit](#) and [Teamworks](#) (for UNDP staff only)



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