



Vi Agroforestry

Vi Agroforestry Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) and Procedures

Introduction

Vi Agroforestry is committed to ensuring transparency, accountability, and inclusiveness in the implementation of its projects, especially those related to climate change and carbon credits in East Africa. To uphold this commitment, Vi Agroforestry provides a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) to address concerns and complaints from individuals, communities, or stakeholders affected by its activities. To maintain good community relations, Vi Agroforestry is cognizant of the significance of timely and efficient response to complaints. Moreover, Vi Agroforestry understands that despite best efforts, grievances will emerge and so a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) has been devised to be implemented across all projects and at project's life cycle to manage any grievances effectively. This will be in alignment with the UN Guiding Principles on Business and Human Rights to protect all parties involved. This mechanism is therefore designed to be accessible, fair, transparent, and responsive to all stakeholders, ensuring that grievances are addressed promptly and effectively.

Objectives of the GRM

A grievance can be defined as an *actual or perceived problem that might give grounds for a claim*. This GRM aims to:

- Provide a transparent process for individuals, groups, or communities to raise concerns related to the impact of Vi Agroforestry's projects.
- Resolve grievances in a timely and effective manner
- Promote transparency, accountability and improve the implementation of climate change and carbon credit projects by identifying and addressing issues early.
- Foster trust between Vi Agroforestry, project beneficiaries, and stakeholders by maintaining open communication.
- Ensure the mechanism is culturally appropriate, non-discriminatory, and inclusive particularly for vulnerable or marginalized groups.
- To gather feedback to improve project operations and comply with sustainability standards.

Key Principles of the Grievance Redress Mechanism

1. **Accessibility:** The GRM will be easily accessible (at no cost) to all project-affected people, including marginalized and vulnerable groups, through multiple channels (e.g., in person, by phone, email, or suggestion boxes)

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2. **Confidentiality:** Vi Agroforestry will ensure confidentiality of all grievances received, especially when anonymity is requested by the complainant.
3. **Non-retaliation:** There will be no retaliation or adverse consequences for individuals or groups that raise grievances.
4. **Timeliness:** The grievance procedure will include clear timeframes for each step, ensuring complaints are addressed promptly.
5. **Transparency:** All stakeholders will be kept informed throughout the process of lodging and resolving grievances.
6. **Impartiality:** Grievances will be handled in a fair, transparent, and unbiased manner. In case of an appeal, a third party will be involved – the identified third party must meet the minimum requirements of a good reputation and professionalism, ensuring impartiality is achieved.
7. **Cultural and Gender Sensitivity:** The mechanism will consider local cultures, languages, and gender dynamics to ensure it is respectful and inclusive.

GRM applicability

Grievances may be lodged by any affected person, community, or stakeholder, including project beneficiaries, partners, or external observers. They can be submitted anonymously and in local languages when deemed necessary. Additionally, a grievance recording template containing a list of what information will be needed will be provided. Complainants can raise issues related to Vi agroforestry's activities and related impacts. However, the Vi agroforestry GRM cannot accept a complain if it is:

- About a project or activities where Vi agroforestry is not involved either directly or indirectly.
- Any complains classified as “whistleblowing reports” thereof defined as any communication, including anonymous ones, regarding conduct that has occurred or is highly likely to occur in violation of laws and regulations, directives from authorities or Vi Agroforestry's internal policies. Any such issue should be communicated directly to Vi Agroforestry either in person through conversations with the Vi Agroforestry personnel, written correspondence or website (<https://report.whistleb.com/en/viagroforestry>) dedicated for whistleblowing reports.

Grievance Redress Procedure

1. Submission of Grievances.

Grievances can be submitted through multiple channels, including

- **In person:** At Vi Agroforestry's project offices in the relevant country
- **Toll free number:** +254 800 721288
- **Email:** safeguarding.eafrica@viagroforestry.org

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- **Suggestion/Grievance Boxes:** Located at local offices or project sites for anonymous submissions.
- **Project/field officers:** can receive and document complaints during site visits.
- **Local community representatives:** In cases where access to digital or physical channels is limited.

2. Acknowledgment

Upon receiving a grievance, the Vi Agroforestry team will:

- Acknowledge receipt of the grievance in writing (or through other appropriate channels).
- Assign a grievance ID number for tracking purposes.
- Inform the complainant of the next steps in the grievance process.

3. Screening and Classification

The grievance will be reviewed and classified to determine the nature, urgency, and complexity of the issue as well as the appropriate response team. Grievances will be categorized as:

- Level 1 (Low Risk): Minor issues that can be resolved quickly and without extensive investigation.
- Level 2 (Medium Risk): Issues requiring further investigation and coordination among different teams.
- Level 3 (High Risk): Complex issues or those that may involve significant risk to stakeholders or the project, requiring the involvement of senior management or external parties.

4. Investigation and Response.

For grievances classified as Level 2 or 3, a thorough investigation will be conducted by a designated grievance committee. The investigation may involve:

- Interviews with the complainant and other relevant parties.
- Site visits to verify claims.
- Review of relevant documents and project activities.

For Level 1 grievances, an immediate response will be provided, often within 10 working days.

The committee responsible will:

- Propose a solution or recommend corrective actions.
- Involve external experts or mediators if required for complex grievances.

5. Resolution and Feedback

Once the investigation is complete, Vi Agroforestry will provide a formal response to the complainant, including:

- The findings of the investigation.
- Proposed corrective actions (if any).

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- A clear timeline for implementing the resolution.

Feedback will be provided in a form accessible to the complainant (e.g., in person, via email, or in writing) within **5 working days** after the resolution has been made.

6. Appeal Process

If the complainant is not satisfied with the resolution, they may:

- Appeal the decision within 15 working days of receiving the response.
- Request that grievance be escalated to an external mediator. If mediation fails, grievances shall be referred to: (a) arbitration in accordance with the ***Kenyan Arbitration Act (CAP 49)***, to the extent permitted by law; or (b) the competent courts of Kenya, without prejudice to a party's right to submit the grievance to any applicable supranational adjudicatory body, if available. The appeal will be reviewed, and a final decision provided.

7. Public Disclosure and Accessibility

The GRM shall be publicly available on the project website, community notice boards, and shared during stakeholder meetings. To ensure all stakeholders are aware of the GRM, Vi Agroforestry will:

- Conduct community awareness-raising sessions at the beginning of every project phase.
- Distribute informational materials in local languages, explaining how to access and use the GRM.
- Ensure that all project staff, community representatives, and partners are trained in grievance handling procedures.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

All grievances and their resolutions will be documented and logged in a grievance database for monitoring purposes. Annual reports will be produced to assess:

- The number of grievances received classified by their severity
- The resolution timeframes. And the percentage of resolved grievances.
- Lessons learned and potential improvements to project implementation or the GRM process. A feedback questionnaire (*annexed*) will be shared with the complainant after the resolution to monitor satisfaction with the GRM.

A **grievance audit** will be conducted at least once every 3 years by an external auditor to ensure the integrity and effectiveness of the GRM and to make any necessary adjustments. Annual reports will be prepared on grievances received, resolved, and any actions taken to prevent recurrence.

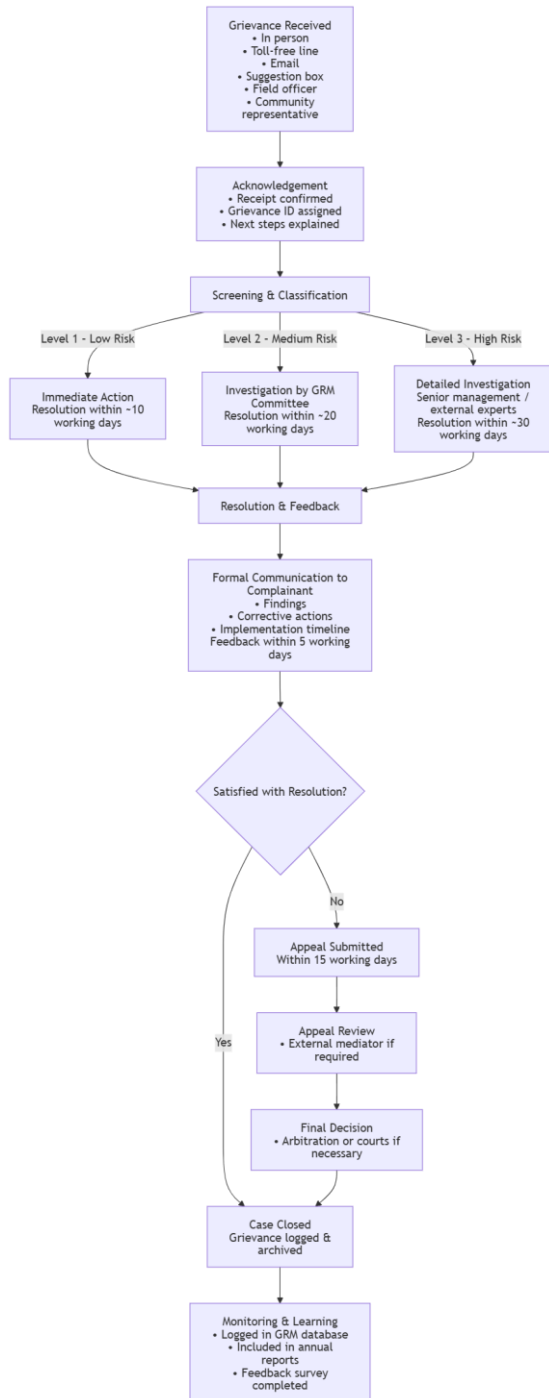
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Figur 1: End to GRM process

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Conclusion

KACP's GRM provides a structured, transparent, and accessible process for resolving grievances that arise during the implementation of its climate change and carbon projects in East Africa. By fostering accountability and dialogue with affected communities, this mechanism will enhance the sustainability and impact of Vi Agroforestry's initiatives.

Appendix: Grievance Reporting Form

If you have any request, complaint or claim related to any component of Vi Agroforestry's work or implementing partner please fill out the form below. If it is a complaint or grievance about governance or corruption, the whole reception and handling procedure will be a confidential part of the project file in the registry platform. If you wish your complaint or grievance to be treated confidentially, please tick the appropriate box below.

1. Type of grievance i. Request ii. Complaint iii. Claim
2. Do you want your request, complaint, or grievance to be treated confidentially?
i. Yes ii. No
3. Full name:
4. Organization/Group:
5. Is your request, complaint or claim in a personal, group or institutional capacity?
i. Personal ii. Group iii. Institutional
6. For response, please leave us your email address, phone number, postal address or WhatsApp.
7. Request, complaint or grievance description

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Grievance feedback survey form

This section is completed after all agreed actions have been implemented.

Case Number	
Action Implementation Date	

Complainant Satisfied with process? Yes No

Complainant Satisfied with the outcome? Yes No

Additional comments:

Complainant Signature: _____

Date: _____

Investigator Signature: _____

Date: _____

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