

Preliminary Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

**KOSOVO EMERGENCY COVID-19 RESPONSE
PROJECT**

and

**Additional Financing (AF) to Kosovo Emergency
COVID-19 Project (P173819)**

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Contents

List of Acronyms	2
1.Introduction/Project Description	3
2. Stakeholder identification and analysis	11
2.1 Methodology	12
2.2. Affected parties	13
2.3. Other interested parties	13
2.4. Disadvantaged / vulnerable individuals or groups	13
3. Stakeholder Engagement Program	14
3.1. Summary of stakeholder engagement done during project preparation and implementation until now	14
3.2. Summary of project stakeholder needs and methods, tools and techniques for stakeholder engagement	16
3.3. Proposed strategy for information disclosure	18
3.4. Stakeholder Engagement Plan	21
3.5. Future of the project	27
3.6 Proposed strategy to incorporate the views of vulnerable groups	27
3.7. Reporting back to stakeholders	29
4. Resources and Responsibilities for implementing stakeholder engagement activities	29
4.1. Resources	29
4.2. Management functions and responsibilities	29
5. Grievance Mechanism	30
5.1. Description of GRM	32
5.2 World Bank Grievance Redress System	34
6. Monitoring and Reporting	34
Annex 1 – Explanation of the Measure 15	35
Annex 2 – Explanation of the GRM for the Component 2	36
Annex 3: REPORT ON PUBLIC DISCLOSURE AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION	38

List of Acronyms

1.Introduction/Project Description

AF	Additional Financing
COVID 19	Coronavirus Disease 2019
CEB	Council of Europe Bank
CCE	Cold Chain Equipment
CMU	Country Management Unit
CSW	Centers for Social Works
EARK	Employment Agency of Kosovo
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
EPPV	Vaccine Adverse Effects Monitoring System
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
EU	European Union
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
FGDs	Focal Group Discussions
FM	Financial Management
GAVI	Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunizations
GoK	Government of Kosovo
GHS	Globally Harmonized System
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanisms
GRS	Grievance Redress Service
ICT	Information and Communications Technology
ICUs	Infection Clinic Units
IPHS	Institute of Public Health
KHP	Kosovo Health Project
KNDVP	Kosovo National Deployment and Vaccination Plan
NDVP	National Deployment and Vaccination Plan
NKIPH	National Kosovo Institute of Public Health
NIPH	National Institute of Public Health
MoH	Ministry of Health
MoFT	Ministry of Finance and Transfers
MoIE	Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment
MLSW	Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare
PCU	Project Coordination Unit
PDO	Project Development Objective
PMT	Proxy-means Test
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
RAE	Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities
RIPH	Regional Institutes of Public Health
SAS	Social Assistance Scheme
SEA	Sexual Exploitation and Abuse
SH	Sexual Harassment

SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SRAs	Stringent Regulatory Authorities
SOP	Standard Operating Procedures
TA	Technical Assistance
UCCK	University Clinical Center of Kosovo
VAC	Bank's vaccine approval criteria
WB	World Bank
WBG	World Bank Group
WHO	World Health Organization

An outbreak of the coronavirus disease (COVID-19) caused by the 2019 novel coronavirus (SARS-CoV-2) has been spreading rapidly across the world since December 2019, following the diagnosis of the initial cases in Wuhan, Hubei Province, China. Since the beginning of March 2020, the number of cases outside China has increased thirteenfold and the number of affected countries has tripled. On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared a global pandemic as the coronavirus rapidly spreads across the world. As of April 09, 2021, the outbreak has resulted in an estimated 134,779,864 cases 2,919,099 and total recovered 108,464,389¹.

With the increasing incidence of COVID-19 in Kosovo, the public health system is under tremendous pressure. The continued support in combating COVID-19 by the WBG remains critical given the ever-increasing threat of the pandemic to health and economic wellbeing in the country. As of March 24, 2021, more than 85,291 positive cases and 1,800 deaths are confirmed, and more that 12,900 active cases are daily monitored.² Majority of confirmed cases are of ages 20-29, followed by the group age 30-39 and 50-59. The transmission rate of COVID-19 in Kosovo is at the factor 1.08. The case fatality rate (CFR) in Kosovo is observed at 2.5%.³ Total number of health workers in Kosovo infected by COVID-19 is 4,175 out of 85,291, making up approximately 5.0% of total cases as of March 24, 2021.

The Government of Kosovo acted quickly, declaring a Public Health Emergency for the entire country as of March 15, 2020 and established a National COVID-19 Coordination and Monitoring Committee, which immediately began working with in country health institutions, the United Nations agencies, local security authorities, as well as international donors to set up quarantine arrangements and border controls and medical evacuation of returning citizens. The Ministry of Health (MoH), as the lead agency for COVID-19 national planning and response, has also initiated action plans to respond to the epidemic, including a National Preparedness and Response Plan for COVID-19.

Kosovo has initiated actions to prevent COVID-19 from moving to the community transmission stage and subsequently into an epidemic. As like other countries in the region Kosovo closed all borders including the airport. An all-of-government action has been mobilized to fight the coronavirus, including scaling up emergency response mechanisms in all sectors. There has been a positive response and compliance with measures by the society and elevated confidence in the government's protective measures and instructions for social distancing is evident. The MoH has started a vigorous risk communication campaign through social media, TV broadcasts and other media. On the health front, the country is working hard now to ensure adequacy of hospitalization surge capacity with the necessary personnel in case of larger community-based transmission.

¹ <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>

² Institute of Public Health in Kosovo. <http://www.niph-rks.org/>

³ Institute of Public Health in Kosovo. <http://www.niph-rks.org/>. UNKT COVID-19 Update. SitRep#60

As of June 2020, UCKK has mobilized additional clinics across the country, in addition to Infectious Disease Clinic to increase bed capacity to 1,308 across the country, suspending thus essential services in all levels of care. In municipal levels, certain Primary Health Care centers (PHCs) have been designated for COVID-19 patients, managed by municipal level. An online phone line at the National Institute of Public Health has been active as of March 2020 monitoring suspected and homecare patients on daily basis. In absence of vaccines, increased testing capacities and containment measures continue to be the only effective approach to manage the pandemic, however they place a significant economic burden for the country. Thus, introduction and equitable administration of safe vaccines remains the ultimate goal to fight COVID-19 pandemic in Kosovo.

To respond to the outbreak the health system and its infrastructure requires scaling up to strengthen disease surveillance and management capacities. The Constraints include shortage of trained health care providers, health workers, Personal Protection Equipment (PPE), testing kits and labs with required capacities, non-compliance by general public on safety measures and limited number of facilities equipped with isolation wards for quarantine and treatment.

Given that work and travel restrictions within and outside the country, closure of borders and imposed curfews, combined are likely to slow down economic activity and growth, sectors in urgent need of support are receiving designated funds. The Government is however yet to streamline their strategies to strengthen social measures to support vulnerable communities, particularly the elderly, the poor, women and children, people losing income, living in a contained environment, may increase the risk of violence as well as translate to spikes in poverty, food and nutrition insecurity, and reduced access to healthcare far beyond COVID-19, especially if the crisis continues.

The initial GoK emergency actions in this respect have included preparation of the economic fiscal package of 170 mil euro as response to Covid 19 crises. Within this package there are also measures for health sector. GoK in continuation has kept the prevention measures with the latest (April 7, 2021) restrictions approved are among other, a curfew, with some exceptions, is imposed from 22:00 to 05:00; gatherings of more than 10 people are not allowed; hospitality services are prohibited, with the exception of 'takeaway' and 'home delivery' options; all schools should switch to online teaching and the decision also asks the public and private institutions to operate with the physical presence of only the essential staff, while it suggests them to create possibility for staff to work online. It closes the shopping malls, while theaters and other similar institutions can operate using a max. of 20% of seats.

The government website is updated with all government ordinances and contact telephone numbers of each ministry providing relevant information including online services <https://msh.rks-gov.net/sq/publikimet/njoftime/>.

The project, Kosovo Emergency COVID-19 Response Project (P173819) aims **to prevent, detect and respond to the threat posed by COVID-19 and strengthen national systems for public health preparedness in Kosovo**. The project supports health sector enhancement of disease detection capacities through provision of technical expertise, laboratory equipment and systems to ensure prompt case finding and contact tracing, consistent with WHO guidelines in the Strategic Response Plan. The World Bank is coordinating closely with partners who are aligned to support the Government, such as the EU delegation and WHO.

The project description of the parent project:

- Component 1: Health care delivery and health system strengthening,
- Component 2: Supporting households to comply with public health containment measures
- Component 3: Project monitoring, communication and community engagement.

Component 1: Health Care delivery and health system strengthening:

- (i) This component provides immediate support to the government to prevent new cases of COVID-19, limit local transmission through contact-tracing and containment strategies, and to treat established cases, including the most severe.
- (ii) Additional investments will be done in Kosovo's pre-existing health care network and established hierarchy of specialist facilities.

Component 2: Supporting households to comply with public health containment measures

This component has supported the Government to fund the Social Assistance Scheme (SAS) to (i) ensure that existing social assistance payments are delivered on time, given the emerging fiscal constraints the country faces; (ii) finance an increase in the value of the benefits provided to SAS beneficiaries to assist them in meeting their basic needs in the face of rising health care costs and loss of other income sources; and (iii) expand the coverage of the SAS to additional households, which have lost their sources of income as result of the pandemic and which do not receive support from other government programs. Government of the Republic of Kosovo has supported the beneficiaries of all social and pension schemes in order to provide assistance to these categories in coping with the COVID-19 pandemic. In this regard through Government decisions set the increase at 30 euros for all beneficiaries of social and pension schemes who receive a monthly payment of up to one hundred (100) euros. The Ministry of Labor and Social Welfare (MLSW) has made payments from the Social Assistance Scheme (SAS) to the beneficiaries for the period covering March through June 2020, including providing double payments for the period March through May 2020 done under retroactive financing. All cash transfers for beneficiaries of the social assistance scheme and the emergency cash transfer program (measure 15) has been disbursed has planned.

Component 3: Project monitoring, communication and community engagement:

This component will support project implementation in overall administration of the project (including project management and financial management functions), as well as regular monitoring and reporting of implementation (including the required fiduciary assessments). Existing government structures and capacities will be used to the extent possible. This component will finance operating costs, equipment and training needed for overall project management. These may be strengthened by the appointment and/or recruitment of additional staff/consultants responsible for overall project implementations, including activities related to the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), communications and outreach, procurement, financial management, and other technical areas. In addition, the component will support the consultancies and purchase of equipment required to operationalize the new measures outlined under Component 2 and to support the Government in longer-term reforms to enable its social protection system to respond to shocks.

This component will also support (i) the development and distribution of basic communication materials on COVID-19 for the general public (e.g., fact sheets or ‘dos’ and ‘don’ts’ for the general public, TV ads, awareness videos etc.); (ii) the development and implementation of outreach and awareness building materials and activities designed to reach the vulnerable, including the elderly; and, (iii) receive inputs and feedback from communities and social assistance beneficiaries, including monitoring by the government of the effectiveness of these interventions. To simplify outreach and build on existing government systems, the component will support the development of digital platforms and social media campaigns that are mobile friendly and able to reach vulnerable groups.

The Kosovo COVID-19 Emergency Response Project is being prepared under the World Bank’s Environment and Social Framework (ESF). As per the Environmental and Social Standard ESS 10 on “Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure”, the implementing agencies should provide stakeholders with timely, relevant, understandable and accessible information and consult with them in a culturally appropriate manner, which is free of manipulation, interference, coercion, discrimination and intimidation.

Additional to Kosovo COVID-19 Emergency Response Project, Government of Kosovo on January 6, 2021 has requested EUR 15 million of WBG financing for COVID-19 AF for additional resources to expand the COVID-19 response. The purpose of the proposed AF is to provide upfront financing to help the government purchase and deploy COVID-19 vaccines that meet Bank’s vaccine approval criteria (VAC) and to strengthen health system resilience to respond to the pandemic. The proposed AF will help contributing to vaccinating additional 50% of the country’s population, in the second and third stages of vaccination, on top of the 20% to be covered through the COVAX AMC facility by the end of CY2021. Other major donors supporting this additional 50% coverage include the Council of Europe Bank (CEB) and the European Union. As of March 21, 2021, the Bank’s VAC for COVID-19 vaccines is: i) approval by three Stringent Regulatory Authorities (SRAs) in three regions, or (ii) WHO prequalification and approval by one SRA designated by WHO. As vaccine development is rapidly evolving, Bank’s VAC may be reviewed. The country will provide free of cost vaccination to the population.

The proposed AF will be aligned with the parent Project objectives and therefore entails no change to the PDO. Likewise, there will be no change to Component 2. Major changes being enabled by the AF are described below:

Proposed Changes

The AF will finance vaccine procurement and deployment, strengthen national immunization systems, and improve health capacity towards COVID-19 response, under Project Component 1. The increase in the project scope will be reflected in an increase of Euro 14.5 million allocation to Component 1 and Euro 0.5 million allocation to Component 3. Implementation arrangements will remain unchanged. The Closing Date will be extended by twenty-four months to June 30, 2024 to accommodate the additional time needed for vaccine deployment.

Specifically, the following changes will be introduced to Component 1:

- An additional sub-component (sub-component 1.3) to support vaccine procurement and deployment; and
- Additional activities to be included in the existing sub-components 1.1 and 1.2.

(i) Proposed activities under the new sub-component 1.3

Under newly added Subcomponent 1.3 “*Vaccine Procurement and Deployment*”, the AF will finance procurement of vaccines in line with the National Development Vaccine Plan (NDVP) in stages 2 and 3. Priority groups have been identified including health and social workers, elders, individuals with chronic diseases, and the rest of the population. All COVID-19 vaccines procured by the Bank must meet the Board-approved standard. **Financing from the Project may allow for re-vaccination if such need arises.** In the case that re-vaccination is required, limited priority populations (such as health workers and the elderly) will need to be targeted for re-vaccination given constraints on vaccine production capacity and equity considerations (i.e., tradeoffs between broader population coverage and re-vaccination).

The AF will support investments to bring immunization systems and service delivery capacity to the level required to successfully deploy COVID-19 vaccines at scale. To this end, the AF is geared to assist the Government of Kosovo, working with WBG, WHO, UNICEF/PAHO and other development partners, to overcome bottlenecks as identified in the COVID-19 vaccine readiness assessment in the country. Key activities to support vaccine deployment include:

- a. ***Communications campaign and IT systems:*** The AF will provide complementary support to communication campaign activities for the MoH to address vaccine hesitancy and provide relevant vaccination information. The established hotline center under NIPH will continue operating free of charge for users calling from mobile and landline telephones, and are convenient for users, which may have mobility barriers, or cannot access information via internet, and have no or limited digital skills to navigate the information on vaccination process through the phone without assistance. In addition, the MOH aims to identify and engage community groups (local influencers such as community leaders, religious leaders, health workers, community volunteers) and local networks (women’s groups, youth groups, business groups, traditional healers, etc. to promote accurate information on COVID-19 vaccines, as well as training of media on vaccine reporting. Data management of the routine immunization program as well as for COVID-19 is established. However real time reporting of stock levels, stock movements, vaccine storage quality and available vaccine storage capacity will be upgraded also with the support from the AF if necessary.
- b. ***Implementation support for the Post-Vaccine Adverse Effects Monitoring System (EPPV).*** The AF will support activities related to developing SOPs and standardizing reporting forms, as well as developing digital solutions for reporting of vaccine adverse effects from physicians to the National Institute of Public Health and inter-agency technical integration based on SOPs developed.
- c. ***Waste Management:*** In the University Clinical Center (UCCK), the infectious medical waste is treated in the sterilization facilities licensed by Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment (MoIE). Currently there are sterilization plants in Prishtina (2 sterilizations), Mitrovica, Gjilan, Prizren, Gjakova, Peja and Ferizaj. Sterilization treatment plant in Prishtina is in the premises of the UCCK. The state of this plant is acceptable, and it works at full capacity. The daily average amount of infectious medical waste treated in this plant is about 1000- 1200 kg. However, during COVID-19 conditions the amount of infectious medical waste has increased, therefore the additional capacities are needed. The AF will assist in ensuring safe medical waste management and disposal systems by supporting civil works to expand capacities of the designated facility in UCCK, mobilizing and training health personnel to set up appropriate procedures on site and for mobile teams engaged in rollout of vaccination, as well as procurement of necessary equipment such as needle destroyers to be available for each vaccination unit, autoclaves, shredders and other disinfection devices to prepare waste for sanitary landfill after disinfection.

(ii) Additional activities to the existing sub-component 1.1

Additional funding will allow for continuation of activities foreseen under Sub-component 1.1 to support strengthening of disease surveillance systems and public health laboratories by adequately equipping them with diagnostic kits, reagents, and other consumables. It will also support activities to further expand testing capacity.

(iii) Additional activities to the existing sub-component 1.2

Additional funding will allow for further investments under Sub-component 1.2 to strengthen the health sector capacity and resilience. Training of medical providers will be expanded to include modules for intra-hospital infection prevention and specialized trainings of anesthesiologists.

The AF will support MOH to develop a national guidance on how to maintain and increase mental health services within PHCs during COVID-19 and recommend allocation of resources to mental health as an integral component of national response and recovery plans, as well as to employ specialized psychologists in PHC level to allow for access to mental health support services within primary care, which are not offered as regular services. A number of teachers, healthcare providers, and nurses will be trained in equipping them to know what questions to ask, what signs to look for and what to do if a patient is struggling of any mental health sign.

The Government of Kosovo has identified priority groups for preferential access to COVID-19 vaccines, drawing on the WHO SAGE values framework to allocate and prioritize COVID-19 vaccination. Specifically, the following criteria has been used for prioritization: (i) WHO SAGE values framework for allocation and prioritization of COVID-19 vaccination, and (ii) WHO SAGE roadmap for prioritizing uses of COVID-19 vaccines in the context of limited supply. The first priority groups include healthcare workers, residents and social workers of elderly homes, 80+ age group, and a part of population with chronic diseases. The total number of the first priority target group is 54,000 individuals, which accounts for 3% of total population of the country. The second priority groups include age group 65-79, remaining population with chronic diseases, teachers, and security forces which account for 17% of the overall population. The third and last priority groups include the remaining of the population to achieve an additional 50% of overall coverage. The country aims to vaccinate 70% of its population in 3 phases, totaling 1,260,000 people. Vaccines for immunization of the first 20% of the population (the most high-risk groups) will be secured through COVAX AMC facility, where Kosovo is among 92 eligible countries. The remaining vaccines are planned to be procured by the government through the bi-lateral agreements with manufacturers or third-party sellers. The delivery strategy planned includes temporary sites (such as PHC centers and the NIPH at the central and sub-national levels) as well as mobile outreach through mobile teams in rural areas and for elderly groups (Table below).

Target Groups and Vaccination Strategies in Phases

Phase	Target population (in priority order)	Number of individuals	Total cumulative % of vaccines as a percentage of population	Delivery strategy	Vaccination sites
Phase 1	All healthcare workers	13,500	0.7%	Temporary Site	Family Medicine Development Center and 6 Regional Institutes of Public Health (RIPH)
	Residents of elderly care homes and social workers	1,249	0.06%	Mobile outreach	Vaccination will be conducted by mobile teams

	Age group 80+	33,000	1.8%	Temporary Site	Family Medicine Development Center and 6 RIPH
	People with chronic diseases	6,251	0.3%	Temporary Site	Family Medicine Development Center and 6 RIPH
Total phase 1		54,000	3%		
Phase 2	Age group 65-79	133,348	7.4%	Temporary Site	Family Medicine Development Center and 6 Regional Institutes of Public Health (RIPH)
	Remaining group of people with chronic diseases	135,439	7.5%	Temporary Site	Family Medicine Development Center and 6 Regional Institutes of Public Health (RIPH)
	Teachers	33,310	1.87%	Temporary Site	Family Medicine Development Center and 6 RIPH
	Security forces	3,903	0.21%	Temporary Site	Family Medicine Development Center and 6 RIPH
Total phase 2		306,000	17%		
Phase 3	Age group 40-64	332,925	18.4%	Fixed site	Primary Health Care Facilities
	Remaining population with underlying health conditions	96,009	5.3%	Fixed site	Primary Health Care Facilities
	Public sector workers	14,853	0.8%	Fixed site	Primary Health Care Facilities
	Remaining of population	456,213	25.5%	Fixed site	Primary Health Care Facilities
Total phase 3		900,000	50%		

Potential Supportive Roles for Partner Agencies in Implementation

The Government of Kosovo allocated 40 million EUR (or approximately US\$ 48 million) in the 2021 budget, to be secured from loans with the CEB and WBG respectively, and potentially with a grant from the EU, for procurement of COVID-19 vaccines and implementation of the NDVP components including: Supply Chain management, HR management and training, vaccine acceptance and uptake, AEFI surveillance, monitoring and disease surveillance and evaluation of COVID-19 introduction. The decision of the government was approved by the Kosovo Assembly.⁴ In addition, key development partners providing technical support include WHO, UNICEF, GAVI, and the Global Fund.

WHO	Financing amount (EUR)
The WHO is providing technical support for the development of a national vaccine deployment plan; a regulatory framework for approval and import of COVID-19 vaccines; the mapping of service delivery platforms; microplanning for priority groups; protocols for infection prevention and control; training of health workers; the development of a monitoring and surveillance framework; the operationalization of a framework for safety surveillance; and the development of a crisis communication plan.	XX
UNICEF	

⁴ National Vaccination and Deployment Plan. February 8, 2021

UNICEF supports the assessment of cold chain capacity, developing standard operating procedures for collection and disposal of medical waste, and developing a demand generation plan to increase vaccine acceptance.	XX
Gavi and Global Fund	
Gavi and Global Fund provide catalytic support towards cold chain equipment needs at the national and regional levels.	XX
COVAX Facility	
The COVAX Facility will finance COVID-19 vaccines for the first 20% of the population.	XX

The overall objective of this Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) is to define a program for stakeholder engagement, including public information disclosure and consultation, throughout the entire project cycle. The SEP outlines the ways in which the project team will communicate with stakeholders and includes a mechanism by which people can raise concerns, provide feedback, or make grievances about project and any activities related to the project. The involvement of the local population is essential to the success of the project in order to ensure smooth collaboration between project staff and local communities and to minimize and mitigate environmental and social risks related to the proposed project activities. In the context of infectious diseases, broad, culturally appropriate, and adapted awareness raising activities are particularly important to properly sensitize the communities to the risks related to infectious diseases. For COVID-19 vaccination programs, stakeholder engagement is key to communicating the principles of prioritization of vaccine allocation and the schedule for vaccine rollout, reaching out to disadvantaged and vulnerable groups, overcoming demand-side barriers to access (such as mistrust of vaccines, stigma, cultural hesitancy), and creating accountability against misallocation, discrimination and corruption.

2. Stakeholder identification and analysis

Project stakeholders are defined as individuals, groups or other entities who:

- (i) are impacted or likely to be impacted directly or indirectly, positively or adversely, by the Project (also known as ‘affected parties’); and
- (ii) may have an interest in the Project (‘interested parties’). They include individuals or groups whose interests may be affected by the Project and who have the potential to influence the Project outcomes in any way.

Cooperation and negotiation with the stakeholders throughout the Project development often also require the identification of persons within the groups who act as legitimate representatives of their respective stakeholder group, i.e. the individuals who have been entrusted by their fellow group members with advocating the groups’ interests in the process of engagement with the Project. Community representatives may provide helpful insight into the local settings and act as main conduits for dissemination of the Project-related information and as a primary communication/liaison link between the Project and targeted communities and their established networks. Community representatives, cultural leaders and women leaders may also be helpful intermediaries for information dissemination in a culturally appropriate manner, building trust for government programs or vaccination efforts.

Women can also be critical stakeholders and intermediaries in the deployment of vaccines as they are familiar with vaccination programs for their children, are the caretakers of their families, and are also attuned to potential risks of exposure to abuse or violence during vaccine deployment, especially as regards sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and sexual harassment (SH).

Verification of stakeholder representatives (i.e. the process of confirming that they are legitimate and genuine advocates of the community they represent) remains an important task in establishing contact with the community stakeholders. Legitimacy of the community representatives can be verified by talking informally to a random sample of community members and heeding their views on who can be representing their interests in the most effective way. It is nonetheless critical that these verification processes organize specific and deliberate outreach to women, youth, elderly, people living with disabilities and any other severe health-issues, and other vulnerable groups (that might be identified during the implementation phase) that are often traditionally excluded from decision-making processes within the community in order to ensure that their interests are adequately represented. With community gatherings limited or forbidden under COVID-19, it may mean that the stakeholder identification will be on a much more individual basis, requiring different media, including civil society actors, relevant local authorities (including social welfare and social protection actors), health centers, to reach affected individuals.

2.1 Methodology

In order to meet best practice approaches, the project will apply the following principles for stakeholder engagement:

- *Openness and life-cycle approach*: public consultations for the project(s) will be arranged during the whole life-cycle, carried out in an open manner, free of external manipulation, interference, coercion or intimidation;
- *Informed participation and feedback*: information will be provided to and widely distributed among all stakeholders in an appropriate format depending of the context; opportunities are provided for communicating stakeholders' feedback, for analyzing and addressing comments and concerns.
- *Inclusiveness and sensitivity*: stakeholder identification is undertaken to support better communications and build effective relationships. The participation process for the projects is inclusive. All stakeholders are encouraged to be involved in the consultation process, to the extent the current circumstances permit. Equal access to information is provided to all stakeholders. Sensitivity to stakeholders' needs is the key principle underlying the selection of engagement methods. Special attention is given to vulnerable groups, in particular women, youth, elderly and the cultural sensitivities of diverse ethnic groups.

For the purposes of effective and tailored engagement, stakeholders of the proposed project can be divided into the following core categories:

- **Affected Parties** – persons, groups and other entities within the Project Area of Influence that are directly influenced (actually or potentially) by the project and/or have been identified as most susceptible to change associated with the project, and who need to be closely engaged in identifying impacts and their significance, as well as in decision-making on mitigation and management measures;
- **Other Interested Parties** – individuals/groups/entities that may not experience direct impacts from the Project but who consider or perceive their interests as being affected by the project and/or who could affect the project and the process of its implementation in some way; and

- **Vulnerable Groups** – persons who may be disproportionately impacted or further disadvantaged by the project(s) as compared with any other groups due to their vulnerable status⁵, and that may require special engagement efforts to ensure their equal representation in the consultation and decision-making process associated with the project.

2.2. Affected parties

Affected Parties include local communities, community members and other parties that may be subject to direct impacts from the Project. Specifically, the following individuals and groups fall within this category:

- COVID-19 infected people in hospitals and their families & relatives;
- Health service employees in the Infectious Disease within the University Clinical Center of Kosovo UCKK;
- Employees in other health service facilities that will receive the TA and equipment;
- Workers at construction sites and points of entries
- People at risk of contracting COVID-19 (e.g. tourists, tour guides, hotels and guest house operators & their staff, associates of those infected, inhabitants of areas where cases have been identified);
- Public/private health care workers (Doctors, Nurses, Public Health Inspectors, Midwives, laboratory technicians/staff) and other staff;
- Local Government administrations in affected regions;
- Public Enterprises providing communal services in affected regions;
- MoH officials;
- Employment Agency and the local branches;
- CSW – Centers for Social Work;
- Beneficiaries under the SAS (Social Assistance Scheme).

2.3. Other interested parties

The project stakeholders also include parties other than the directly affected communities, including:

- The public at large;
- Community based organizations, national civil society groups;
- Goods and service providers involved in the project's wider supply chain;
- Media and other interest groups, including social media & the Government Information Department;
- Interested international NGOs, Diplomatic missions and UN agencies (especially UNICEF, WHO etc.);
- Interested businesses;
- Schools, universities and other education institutions closed down due to the virus;
- Religious institutions, and
- Transport workers (e.g. cab/taxi drivers)

2.4. Disadvantaged / vulnerable individuals or groups

⁵ Vulnerable status may stem from an individual's or group's, national, ethnic or social origin, color, gender, language, religion, political or other opinion, property, age, culture, literacy, sickness, physical or mental disability, poverty or economic disadvantage, and dependence on unique natural resources.

It is particularly important to define and understand vulnerability in the project context and assess whether vulnerability arises because adverse project impacts may disproportionately fall on disadvantaged or vulnerable individuals or groups, or vulnerability arises because vulnerable groups are limited in their ability to take advantage of project benefits and/or because they are more likely to be excluded from/unable to participate fully in the mainstream consultation process. The vulnerability may stem from person's origin, gender, age, health condition, economic deficiency and financial insecurity, disadvantaged status in the community (e.g. minorities or fringe groups), dependence on other individuals or natural resources, etc. Engagement with the vulnerable groups and individuals often requires the application of specific measures and assistance aimed at the facilitation of their participation in the project-related decision making so that their awareness of and input to the overall process are commensurate to those of the other stakeholders.

Within the Project, the vulnerable or disadvantaged groups include but are not limited to the following:

- Elderly,
- Individuals with chronic diseases and pre-existing medical conditions;
- People with disabilities,
- Pregnant women,
- Women, girls and female headed households,
- Children,
- Daily wage earners,
- Those living below poverty line,
- Unemployed,
- Communities in remote villages and communities living in neglected urban settlements, and
- Members of the RAE (Roma, Ashkali and Egyptian Communities).

Vulnerable groups within the communities affected by the project will be further confirmed and consulted through dedicated means, as appropriate. Description of the methods of engagement that will be undertaken by the project is provided in the following sections. For any vaccination program, the SEP will include targeted, culturally appropriate and meaningful consultations for disadvantaged and vulnerable groups in safe and enabling environments before any vaccination efforts begin.

3. Stakeholder Engagement Program

3.1. Summary of stakeholder engagement done during project preparation and implementation until now

The speed and urgency with which this project has been developed to meet the growing threat of COVID-19 in the country (combined with State of Emergency and the government restrictions on gatherings of people) has limited the project's ability to develop a complete SEP before this project is approved by the World Bank. This initial SEP was developed and will be disclosed prior to project approval, as the starting point of an iterative process to develop a more comprehensive stakeholder engagement strategy and plan. The World Bank team, including Country Management Unit representatives of the World Bank office in Kosovo, held a series of meetings, in March 2020, with the Government aimed at discussing the impact of the pandemic to the social sectors and economy and how the World Bank can help government in responding to the pandemic. The Government sought the World Bank assistance in coping with the pandemic i.e. strengthening the public health sector preparedness and the social safety net response to the crisis. After these initial meetings the World Bank team had follow up meetings with the MoH and

Ministry of Transfers and Finance to discuss the scope of the operation. The World Bank and Government preparation teams received regular updates about the conclusions of the donor coordination meetings regarding the pandemic, and teams are in regular communication especially with the WHO and EU Delegation

This SEP as well as the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) that will be prepared under the project will be consulted on and disclosed. The project includes considerable resources to implement the actions included in the Plan. A more detailed account of these actions will be prepared as part of the update of this SEP, which is expected to take place within 1 month after the project Effective date. The SEP will be continuously updated throughout the project implementation period, as required. Stakeholder consultation during the implementation of parent project was conducted during the month of May 2020 and the results and feedback are provided in the table below.

Table of the Stakeholder consulted during the project implementation:

Stakeholder	Consultation method	Comments
Kosovo National Institute of Public Health (KNIPH)	Regular meetings; email; sending out letters; holding one-on-one meetings; technologies such as telephone calls, SMS, etc; through website sharing material;	KNIPH recommends to develop the web-based platform, the application will be accessible from any device, NIPHK staff PC, mobile phones, tablets and will allow easy integration of multiple recording sources; for the six regional IPHs, clinics, mobile teams and any institution involved in the registration, surveillance and monitoring of COVID cases ¹⁹ . This will enable the KNIPH to react and make timely decisions regarding public health and well-being. This platform will also enable a strong SURVEILLANCE AND MONITORING TOOL FOR CONTINUOUS DISEASES IN GENERAL, which is an important segment of public health in general and a task of the
Steering Committee	Regular meetings, email; telephone; etc	No comments
Donor Community List of the donors: UN Agencies; EU office; WHO; Luxembourg embassy; Swiss Cooperation Office; Accessible Quality Healthcare	Through email and web platforms; zoom; webex; teams;	EU office comments: has shared the list of the medical supplies to be procured under the EU grant, in order to ensure complementarity. UN Agencies meeting with team, WB project team and CMU
NGO/CSO List of the NGOs contacted: Kads; Woman network; Integra; NGO; Pen; Prak Kosova; Qendra KCS; Traumacenter Diakonie Kosova; Caritas Kosova; HendiKos Kosova; Autizmi Kosova; Prishtina REA; Down syndrome Kosova; Pema Kosova; OJQ JETA; Health FORAL Kosova; MAC Health; NGO Zana; NGO Gaga.	Through emails, media and platforms, zoom, webex	No comments received

The original SEP were disclosed through Ministry of Health website (<https://msh.rks-gov.net/en/>) and World Bank website

<http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/452451588296247533/pdf/Stakeholder-Engagement-Plan-SEP-KOSOVO-EMERGENCY-COVID-19-PROJECT-P173819.pdf>.

The first stakeholder consultation meeting for Additional Financing (AF) to Kosovo Emergency COVID-19 Project (P173819) was held virtually on February 2021 and lasted over 2 hours with participation of Public Health Institutions: University Clinical Center of Kosovo, Institute of Public Health, MoH, Department of Primary Care, Department of Information, WHO, UNICEF, etc. Over 30 people participated in this consultation that was ably chaired by the MoH. The Project Task Team Leader made a presentation on the Project design (which was based on the National COVID-19 Deployment Vaccine Plan) followed by discussion on the: procuring vaccines that are approved for emergency use by one SRA (MHRA, EMA, Bfarm(DE), FDA) and/or are WHO pre-qualified; discussions to defined the priority groups for vaccination applying equity approach with frontline workers and elders being top priority groups for the first vaccination phase, followed by high risk groups and other part of the population reaching 70% of national coverage by phase 3; assessment of cold-chain-equipment (CCE) which reports on existing storage capacities for the regular immunization services as well as for COVID-19 vaccine. Through the Pandemic Emergency Response trust fund (PEF), funded by the World Bank, the assessment reports that Kosovo possesses the required capacities for storing vaccines for more than 60% of the population. Through COVAX AMC, an allocation of 100,800 doses of AstraZeneca vaccines will be provided by the end of May 2021, and the first 24,000 doses have arrived on March 29, 2021. Kosovo has made all the required preparations to receive COVID-19 vaccines and it also possesses the required capacities for storing vaccines which require storage temperature of -70 Celsius degrees. The country is well prepared to receive and administer COVID-19 vaccines for the first portion from COVAX for 0.25% of first priority group (healthcare workers) and 19.75% of the following groups. Participants were supportive of the proposed design and provided useful feedback particularly on the prioritized target groups. The Project paper was updated accordingly. Other stakeholder consultations planned is described below. The follow-on action is for the MOH to update the National COVID-19 Deployment vaccine Plan based on the [WHO Guidance on developing a national deployment and vaccination plan for COVID-19 vaccines](#).

The National Deployment and Vaccination Plan for Covid-19 Vaccines sees the engagement of community as crucial for vaccine acceptance. Reaching out to community, especially the most vulnerable and marginalized requires utilization of trusted channels of communication (materials to inform public on vaccination rollout, vaccine effectiveness, prioritization of groups etc.). Mobilize and engage key partners and the community, such as local NGOs, trusted community leaders to promote immunization on COVID-19.

3.2. Summary of project stakeholder needs and methods, tools and techniques for stakeholder engagement

A precautionary approach will be taken to the consultation process to prevent infection and/or contagion, given the highly infectious nature of COVID-19 in line with Bank guidance on “Public Consultations and Stakeholder Engagement in WB-supported operations when there are constraints on conducting public meetings”. The following are some considerations for selecting channels of communication, in light of the current COVID-19 situation:

- Avoid public gatherings (taking into account national restrictions or advisories), including public hearings, workshops and community meetings;
- If smaller meetings are permitted/advised, conduct consultations in small-group sessions, such as focus group meetings. If not permitted or advised, make all reasonable efforts to conduct meetings through online channels;

- Diversify means of communication and rely more on social media and online channels. Where possible and appropriate, create dedicated online platforms and chat groups appropriate for the purpose, based on the type and category of stakeholders;
- Employ traditional channels of communications (TV, newspaper, radio, dedicated phone-lines, and mail) when stakeholders do not have access to online channels or do not use them frequently. Traditional channels can also be highly effective in conveying relevant information to stakeholders, and allow them to provide their feedback and suggestions;
- Where direct engagement with project affected people or beneficiaries is necessary, identify channels for direct communication with each affected household via a context specific combination of email messages, mail, online platforms, dedicated phone lines with knowledgeable operators;
- Each of the proposed channels of engagement should clearly specify how feedback and suggestions can be provided by stakeholders.
- Identify trusted local civil society, ethnic organizations, community organizations and similar actors who can act as intermediaries for information dissemination and stakeholder engagement; engage with them on an ongoing basis. For effective stakeholder engagement on COVID-19 vaccination, prepare different communication packages and use different engagement platforms for different stakeholders, based on the stakeholder identification above. The communication packages can take different forms for different mediums, such as basic timeline, visuals, charts and cartoons for newspapers, websites and social media; dialogue and skits in plain language for radio and television; and more detailed information for civil society and media. These should be available in different local languages. Information disseminated should also include where people can go to get more information, ask questions and provide feedback.

With the evolving situation, as the GoK has taken measures to impose strict restrictions on public gatherings, meetings and people's movement, the general public has also become increasingly concerned about the risks of transmission, particularly through social interactions. Hence, alternative ways will be adopted to manage consultations and stakeholder engagement in accordance with the local laws, policies and new social norms in effect to mitigate prevention of the virus transmission.

These alternate approaches that will be practiced for stakeholder engagement will include: reasonable efforts to conduct meetings through online channels (e.g. webex, zoom, skype etc.); but much more diversifying means of communication and relying more on social media, chat groups, dedicated online platforms & mobile Apps (e.g. Facebook, Twitter, Instagram WhatsApp groups, project weblinks/websites etc.); and employing traditional channels of communications such TV, radio, dedicated phone-lines, SMS broadcasting, public announcements when stakeholders do not have access to online channels or do not use them frequently.

For the public outreach and awareness-raising activities supported through the third component, project activities will support awareness around these aspects: (i) benefits around social protection and (ii) social distancing measures such as in schools, restaurants, religious institutions, and café closures as well as reducing large gatherings (e.g. weddings); preventive actions such as personal hygiene promotion, including promoting handwashing and proper cooking, and distribution and use of masks, along with increased awareness and promotion of community participation in slowing the spread of the pandemic;

WB's Environmental and Social Standard (ESS) 10 "Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure and the relevant national policy or strategy for health communication & WHO's "COVID-19 Strategic

Preparedness and Response Plan - Operational Planning Guidelines to Support Country Preparedness and Response” (2020) will be the basis for the second aspect of the project’s stakeholder engagement plan.

For Additional Financing (AF) to Kosovo Emergency COVID-19 Project (P173819) in terms of consultations with stakeholders and other target groups, the Kosovo National Deployment and Vaccination Plan (KNDVP) will be followed.

According to KNDVP the diverse communication channels will be in disposal, including media and social media, which proactively will share information about vaccination in general and risk communication to manage expectations and raise public awareness and confidence in roll-out process.

The target groups to be reached are:

1. Main stakeholders involved in introduction of COVID-19 vaccine
 - Committee for vaccination with COVID-19 vaccines
 - The Ministry of Health and the National Institute of Public Health
 - Regional Offices of the Institute of Public Health
 - Municipal Primary Health Care Centers
 - Local and international partner organizations: (WHO, UNICEF, WB, local NGOs)
2. Health personnel
3. High Risk Groups
 - Beneficiaries and personnel of long- term care institutions (elderly houses)
 - Persons above the age 65
 - Persons with chronic diseases
 - Providers of essential services (police, military, teachers, and other relevant groups in Kosovo)
4. Part of population which is not included in the priority groups for immunization (management of expectations)
 - Key stakeholders
 - Civil society
 - Community leaders (religious or ethnic groups)
 - Experts and academia
 - NGOs
5. Mass- and social-media representatives
 - Central and regional TV channels (including ethnic TV channels broadcasting on the minority languages)
 - Radio
 - Social media groups and “influencers”
 - o MoH and IPH webpage
 - o Facebook, Instagram, Twitter

3.3. Proposed strategy for information disclosure

The project will ensure that the different activities for stakeholder engagement, including information disclosure, are inclusive and culturally sensitive. Measures will also be taken to ensure that the vulnerable groups outlined above will have the chance to participate and benefit from project activities. This will include among others, household-outreach through SMS, telephone calls, social networks and social assistance center networks etc., depending on the social distancing requirements, in local languages both

in Albanian and Serbian, the use of verbal communication, audiovisuals or pictures instead of text, etc. Specific communications in every local government (especially for the second component) will be established, providing contacts and information for the specific Social Work Centers. Communication on Component 1 will target hotels, schools, hospitals, quarantine centers and laboratories, and Social Work Centers.

Project stage	Target stakeholders	List of information to be disclosed	Methods and timing proposed
<i>Preparation of Health Component</i>	<i>Government entities; local communities; vulnerable groups; NGOs and academics; health workers; media representatives; health agencies; others</i>	<i>Project concept, E&S principles and obligations, documents, Consultation process/SEP, Project documents- ESMF, ESCP, GRM procedure, update on project development</i>	<i>Dissemination of information via dedicated project website, Facebook site, SMS broadcasting (for those who do not have smart phones) including hard copies at designated public locations; Information leaflets and brochures; and meetings, including with vulnerable groups while making appropriate adjustments to formats in order to take into account the need for social distancing.</i>
<i>Preparation of Supporting households to comply with public health containment measures component</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Vulnerable Groups, Charity organizations, Employees, Social Centers for Social Work, Employment agencies</i> 	<i>Social Protection Measures</i>	<i>Dissemination of information via dedicated website, social network accounts, charity-based organizations, employment agencies, local government department for local economic development</i>
<i>AF activities to support vaccine deployment</i>	<i>Committee for vaccination with COVID-19 vaccines</i> <i>The Ministry of Health and the National Institute of Public Health</i> <i>Regional Offices of the Institute of Public Health</i> <i>Municipal Primary Health Care Centers</i> <i>Local and international partner organizations: (WHO, UNICEF, WB, local NGOs)</i>	<i>Project documents- ESMF, ESCP, GRM procedure, update on project development</i>	<i>Dissemination of information via dedicated project website, Facebook site, SMS broadcasting (for those who do not have smart phones) including hard copies at designated public locations; Information leaflets and brochures; and meetings, including with vulnerable groups while making appropriate adjustments to formats in order to take into account the need for social distancing.</i>
<i>Implementation of public awareness campaigns applicable for both components</i>	<i>Affected parties, public at large, vulnerable groups, public health workers, government entities, other public authorities</i>	<i>Update on project development; the social distancing and SBCC strategy</i>	<i>Public notices; Electronic publications via online/social media and press releases; Dissemination of hard copies at designated public locations; Press releases in the local media; Information leaflets and brochures; audio-visual materials, separate focus group meetings with vulnerable groups, while making appropriate adjustments to consultation formats in order to take into account the need for social distancing (e.g., use of mobile technology such as telephone calls, SMS, etc.).</i>
<i>During preparation of ESMF, ESMP Applicable for</i>	<i>Workers in the facilities; Relatives of patients/affected people; neighboring communities; public health</i>	<i>Project documents, technical designs for civil works in the ICUs, SEP, relevant</i>	<i>Public notices; Electronic publications and press releases on the Project web-site & via social media; Dissemination of hard copies at designated public locations; Press releases in the</i>

Project stage	Target stakeholders	List of information to be disclosed	Methods and timing proposed
<i>both components and AF</i>	<i>workers; other public authorities; Municipal councils; Civil society organizations, Religious Institutions/bodies. Centers for Social Work, Employment agencies; donor community</i>	<i>E&S documents, GRM procedure, regular updates on Project development</i>	<i>local media; Consultation meetings, separate focus group meetings with vulnerable groups, while making appropriate adjustments to consultation formats in order to take into account the need for social distancing (e.g., use of mobile technology such as telephone calls, SMS, etc.).</i>
<i>During project implementation</i>	<i>COVID-affected persons and their families, neighboring communities to laboratories, hotels and workers, workers at construction sites public health workers, MoH, airline and border control staff, police, military, government entities, Municipal councils;</i>	<i>SEP, relevant E&S documents; GRM procedure; regular updates on Project development</i>	<i>Public notices; Electronic publications and press releases on the Project web-site & via social media; Dissemination of hard copies at designated public locations; Press releases in the local media; Consultation meetings, separate focus group meetings with vulnerable groups, while making appropriate adjustments to consultation formats in order to take into account the need for social distancing (e.g., use of mobile technology such as telephone calls, SMS, etc.).</i>
<i>During project implementation Supporting households to comply with public health containment measures component</i>	<i>Beneficiaries, vulnerable groups, Centers for Social Work, chamber of commerce, Employment Agencies</i>	<i>Project activities of the Financial support to household's component</i>	<i>Social network, through social assistance centers, through employment agencies, local media</i>
<i>During project implementation for AF vaccine</i>	<i>For AF vaccine: Committee for vaccination with COVID-19 vaccines The Ministry of Health and the National Institute of Public Health Regional Offices of the Institute of Public Health Municipal Primary Health Care Centers Local and international partner organizations: (WHO, UNICEF, WB, local NGOs) (local influencers such as community leaders, religious leaders, health workers, community volunteers) and local networks (women's groups, youth groups, business groups, traditional healers</i>	<i>E&S principles, Environment and social risk and impact management/ESMF Grievance Redress mechanisms (GRM) Health and safety impacts Vaccination plans and procedures Vaccine safety information Vaccine distribution</i>	<i>organize information sharing events in the media in which influencers will share their experience of vaccination</i>

The government will ensure that information to be disclosed:

- Is accurate, up-to-date and easily accessible;
- Relies on best available scientific evidence;
- Emphasizes shared social values;

- Articulates the principle and rationale for prioritizing certain groups for vaccine allocation;
- Includes an indicative timeline and phasing for the vaccination of all the population;
- Includes explanation of measures that will be used to ensure voluntary consent, or if measures are mandatory that they are reasonable, follow due process, do not include punitive measures and have a means for grievances to be addressed;
- Includes explanation of vaccine safety, quality, efficacy, potential side effects and adverse impacts, as well as what to do in case of adverse impacts;
- Includes where people can go to get more information, ask questions and provide feedback;
- Includes the expected direct and indirect economic costs of the vaccines and addresses measures should there be serious adverse impact on stakeholders due to the vaccine, such as serious side effects; and
- Is communicated in formats taking into account language, literacy and cultural aspects.

Over time, based on feedback received through the Grievance Mechanism and other channels, information disclosed should also answer frequently asked questions by the public and the different concerns raised by stakeholders.

- Misinformation can spread quickly, especially on social media. During implementation, the government will assign dedicated staff to monitor social media regularly for any such misinformation about vaccine efficacy and side effects, and vaccine allocation and roll out. The monitoring should cover all languages used in the country.

In response, the government will disseminate new communication packages and talking points to counter such misinformation through different platforms in a timely manner. These will also be in relevant local languages.

3.4. Stakeholder Engagement Plan

The Stakeholder engagement will involve: (i) consultations with stakeholders throughout the entire project cycle to inform them about the project, including their concerns, feedback and grievances, (ii) awareness-raising activities to sensitize communities on a) risks of COVID-19 and b) the component on supporting households to comply with public health containment measures. The SEP will be primarily be implemented through and build on component 3 of the project, which has a focus on communication and outreach. The communication and outreach will in scope, cover all relevant project activities, including those in components 1 and 2 for which stakeholder engagement and community outreach is crucial. The SEP will be financed through the budget defined in the component 3, as part of the communication and outreach program.

3.4. (i) Stakeholder consultations related to Emergency Response Project ⁶ and **Additional Financing (AF) to Kosovo Emergency COVID-19 Project (P173819)**

⁶ The strategies for consultation will include also use of online platforms.

Project stage	Topic of consultation / message	Method used	Target stakeholders	Responsibilities
Preparation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need of the project • planned activities • E&S principles, Environment and social risk and impact management/ESMF • Grievance Redress mechanisms (GRM) • Health and safety impacts • Supporting households to comply with public health containment measures component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Phone, email, letters • One-on-one meetings • FGDs • Outreach activities • PCU, MoH website to disclose the E&S documents • Reach stakeholders, NGOs and other interested parties through emails, webex, zoom and other communication platforms • Through the appropriate adjustments to be made to take into account the need for social distancing (use of audio-visual materials, technologies such as telephone calls, SMS, emails, etc.) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government officials from relevant line agencies at central and local level • Health institutions • Health workers and experts • Local governments or association of local governments • Centers for Social Work • Employment Agency • For AF: Committee for vaccination; • The MoH and the KNIPH • Regional Offices of the Institute of Public Health • Municipal Primary Health Care Centers • Local and international partner organizations: (WHO, UNICEF, WB, local NGOs) 	<p>Environment and Social Specialist M&E specialist</p> <p>Project Coordination Unit (PCU)</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Need of the project • planned activities • Environment and social risk and impact management/ESMF • Grievance Redress mechanisms (GRM) • Supporting households to comply with public health containment measures component 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach activities that are culturally appropriate • Appropriate adjustments to be made to take into account the need for social distancing (use of audio-visual materials, technologies such as telephone calls, SMS, emails, etc.) • Use of social networks. Through specially established accounts for the project and the accounts of local governments • Use of network of social assistance centers in local level • Use of network of regional red cross offices to be used to be sure that social 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affected individuals and their families • Local communities • Vulnerable groups • Employment Agency • Centers for Social Work 	<p>Environment and Social Specialist</p> <p>M&E Specialist PCU</p>

		<i>protection measures are disseminated well</i>		
Implementation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project scope and ongoing activities • ESMF and other instruments • SEP • GRM • Supporting households to comply with public health containment measures Component • Health and safety • Environmental concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Training and workshops • Disclosure of information through Brochures, flyers, website, etc. • Information desks at municipalities offices and health facilities • Appropriate adjustments to be made to consider the need for social distancing (use of audio-visual materials, technologies such as telephone calls, SMS, emails, etc.) <p>The brochures, awareness campaigns, videos, messages, the information on the ranking of municipalities based on the risk category, the information on the vaccine schedule and registration and other information are shared through the website of the MoH https://msh.rks-gov.net/en/category/news/ and social platforms: https://www.facebook.com/search/top?q=Ministria%20e%20Sh%C3%ABndet%C3%ABsis%C3%AB</p> <p>The original SEP is disclosed through MoH website (https://msh.rks-gov.net/en/) and World Bank website link</p> <p>Environmental concerns managed through the ESMP disclosed to the MoH website</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Government officials from relevant line agencies at local level • Health institutions • Health workers and experts • Civil workers • Waste management workers • Centers for Social Work • Local Employment Offices <p>For AF: Committee for vaccination;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The MoH and the KNIPH • Regional Offices of the Institute of Public Health • Municipal Primary Health Care Centers • Local and international partner organizations: (WHO, UNICEF, WB, local NGOs) 	Environment and Social Specialist M&E Component- Coordinators PCU
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Project scope and ongoing activities • ESMF and other instruments • SEP • GRM • Supporting households to comply with public health containment measures Component • Health and safety • Environmental concerns 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Public meetings in affected municipalities/villages • Brochures, posters • Information desks in local government offices and health facilities. • Appropriate adjustments to be made to take into account the need for social distancing (use of audio-visual materials, technologies such as 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Affected individuals and their families • Local communities • Vulnerable groups 	Environment and Social Specialist PCU

		<p>telephone calls, SMS, emails, radio, tv etc.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Social Networks • Information through local social assistance centers • Information through local Employment Agencies <p>Component 2 has disbursed 28.18 million (97.51%) in cash transfers as foreseen and progress towards this Component is rated as Highly Satisfactory</p> <p>The GRM for the SAS is well established and functioning. Previous reviews of the SAS have found that project-affected people use it to lodge complaints and that these are recorded and responded to by the Ministry</p>		
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3.4. (ii) Public awareness on the project:

For stakeholder engagement relating to public awareness, the following steps will be taken:

Step	Actions to be taken
1	<p>A) Implement risk communication strategy and community engagement plan for COVID- 19 including details of anticipated public health measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - It has prepared and communicated with stakeholders the Manual for COVID-19 Prevention and Control, which has served and continues to serve in guiding all of Kosovo's citizens for care and protection against COVID-19 - Plan for Prevention and Control of COVID-19, version 2.0, which aims to provide for an adequate response to COVID-19 pandemic in future phases, has been approved. <p>B) Implement the communication and dialogue strategy for the social protection measures.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - The new scheme of monthly assistance for families without income has been implemented, benefiting about 30 thousand families. <p>C) For AF vaccine: the communication will follow the strategies introduced in the Kosovo National Deployment and Vaccination Plan, for successful implementation of the vaccination program, several strategic directions are suggested: a) Misinformation Management, b) Community Engagement, c) Health workers capacity building, d) Crises communication e) Data generation and information dissemination.</p> <p>A) For the health component - Conduct behavior assessment to understand target audience, perceptions, concerns, influencers and preferred communication channels.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Mainly through the media platforms, the social media of the MoH, and the KNIPH. <p>B) For the Supporting households to comply with public health containment measures component – The target audience are those people who currently receive support from the SAS and potential beneficiaries of Measure 15. The component 2 is completed: assisting the most vulnerable groups being not only at health risk from the COVID19 but also likely to be exposed to its economic impact. Eligibility was decided through application via a designated website and the payment is made through bank transfers directly to beneficiary payroll accounts. The social scheme helped to keep under control the pressure to increase exposure to poverty, especially extreme poverty for social categories and vulnerable groups. The success of the package should be done through Assessment of the emergency cash transfer support provided through the social assistance scheme in response to COVID. The contract is under the evaluation from the evaluation committee and the beneficiary feedback will be received after the completion of assessment, it is expected that first beneficiary feedback to be ready by the end of July.</p>

	<p>In due course MoH had regular online engagement with the community and the following feedback was raised by beneficiaries:</p> <p>QUESTION 1:</p> <p>1. What is the solution offered to workers who have lost their jobs as a result of government measures?</p> <p>EXPLANATION FROM MOF:</p> <p>1. If there are workers who have lost their job after the announcement of the measures of the GoK in mid-March 2020, then these workers benefit from the eighth measure of the emergency package in the amount of 130 euros for the next three months (always under the assumption that in the meantime they do not create new employment relationships).</p> <p>The government encourages employers to maintain their workforce whenever they can, as this will benefit businesses themselves in the medium term.</p> <p>It should also be clarified that this measure is intended only for those who have lost their job as a result of difficulties in coping with the pandemic and not as a result of other problems with the employer or as a result of the termination of existing employment contracts. In case the dismissed workers have been working without employment contracts, then the only option remains the possibility to benefit from measure number 15 of the emergency package</p> <p>QUESTION 2:</p> <p>2. What is the solution offered for workers who have worked on a daily basis (or have no family members providing income)?</p> <p>EXPLANATION FROM MoF:</p> <p>2. This measure seeks to cover that part of the families whose only source of income is temporary work or engagements in care or maintenance work in private families. All of these families can benefit from measure 15 of the government's emergency package (130 euros for the next three months), if they document that this income is the only source of family income. This means that applicants, when submitting the family certificate must prove that none of their members is in a regular employment relationship and are also not part of any of the social and pension schemes of the public sector. Verification is done through the database of the tax administration of Kosovo and the Treasury department in the Ministry of Finance and Transfers.</p> <p>The measure is described in the annex 1.</p> <p>C) For AF vaccine: Develop communication materials to inform public on vaccination rollout, vaccine effectiveness, prioritization of groups etc.</p>
	Prepare local messages and test them, specifically target risk groups and key stakeholders for both components
	Identify community groups and local networks for both components
2	<p>Finalize the messages and complete materials in local languages and prepare communication channels for both components</p> <p>A) Engage with existing public health, community-based networks, media, local CSOs, schools, local governments and other private sector actors for consistent mechanism of communication</p> <p>B) Engage with social assistance centers, charity organizations, Employment Agency, Chamber of commerce</p> <p>C) For AF vaccine: Inform, empower and engage community to strengthen confidence in vaccine and reduce vaccine hesitancy among target populations, as well as most marginalized and vulnerable groups of population.</p> <p>Utilize two way of communication for both components</p> <p>A) Establish large scale community engagement for social and behavior change to ensure preventive community and individual health and hygiene practices in line with national public health containment recommendations</p> <p>B) Establish large scale community engagement for the beneficiaries from the second component – Supporting households to comply with public health containment measures component</p> <p>C) For AF vaccine:</p> <p>a) <i>Identify key community influencers for various audiences (religious, minority groups, experts etc.)</i></p> <p>b) <i>Organize meetings with community influencers to inform on COVID-19 vaccination program</i></p> <p>c) <i>Identify influencers in the target population and organize information sharing events in the media in which influencers will share their experience of vaccination</i></p>
3	<p>For both components and AF vaccine, systematically establish community information and feedback mechanism including through social media, community perception, knowledge, attitude and practice surveys and if possible direct dialogue and consultation for both components</p> <p>Ensure changes to community engagement are based on evidence and needs and ensure the engagement is culturally appropriate for both components</p> <p>Document lessons learned to inform future preparedness and response activities for both components</p>

Step 1: Design of communication strategy

- Assess the level of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) penetration among key stakeholder groups by using secondary sources to identify the type of communication channels that can be effectively used in the project context. Take measures to equip and build capacity of stakeholder groups to access & utilize ICT. This is for components one and two
- Conduct rapid behavior assessment to understand key target audience, perceptions, concerns, influencers and preferred communication channels. This is for components one and two
- Work with organizations supporting people with disabilities to develop messaging and communication strategies to reach them. This is for components one and two
- Prepare local messages and pre-test, especially targeting key stakeholders, vulnerable groups and at-risk populations. This is for both components
- Identify & partner with tele/mobile communication companies, ICT service providers and trusted community groups (e.g. Other community-based organizations, community leaders, religious leaders, health workers, community volunteers) and local networks to support the communication strategy.

Step 2: Implementation of the Communication Strategy

- Establish and utilize clearance processes for timely dissemination of messages and materials in local languages (Albanian and Serbian) and also in English, where relevant, for timely dissemination of messages and materials and adopt relevant communication channels (including social media/online channels) (Both components).
- Project will take measure to ensure that women and other vulnerable groups are able to access messaging around social isolation, prevention methods and government streamlined messaging pathways by radio, short messages to phones (Health Component).
- Project will take measure to ensure that women and other vulnerable groups are able to access information and benefit from the measures defined in Social Component
- Specific messages/awareness targeting women/girls will also be disseminated on risks and safeguard measures to prevent GBV/SEA in quarantine facilities, managing increased burden of care work and also as female hospital workers. Communication campaign would also be crafted in partnership with UNICEF targeting children to communicate child protection protocols to be implemented at quarantine facilities (Health Component).
- Engage with existing health and community-based networks media, local NGOs, schools, local governments and other sectors such healthcare service providers, education sector, defense, business, travel and food/agriculture sectors, ICT service providers using a consistent mechanism of communication (Health Component).
- Engage with social assistance centers, employment agencies, charity organizations, local media, local governments using consistent mechanism of communication. Social protection component
- Utilize two-way 'channels' for community and public information sharing such as hotlines (text and talk), responsive social media, where available, and TV and Radio shows, with systems to detect and rapidly respond to and counter misinformation (Both components).
- Establish large-scale community engagement strategy for social and behavior change approaches to ensure preventive community and individual health and hygiene practices in line with the national public health containment recommendations. Given the need to also consider social distancing, the strategy would focus on using IT-based technology, telecommunications, mobile technology, social media platforms, and broadcast media, etc. (Health component).

Step 3: Learning and Feedback

- Systematically establish community information and feedback mechanisms including through social media monitoring, community perceptions, knowledge, attitude, and practice surveys mostly online, and direct dialogues and consultations. This is for components one and two
- Ensure changes to community engagement approaches are based on evidence and needs, and ensure all engagement is culturally appropriate and empathetic. Health component
- Document lessons learned to inform future preparedness and response activities. This is for both components

For stakeholder engagement relating to the specifics of the project and project activities, different modes of communication will be utilized, applies to both components:

- Policy-makers and influencers might be reached through weekly engagement meetings with religious, administrative, youth, and women's groups. will be carried out virtually to prevent COVID 19 transmission.
- Individual communities should be reached through alternative ways given social distancing measures to engage with women groups, edutainment, youth groups, training of peer educators, etc. Social media/Online platforms, ICT & mobile communication tools can be used for this purpose.
- For public at large, identified and trusted media channels including: Broadcast media (television and radio), print media (newspapers, magazines), trusted organizations' websites, Social media (Facebook, Twitter, or other or customized online platforms etc.), Text messages for mobile phones, Hand-outs and brochures in community and health centers, at offices of Local Governments, Community health boards, Social Assistance Centers, Employment Agency Billboards Plan, will be utilized to tailor key information and guidance to stakeholders and disseminate it through their preferred channels and trusted partners.

3.5. Future of the project

Stakeholders will be kept informed as the project develops, including reporting on project environmental and social performance and implementation of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan and the grievance mechanism. This will be important for the wider public, but equally and even more so for suspected and/or identified COVID-19 cases their families as well as project beneficiaries of the social protection component.

3.6 Proposed strategy to incorporate the views of vulnerable groups

The project will carry out targeted consultations with vulnerable groups to understand concerns/needs in terms of accessing information, medical facilities and services and other challenges they face at home, at workplaces and in their communities. Vulnerable groups will be further identified in collaboration with the ministry as well as civil society organizations. Among the most vulnerable groups, the following will deserve special attention: i) the elderly, as they are among the most exposed to the virus as well as might have less access to information and access to the vaccination centers; ii) women, which are by the local cultural in charge of the main caregivers' roles (including child care and caring for the elderly), iii) people living with disabilities iv) people with chronic diseases, that might have limited access to information as well as access to the vaccine centers. In addition to specific consultations with vulnerable groups and women, the project will partner with agencies like UNICEF to engage children and adolescents to

understand their concerns, fears and needs. Some of the strategies that will be adopted to effectively engage and communicate to vulnerable groups will be:

- Women: ensure that community engagement teams are gender-balanced and promote women's leadership within these, design online and in-person surveys and other engagement activities so that women in unpaid care work can participate; consider provisions for childcare, transport, and safety for any in-person community engagement activities.
- Members of the RAE communities: Special targeting measures to areas where RAE live to inform them about safety measures like social distancing, masks and PPE. Use local government bodies to target RAE families who are likely to be eligible for benefits under component 2.
- Pregnant women: develop education materials for pregnant women on basic hygiene practices, infection precautions, and how and where to seek care based on their questions and concerns.
- Elderly and people with existing medical conditions: develop information on specific needs and explain why they are at more risk & what measures to take to care for them; tailor messages and make them actionable for particular living conditions (including assisted living facilities), and health status; target family members, health care providers and caregivers.
- People with disabilities: provide information in accessible formats, like braille, large print; offer multiple forms of communication, such as text captioning or signed videos, text captioning for hearing impaired, online materials for people who use assistive technology.
- Children: design information and communication materials in a child-friendly manner & provide parents with skills to handle their own anxieties and help manage those in their children.
- Outreach of the vulnerable for the Component 2 will be done also through Social Work Centers, Information posted in the Centers and Local Governments as these local level structures are in better position to target and outreach vulnerable population. There will be mechanisms to allow people to access the social support program through a range of means, with special outreach via media to the relevant identified vulnerable groups like RAE and wage labour.
- For AF vaccine: Communications campaign and IT systems: The AF will provide complementary support to communication campaign activities for the MoH to address vaccine hesitancy and provide relevant vaccination information. The established hotline center under NIPH will continue operating free of charge for users calling from mobile and landline telephones, and are convenient for users, which may have mobility barriers, or cannot access information via internet, and have no or limited digital skills to navigate the information on vaccination process through the phone without assistance. In addition, the MOH aims to identify and engage community groups (local influencers such as community leaders, religious leaders, health workers, community volunteers) and local networks (women's groups, youth groups, business groups, traditional healers, etc. to promote accurate information on COVID-19 vaccines, as well as training of media on vaccine reporting. Data management of the routine immunization program as well as for COVID-19 is established. However real time reporting of stock levels, stock movements, vaccine storage quality and available vaccine storage capacity will be upgraded also with the support from the AF if necessary.

- Implementation support for the Post-Vaccine Adverse Effects Monitoring System (EPPV). The AF will support activities related to developing SOPs and standardizing reporting forms, as well as developing digital solutions for reporting of vaccine adverse effects from physicians to the National Institute of Public Health and inter-agency technical integration based on SOPs developed.

3.7. Reporting back to stakeholders

Stakeholders will be kept informed as the project develops, including reporting on project environmental and social performance and implementation of the stakeholder engagement plan and grievance mechanism. The project will plan specific and deliberate outreach to vulnerable groups in order to ensure that these stakeholders remain informed about project implementation.

4. Resources and Responsibilities for implementing stakeholder engagement activities

4.1. Resources

The MoH and the Ministry of Finance and Transfers (MoFT) will be the implementing entities for the project. The Project Coordination Unit (PCU), established within the Ministry of Health under the World Bank assisted Kosovo Health Project (KHP) will oversee implementation of stakeholder engagement activities which will be financed through Component 3- Project monitoring, communication and community engagement

The budget for the SEP is included under Component 3, and is approximately US 1.0 Mil USD

4.2. Management functions and responsibilities

The project will be implemented over a period of 2 years, with the Ministry of Finance and Transfers (MoFT) and the Ministry of Health (MoH) as the key implementing agencies.

The MoH and MoFT will be accountable for execution of project activities and implementation would rely on their existing structures, with the additional support of the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) that has already been established for the WB supported Kosovo Health Project (KHP) (P147402).

The existing Project Coordination Unit (PCU) established for the parent Kosovo Health Project (KHP) housed by the Ministry of Health will be accountable for the implementation of Component 1 (Health care delivery and health system strengthening) on health sector activities. Decisions will be made by the Ministry of Health (MoH) in coordination with the National Institute and Centers for Public Health and other institutions involved in COVID-19 related activities.

MoFT will be primarily responsible for Component 2 (Supporting households to comply with public health containment measures). Component 2 will be implemented by MoFT, through the Social Assistance Scheme (SAS) Division, closely coordinating with and assisted by the Department for Social Policies and Family (which is now in the MOH). The Centers for Social Works (CSWs) which are part of the Dept. For Social Policies and Family will assist beneficiaries on the ground.

The overall project PCU in the MoH, aside from coordinating Component 1, will also be responsible for (i) preparation of required financial reports and withdrawal applications; (ii) any necessary procurement activities; (iii) compliance with the ESF; and (iv) monitoring and evaluation for all project components.

The directors of relevant departments of the MoH (such as HR department and the Department of health services) will be responsible for the technical implementation of Project activities. Both ministries have experience in implementing World Bank projects. The current PCU is staffed with a Project coordinator, a Procurement specialist, a Financial Management specialist, a monitoring and evaluation specialist and an assistant. The KHP was prepared under the World Bank's Safeguards with an Environmental Risk Rating of category "C" and had no related safeguards issues and hence no relevant qualified staff to cope with the substantial risk rating for the current project, the capacity of the PCU will be strengthened through hiring of an environment and a social standards specialist. They will be supported by the World Bank team to ensure adequate knowledge of the ESF and compliance with it. These staff will be financed through the KHP which is currently being restructured, but will work on managing the E & S requirements of both, the restructured KHP and the current Kosovo Covid-19 Emergency Project.

For **Additional Financing (AF) to Kosovo Emergency COVID-19 Project (P173819)**, no changes in the implementation arrangements will take place. The existing Project Operations Manual (POM) will be updated accordingly, within 30 days after effectiveness.

The Senior Management Committee of the KHP—chaired by the Minister of Health or his designee and including the deputy ministers, directors of relevant MoH departments/divisions, director of the Kosovo Hospital and University Clinical Center, and the director of the NIPH—will continue to be responsible for decision-making to prevent and address implementation bottlenecks. The committee will coordinate and monitor the progress of Component 1.

The PCU will implement the behavior change communication activities in partnership with MoH, MoFT and Institute for Public Health. At the local level, PCU will collaborate with the Primary, Secondary, Tertiary hospitals, local government authorities and Centers for Social Work and employment agencies (local branches).

The stakeholder engagement activities will be documented through quarterly progress reports, to be shared with the World Bank.

5. Grievance Mechanism

The main objective of a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) is to assist to resolve complaints and grievances in a timely, effective and efficient manner that satisfies all parties involved. Specifically, it provides a transparent and credible process for fair, effective and lasting outcomes. It also builds trust and cooperation as an integral component of broader community consultation that facilitates corrective actions. Specifically, the GRM:

- Provides affected people with avenues for making a complaint or resolving any dispute that may arise during the implementation of project.

- Ensures that appropriate and mutually acceptable redress actions are identified and implemented to the satisfaction of complainants.
- Supports accessibility, anonymity, confidentiality and transparency in handling grievances and grievances.
- Avoids the need to resort to judicial proceedings (at least at first).

Because of the separate nature of the activities in the Component 1 and 2 there will be separate mechanisms for each Components.

Component 1: For the ongoing civil works the contractor has disclosed the information on the working site, for the project, the contact details to address the complaints and so far no complaints were reported.

Component 2: the Complaints Review Commission has received about 13,697 complaints, of which 8,487 are regular complaints being rejected by the first instance Social Work Center (SWC), and approximately 5,210 ungrounded complaints which have not applied at all in the first instance but have filed a complaint and have been accepted by the SWCs and the Commission.

- 4,755 were rejected as they did not provide sufficient evidence for no objection from the first instance verification report.
- 3,732 were approved by the Commission as they provided evidence put down the first instance verification report.
- 5,210 rejected as they have not provided any evidence that they have applied to benefit from this measure.

After reviewing and deciding on the Regular Complaints, the Centers for Social Work has issued the rejection decisions to inform the parties of their decisions.

As mentioned above, we as the Commission have received 5210 complaints which have not been reviewed at all in the first instance, but which the party claims to have applied and has not received a response from the relevant institutions (SWC).

The commission have checked and reviewed all complaints and each party that has provided evidence that has applied within the deadlines, we have ordered the SWCs to register them and compare the list with other database of relevant institutions. Of these, 402 have resulted were accepted, while the for the remaining 4,808 complaints no evidence to substantiate the claims of the parties was found. Therefore, commission has consulted the professional help from experts that have drafted legislation, and some judges of the courts of Kosovo. Based on expert and judges recommendations the commission are obliged to issue a decision on all these complaints.

For Additional Financing (AF) to Kosovo Emergency COVID-19 Project (P173819) will use the already existing Grievance redress mechanism (GRM) of the parent project. The GRM will enable a broad range of stakeholders to channel concerns, questions, and complaints to the various implementation agencies and COVID-19 Call centers. The project supports the COVID-19 Call Centers with call-free numbers. These numbers have been publicly disclosed throughout the country in the broadcast and print media. The GRM will be equipped to handle cases of SEA/SH, as rapid guidance on how to respond to these cases will be developed and shared with operators. This will follow a survivor-centered approach The GRM will continue to be publicized by the MOH and GHS and other relevant agencies. Update here the status of compliance with GRM in the parent project.

5.1. Description of GRM

For the Component 1 An on-line Grievance mechanism and registry has been established within the Project PCU (Ministry of Health) (<https://msh.rks-gov.net/>). This GRM will be strengthened further and described in the updated SEP. The aim is to inform all stakeholders of the procedures for submitting grievances/suggestions regarding the Project and receiving responses on the submitted grievance. The same mechanism will be available at the dedicated social network accounts for the project. Information about the GRM shall be locally advertised i.e. at social work centres and local governments.

In addition to the on-line submission avenue, any comments/concerns/grievance can be submitted to the MoH verbally (personally or by telephone) or in writing by filling in the Project Grievance Form (by personal delivery, post, fax or e-mail to the MoH contact person). Individuals who submit comments or grievances have the right to request that their name be kept confidential. Grievances may be submitted anonymously, although in such cases, the person will not receive any response though the case will be reviewed. All comments and grievances will be responded to either verbally or in writing, in accordance with the preferred method of communication specified by the complainant, if contact details of the complainant are provided. There will be outreach campaigns to inform people about the Grievance mechanism and information will be disseminated via a range of channels. This will serve general project related grievances as well as those specific to components 1 and 3 of the project.

For component 2, there will be separate channel for the Grievance. The complainant can contact the local CSW or Division for Social Assistance Services (SAS) at the Central level via phone and present their complaint to the officer. The outreach activities financed through Component 3, will inform people about the SAS GRM, through local governments and Centres for Social Work. The dissemination channels and the procedure for submission of a complaint will be defined in the updated SEP. Current GRM process for the Component 2 is elaborated in the Annex 2. This will be detailed and further strengthened in the updated SEP.

SAS telephone number: +38338212504 and +383211010.

SAS Email: sns@rks-gov.net

Complainant feedback on the resolution for the For the Component 1

The complainant will be informed about the proposed corrective action and follow-up of corrective action within 15 calendar days upon the acknowledgement of grievance. The acknowledgment will be done within 48 hours. In situation when the grievance is not able to be addressed or if action is not required, the PCU will provide a detailed explanation/ justification on why the issue was not addressed. The response will also contain an explanation on how the person/ organisation that raised the grievance can proceed with the grievance in case the outcome is not satisfactory. At all times, complainants may seek other legal remedies in accordance with the national legal framework, including formal judicial appeal.

Contact information for enquiries and grievances:

Rapid Response COVID- 19 Project

Ministry of Health

Address:

Rr. Zagrebit Nr. 60, 10000, Prishtinë

Republic of Kosovo

Division for Public Communication and Relations

E-mail: msh.info@rks-gov.net

Telephone: +383 38 200 24 131; +383 38 200 24 020

The GRM will include the following steps:

- **Step 1:** Submission of grievances either orally, in writing via suggestion/grievance box, through telephone hotline/mobile, mail, SMS, social media (WhatsApp, Viber, FB etc.), email, website, and via any local institution partner of the project
- The GRM will also allow anonymous grievances to be raised and addressed.
- **Step 2:** Recording of grievance, classifying the grievances based on the typology of grievances and the complainants in order to provide more efficient response, and providing the initial response immediately as possible at the local partner or PCU level. The typology will be based on the characteristics of the complainant (e.g., vulnerable groups, persons with disabilities, people with language barriers, etc) and the nature of the grievance
- **Step 3:** Investigating the grievance and Communication of the Response within 15 days
- **Step 4:** Complainant Response: either grievance closure or taking further steps if the grievance remains open. If grievance remains open, complainant will be given opportunity to appeal to the MoFT formal Ministry level 2nd tier complain commission (part of the administrative proceedings).

Monthly/quarterly reports in the form of a summary of grievances, types, actions taken, and progress made in terms of resolving of pending issues will be submitted for the review to all focal points at the implantation structures in the MoH and MoFT. Once all possible avenues of redress have been proposed and if the complainant is still not satisfied then s/he would be advised of their right to legal recourse.

Handling GBV issues. Although the risk from project activities and in the Kosovo, context is low, the first responders will be trained on how to handle disclosures of GBV. Health workers who are part of the outbreak response will be trained with the basic skills to respond to disclosures of GBV that could be associated with or exacerbated by the epidemic, in a compassionate and non-judgmental manner and know to whom they can make referrals for further care or bring in to treatment centers to provide care on the spot. This will be integrated into the project design and be part of the outreach to health workers. GBV referral pathway will be established in line with healthcare structures of the country. The project communication campaign and outreach will make sure that there is information available on the helplines and organizations in country that provide support to GBV survivors who may be affected by the pandemic. The GRM that will be in place for the project will also be used for addressing GBV-related issues exacerbated by project activities and will have in place mechanisms for confidential reporting with safe and ethical documenting of GBV issues. The project will also educate the public that for project related activities, the GRM can be utilized to raise concerns or complaints related to GBV and SEA/Sexual Harassment (SH) issues. Thus, the existing GRM will also be

strengthened with procedures to handle allegations of GBV/SEA/SH violations which will be outlined in the updated SEP.

The updated version of the SEP will focus on typology of grievances and complainants to provide more efficient management. Possible examples: the highly vulnerable i.e. persons with disabilities, people facing language barriers, disruptions in areas neighboring facilities, RAE, etc.

5.2 World Bank Grievance Redress System

Communities and individuals who believe that they are adversely affected by a World Bank (WB) supported project may submit complaints to existing project-level grievance redress mechanisms or the WB's Grievance Redress Service (GRS). The GRS ensures that complaints received are promptly reviewed in order to address project-related concerns. Project affected communities and individuals may submit their complaint to the WB's independent Inspection Panel which determines whether harm occurred, or could occur, as a result of WB non-compliance with its policies and procedures. Complaints may be submitted at any time after concerns have been brought directly to the World Bank's attention, and Bank Management has been given an opportunity to respond.

For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank's corporate Grievance Redress Service (GRS), please visit <http://www.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/products-and-services/grievance-redress-service>. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank Inspection Panel, please visit www.inspectionpanel.org.

6. Monitoring and Reporting

The SEP will be periodically revised and updated as necessary in the course of project implementation in order to ensure that the information presented herein is consistent and is the most recent, and that the identified methods of engagement remain appropriate and effective in relation to the project context and specific phases of the development. Any major changes to the project related activities and to its schedule will be duly reflected in the SEP. Quarterly summaries and internal reports on public grievances, enquiries and related incidents, together with the status of implementation of associated corrective/preventative actions, will be collated by the designated GRM officer, and referred to the senior management of the project. The quarterly summaries will provide a mechanism for assessing both the number and the nature of grievances and requests for information, along with the Project's ability to address those in a timely and effective manner. Information on public engagement activities undertaken by the Project during the year may be conveyed to the stakeholders in two possible ways:

- Publication of a standalone annual report on project's interaction with the stakeholders.
- Monitoring of a beneficiary feedback indicator on a regular basis. The indicator will be determined in the updated SEP and may include: number of consultations, including by using telecommunications carried out within a reporting period (e.g. monthly, quarterly, or annually); number of public grievances received within a reporting period (e.g. monthly, quarterly, or annually) and number of those resolved within the prescribed timeline; number of press materials published/broadcasted in the local, regional, and national media.

Further details on the SEP will be outlined in the updated SEP, to be prepared and disclosed within 1 month of the project effective date.

Annex 1 – Explanation of the Measure 15

Expanding the SAS to new households: Measure 15. According to the Government's Emergency Plan households are eligible for this support when the applicant household member is unemployed, no member of the household receives any other regular assistance from the Government, and the household has no source of formal income. Eligible households will receive support for a period of three months (planned for April, May, June 2020), amounting to Euro 130 per month per household. To deliver this support, the Government will use the systems and procedures that have been established for the SAS, including payment procedures, with modifications to the enrolment and targeting system. More specifically, one member of the household will apply to receive this emergency support to MoFT on behalf of his or her household. Given the need to start quickly, this application process will initially be in the form of an email to a dedicated email account staffed by the SAS Division. Through this application, the individual will provide the list of household members and ID numbers. Alternatively, for households without the necessary internet access, there is also the option to apply to this emergency support in person at the CSWs. Efforts are underway to build a web-based enrolment system that would enable people to apply for support by entering their national ID number, name and a few key variables.

1. This application form will be reviewed by the SAS Division for completeness and then sent to the respective CSW, where the staff will enter it into the SAS MIS, in which the SAS MIS targeting module will carry-out the means-test of the SAS to determine if the household has sources of formal income or receives monthly support from other Government programs. This is carried-out by cross-referencing the national ID number with Government databases in the Tax Administration and MoFT. All households that receive regular public benefits and social security payments will be excluded. There will also be a cross-reference with the Employment Agency of Kosovo (EARK) to confirm that the applicant is registered as unemployed
2. Initially, the threshold for the means-test is set such that eligible households will have no source of formal income. However, analysis shows that even a considerable share of households in the top 60 percent have no formal sources of income. Many households in Kosovo rely on informal sources of income, including remittances. The anticipated effects of the crisis are likely to be much wider and deeper, with anticipated reductions in sources of informal income, including remittances from abroad. For this reason, efforts are underway to introduce a second targeting criteria based on a proxy-means test (PMT) to better assess the poverty status of households. Should this emergency measure be extended, it is anticipated that this second targeting method will be introduced, and, to this end, the enrolment form will be adapted to include questions that are necessary for the PMT.
3. The proposed project will invest in adapting the SAS MIS to enable it to support the emergency payments, specifically the development of the web-based enrollment capability, and to explore the possibility of communication through mobile phones. Drawing on the experience of the emergency operation, the aim is to support the MoFT to further strengthen the systems of the SAS to enable it to better response to future emergencies. It is anticipated that this will include adopting a poverty-targeting system, which includes the flexibility to respond to crisis, and the design of the architecture for a social registry, which would support the rapid scaling up of the SAS in the face of any future shock.

Annex 2 – Explanation of the GRM for the Component 2

SAS Grievance and Redress Mechanism

1. **The main objective of a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) for the Component 2 is to assist to resolve complaints and grievances in a timely, effective and efficient manner that satisfies all parties involved.** Specifically, it provides a transparent and credible process for fair, effective and lasting outcomes. It also builds trust and cooperation as an integral component of broader community consultation that facilitates corrective actions. Specifically, the GRM:

- Provides affected people with avenues for making a complaint or resolving any dispute that may arise during the course of the implementation of projects;
- Ensures that appropriate and mutually acceptable redress actions are identified and implemented to the satisfaction of complainants; and
- Reduces the scope of complaint cases that are brought to court to be resolved through judicial proceedings.

2. **The decision-making responsibility for approval or rejection of applications for the SAS benefit rests with the Head of the SAS Division in the respective CSW** (Law No.04/L-096, Art. 3.5). It is based on the information on the case which is collected ex officio and through a field visit and fed in the SAS Management Information System (MIS) with the MLSW by CSW SAS Unit employees (case managers and IT administrators). The MIS cross-checks data on eligibility of each case on a monthly basis, confirms eligibility or rejects it and communicates back to the CSWs the identified reasons for rejection. Subject of the appeal / grievance procedure is the Decision made by the Head of the SAS Unit in the respective CSW. All applicants for SAS who are not satisfied with the decision of the respective CSW not to honor their applications, have the right to appeal the decision for rejection.

3. The grievance procedure is organized in two instances which could be followed by a third stage - court appeal. The steps / stages to be followed with the grievance procedure are as follows:

4. **First instance grievance procedure.** The first instance body is the CSW which has processed the application. The grievance procedure is initiated by the applicant whose application has been rejected or by his/her legal representative. The appeal is addressed to the Head of the SAS unit and should be filed no later than five (5) days after the applicant has been notified about the Decision (Law No.04/L-096, Art. 11.1). Missing to comply with this deadline does not mean losing the right to appeal/complaint at second instance. For starting the grievance/appeal at first instance, the applicant submits a written complaint to the Head of the SAS Division. He/she authorizes a review of the case. The CSW SAS Unit Head is obliged to review the complaint within a timeframe of ten (10) days from the day when the complaint has been received, or – in the same timeframe – to transfer it for resolution to the second instance body. The CSW SAS Unit Head is obliged to report back the status of the disputed decision to the applicant in writing. The CSWs also report annually to MLSW on the number of resolved appeals at first instance, along with the reasons for appeals. MLSW monitors the number of appeals by CSW and the reasons for them.

5. **Second instance grievance procedure.** The MLSW is the second instance body for grievance procedure for this component. The initiative for the second instance grievance procedure is taken by the applicant. The applicant is responsible for filing the grievance / appeal at second instance in writing, if the decision of the first instance is not satisfactory for him/her. Complaints are submitted not later than fifteen (15) days from the date of receiving the Decision from the first instance body. The staff of the CSW supports the applicant in preparing the file with documents needed for the submission of the appeal. MLSW appoints a Complaint Commission which reviews complaints and informs those who complain in

writing not later than twenty-one (21) days after receiving the complaint.

6. **Court appeal.** If the applicant is not satisfied with the outcome of the Complaint Commission's Decision outcomes at the second instances, he/she or legal representative can file an appeal with the competent Court. The deadline for court appeal is thirty (30) days from receiving the Decision of the second instance appeal body.

7. **During Project implementation, the typology of appeals and appellants will be monitored closely to ensure efficient GRM management.** Efforts will be made to: (i) identify specific barriers for certain types of applicants to exercise their right to appeal and redress; (ii) increase the benefit take up by reducing bureaucracy associated with grievance and appeal procedures at different instances; (iii) limit, and possibly eliminate, physical presence of appellants in the GRM procedure; and (iv) provide through the CSWs with more detailed and informative data on the reasons for rejection of applications so that an increasing share of appeals are resolved by the first instance body.

8. The CSWs will be tasked with dissemination of information of the available GRM procedures, along with the rights and responsibilities of applicants/beneficiaries and benefit administrators, contact details and deadlines.

Annex 3: REPORT ON PUBLIC DISCLOSURE AND PUBLIC CONSULTATION

As required by the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework during the preparation of draft Social Engagement Plan (SEP) for the Kosovo Emergency Covid-19 Response Project and Additional Finance the Borrower carried out public consultations with relevant stakeholders.

The Ministry of Health (MoH) disclosed the draft SEP document on their website on 28 April 2021 and announced invitation for public consultations for the public, bodies and organizations interested in the subject documents prepared for Kosovo Emergency Covid-19 Response Project. The draft documents and invitation to the public consultations were provided to stakeholders, institutions, Environmental and Social NGOs, think tanks, media, health NGOs and the international community, donors investing in health sector, and documents were also available for public consultation on the MoH website: <https://msh.rks-gov.net/en/sep -kosovo-emergency-covid-19-project-p173819/>

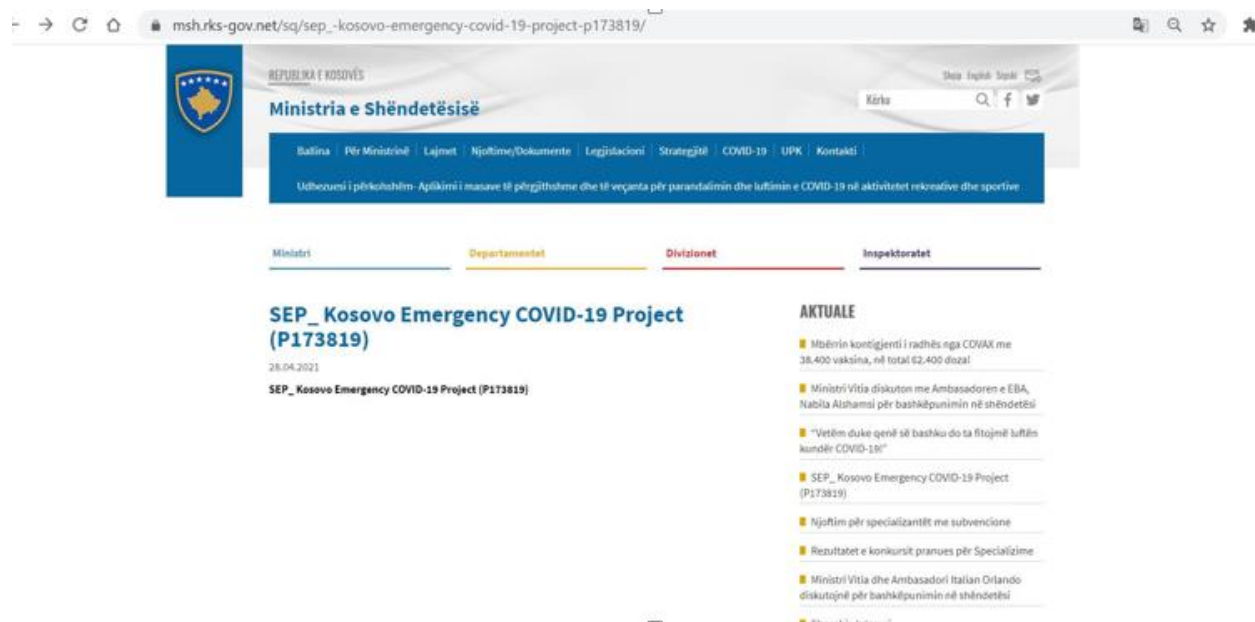
As result of the consultation the following comments were received and have been addressed by PCU and MoH:

#	Comment	MoH PCU response
Stakeholder – Accessible Quality Healthcare (AQH) Project SDC project implemented by Swiss TPH Nicu Fota- Team Leader		
1.	<p>Thank you for sharing the "Stakeholders Engagement Plan for Kosovo Emergency Project COVID-19 Response". On behalf of the AQH Project team, I would like to forward the following comments together with our expressed availability for sharing and contributing with the AQH Project practical experiences to the overall consistent efforts of the MoH, the donor community and all the other support projects and initiatives for fighting against COVID-19:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> as well observed within the document, communication component is all the way accompanying the "hardware" of the project and the use of social media and/or internet platforms as important channels of communication is underlined. [Fully in line with that approach, AQH is implementing together with the MoH and NIPH, since May 2020, a risk communication campaign dedicated to the vulnerable groups of chronic patients, elderly, RAE, and other, by making use of the same recommended channels: social media, TV broadcasting, direct communication to vulnerable families etc.] the program previews the training of medical staff for intra-hospital infection prevention and for anesthesiologists. [The AQH Project is currently implementing, together with the MoH, a COVID-19 related training program dedicated to medical staff within PHC facilities.] 	<p>The comments are well noted. The MoH will coordinate the communication component and training program supported by AQH Project and Kosovo Covid 19 Emergency Project.</p> <p>The comment for inclusion of the chronic patients at priority vulnerable groups is accepted and will be considered.</p>

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> although included in the priority vulnerable groups of the program, the chronic patients are not mentioned when it comes to the proposed strategy to incorporate the views of vulnerable groups (chapter 3.6). we salute the planning and the allocation of resources for the coordination functions fulfilled at different levels by the National COVID-19 Coordination and Monitoring Committee, the MoH donor coordination meetings, and the Project Coordination Unit. <p>Considering the practical experience accumulated by the AQH Project during the implementation of the communication campaign (using TV channels/social media/direct communication/other), and its work with national and local stakeholders and with the communities, vulnerable groups and NGOs, we will be gladly participating to the future coordination mechanism among project stakeholders, as it will planned by the MoH.</p> <p>We wish all the best for the further implementation of the "Kosovo Emergency Project COVID-19 Response" Project.</p>	
Stakeholder – European Union Office in Kosovo Samir Selimi, Programme Manager		
	<p>Thank you for your email and for sharing Stakeholder engagement plan document.</p> <p>In relation to new proposed activity under sub-component 1.3 “Vaccine Procurement and Deployment” of your document please note the following:</p> <p>The EU has granted Government of Kosovo/Ministry of Health EUR 7,030,070.00 for purchase of covid-19 vaccines. Through this grant it is foreseen that approximately 700,000 doses of covid-19 vaccines are purchased (of course the exact number of vaccine doses may vary pending on the price of vaccines) through re-sale agreement involving EU Member States. The implementation of this grant contract has started in Mar 2021 and will go on for 18 months.</p> <p>First such agreement was signed with Austria which will ensure delivery of 95,000 doses of Pfizer vaccine paid by this grant. The delivery schedule will involve smaller batches due to be delivered between May-Aug 2021. The implementation of this grant contract has started in Mar 2021 and will go on for 18 months.</p>	<p>Thank you for sharing the information, the same will be reflected in the Kosovo Covid-19 Emergency Additional Finance Project Paper.</p>

SEP_ Kosovo Emergency COVID-19 Project (P173819)

The screen shots of the public disclosure for consultation on the MoH website and invitation for consultation are presented below:



Disclosure of the SEP in the website of the MoH

From: Nexhip Sheholli <Nexhip.Sheholli@rks-gov.net>
Sent: Wednesday, April 28, 2021 5:59 PM
To: ulrika.richardson@one.un.org; nicu.fota@aqhproject.org; Samir.selim@eeas.europa.eu; aferdita@luxdev.lu; merita.stavileci@eda.admin.ch; koryaks@who.int; qamile.ramadan@aqhproject.org; prishtina@unicef.org; lkshpk; kabinet.mf; Mentor Morina; Bjondina Rexha; FSSH Info; Drejtoria SHSKUK; info@kado-ks.org; info@womensnetwork.com; info@ngo-integra.org; info@ngo-pen.com; vjollcagodanci@gmail.com; info@prak-kosova.org; qendra.ks@gmail.com; traumacenter@diakoniekosova.org; info@caritaskosova.org; handikos_th@hotmail.com; info@autizmi-ks.org; teuta.abrashi@gmail.com; pvpt.ngo@gmail.com; sheptjakova@yahoo.com; remzi.kajiku@handi-kos.org; prishtinarea@yahoo.com; arbnor.ctaku@gmail.com; handikos@handi-kos.org; info@downsyndromekosova.org; pema.kosova@gmail.com; opdmk.kosovo@yahoo.com; opdmk.kosovo@gmail.com; ojijeta@hotmail.com; haderprizren@hotmail.com; qendra.drenas@hotmail.com; kadire_tahiraj@hotmail.com; healthforall.info@gmail.com; asllani.m@gmail.com; kr_mdri028@hotmail.com; info@amchealth.org; adelina_shqipeja@hotmail.com; info@fondazione.it; sabrije.seqaj@handi-kos.org; pejaviv@yahoo.com; info@ngo-zana.org; tahir.gashi@ngo-zana.org; opsrahovec@gmail.com; info@caritaskosova.org; info@educationcode.org; mimoz.stanovci@educationcode.org; vjosa.preniqi@educationcode.org; info@prak-kosova.org; info@shv-kosova.org; r-jeton@hotmail.com; enis.berisha@hotmail.com; ngo_gaga@yahoo.com
Cc: Arben Viti; Sami.R.Uka; Korab Kamberi; Naim Bardiqi; Vjosa Kalaja; Minire.Kazazi; Lorena Kostallari; Mrike Allu; Bekim Ymeri; Shpresa Kastrati; Merita Kasapolli; Afrim Bajrami; Agim Ali; Allu; Kadrije Berisha; Blerim Çerçini; Faik Hoti; Fatmir Plakij@rks-gov.net
Subject: FTESA PUBLIKE PER KOMENTE/ PUBLIC CALL FOR COMMENTS/ JAVNI POZIV ZA KOMENTARE
Attachments: SEP_Kosovo Emergency COVID-19 Project (P173819).pdf

[External]

Të nderuar kolege,
Shpresoj që ky e-mail t'ju gjejë mirë.
Në emër të Ekspertit të MSH dhe Ekspertit të BB, për komentet tuaja, dëshirojmë të ndajmë me ju "Planin i angazhimit të palëve të interesit" për Projektin Shëndetësor në Kosovë, përgjigja ndaj COVID-19".
Ju lutemi të dërgoni komente e juaja deri më 12 Maj 2021, në fund të orarit të punës, në adresën msh.info@rks-gov.net dhe merita.kasapolli@gmail.com.
Faleminderit dhe gjithë të mirat,

Dear colleagues,
Hope this e-mail finds you well.
On behalf of the MOH and the WB Team, for your comments, we would like to share the "Stakeholder Engagement Plan" for Kosovo Emergency Project COVID-19 Response".
Will appreciate if you will send your comments latest by May 12, 2021, COB to msh.info@rks-gov.net and merita.kasapolli@gmail.com.
Thank you and best regards,

Poštovane kolege,
Nadam se da vas ovaj e-mail nade dobro.
U ime Ministarstva zdravlja (MZ) i tima Svestke banke, za vaše komentare, želili bismo da delimo "Plan angazovanja zainteresovanih strana" za odgovor na Kosovo COVID-19".
Vaše komentare šaljite najkasnije do Maja 12.2021, COB na adresu msh.info@rks-gov.net i merita.kasapolli@gmail.com.
Hvala i puno pozdrava,

Best regards:

Nexhip Sheholli, MD,
Acting Coordinator of the Kosovo Health Project Unit,
Specialist i Menaxhimit Financiar në NJKP për P.Sh.K
Financial Management Specialist of PCU of the K.H.P
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Ky mesazh është konfidencial. Nëse keni prurur këtë mesazh gabimisht, ju lutem na njoftoni menjëherë me e-mail dhe fshini atë nga sistemi juaj. Ju nuk mund të kopjoni këtë mesazh ose të bëni publik përmbajtjen e tij.
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Invitation for public consultation