



INCLUSIVE DIGITALIZATION IN EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA PROJECT

(IDEA)

GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM BROCHURE

JANUARY 2026

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1. About IDEA

Inclusive Digitalization in Eastern & Southern Africa (IDEA) is a regional Multiphase Programmatic Approach (MPA) for Eastern and Southern Africa, focusing on:

- (i) affordable, high-quality broadband and digital access.
- (ii) interoperable and secure data platforms and trusted online transactions; and
- (iii) high-impact digital applications in priority sectors—initially social protection and financial services—along with digital skills to enhance productive use.

The MPA outlines an ambitious agenda for universal digital access through coordinated pillars and a menu of regional interventions.

IDEA COMESA Platform

Project Development Objective (PDO): To strengthen the enabling environment for expanded inclusive internet access and digital services in Eastern and Southern Africa. The COMESA operation contributes to and reports on overall Program objectives.

Project Components

Component 1: Regional Harmonization and Planning Platform (US\$4.1M)

Supports regional digital market integration and investment planning through:

- Technical assistance and training to develop harmonized digital policies, standards, roaming framework implementation, spectrum management models, AI and emerging technology guidelines, cross-border data frameworks, and measures to mobilize private capital for digital infrastructure (including linkages to ASCENT where feasible).
- Development of geospatial planning tools and least-cost models to expand internet access to cross-border areas and priority public institutions.

Component 2: Regional Knowledge and Capacity Building (US\$2.4M)

Strengthens institutional capacity and knowledge sharing through:

- Toolkits for project preparation, procurement, financial management, E&S risk management, and M&E (including a regional platform).
- Training and knowledge exchange on digital safeguards, e-commerce frameworks, procurement, FM, E&S, data systems, and M&E.
- Communications and outreach using COMESA platforms to promote gender inclusion and private-sector engagement.

Component 3: Regional Project Coordination and Management (US\$3.5M)

Establishes the regional Program Coordination Unit to coordinate with countries, report on results, and manage fiduciary, E&S, and other implementation functions for the COMESA regional grant.

2. The Project Grievance Redress Mechanism

2.1 Preamble

Despite the benefits, we understand that the IDEA Project may cause unintended environmental or social impacts. We are committed to addressing any concerns and ensuring that all stakeholders feel heard and supported.

Should the IDEA Project cause, or potentially cause, harm to you, your community, or the environment, we encourage you to share your concerns through our Grievance Redress Mechanism. This system ensures that the Project and its partners remain accessible and responsive to all stakeholders, including local communities.

2.2 Who may file a complaint

Any individual or community who believes that they have been, or may be, adversely affected by the Project or its activities may submit a grievance. Complaints may also be submitted by representatives, including civil society organizations, on behalf of affected parties. Complainants may request confidentiality, and their identities will be protected to the extent possible.

2.3 Complaint Eligibility

When a complaint is received, it will be assessed for its eligibility. The Project consider a complaint eligible when it:

- a) Relates to the Project
- b) Alleges environmental and social harm caused or likely to be caused by the Project; and
- c) Is filed by a person or community who believes have been affected by the Project

2.5 What to include in submitting a grievance

When submitting a grievance or complaint, it is important that the complainant provide the following information:

- Name, address, telephone number, and other contact information
- Whether the complainant wishes to keep his/her identity confidential
- Name, location, and nature of the Project
- How the complainant believes has been, or is likely to be affected by the Project
- If the complaint is submitted by a representative, include the name, signature, contact details, and written proof of authority of the representative
- Supporting evidence is not necessary but may be helpful in reviewing and/or resolving the complaint.
- Suggestions on how the complainant believe the complaint could be resolved
- Any efforts that have been pursued to try to resolve the grievance

Forms for reporting **sexual misconduct** or **other cases** are available for download on our website at www.idea.comesa.int

2.6 How is a complaint handled

If you want to know the procedure of handling complaints, you may refer to Figure 1 below.

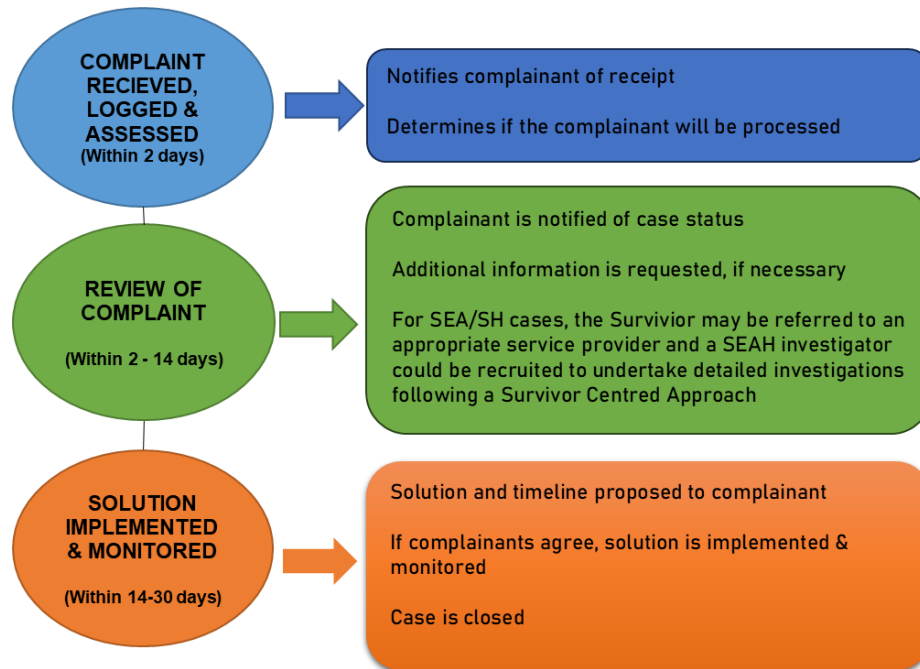


Figure 1: Procedure of handling complaints

2.7 How to submit a complaint

You can reach us through any of the following channels:

 **Email:** grmidea@comesa.int

 **Phone:** +260 211 229725 / 229732

 **Fax:** +260 211 225693 / 232311

 **WhatsApp:** +260 772 909403 / +260 773 000254

 **Mail:**

IDEA Programme Coordinator
Infrastructure and Logistics Division
COMESA Secretariat
COMESA Centre, P.O. Box 30051
Lusaka 10101, Zambia

 **In Person:**

IDEA Programme Office
COMESA House, Ben Bella Road, Lusaka, Zambia



For complaints related to sexual misconduct:

Email our SEA/SH focal points at seah_idea@comesa.int



During Events:

Raise concerns during project-organised meetings, conferences, or workshops.



GRM Box available at fixed locations and during meetings, conferences, or workshops.

3. Other grievance redress channels

It is important that our stakeholders are aware that the P-GRM is intended to complement and not replace formal legal channels for resolving grievances (e.g. the national court system, organizational audit mechanisms, etc.). Our stakeholders always have the option to approach other formal redress mechanisms including legal redress.

3.1 National Legal Systems

The existence of the P-GRM should not prevent affected parties or communities from pursuing their rights and interests in any other international, national or local forum, and thus complainants are free to choose legal redress or other formal dispute resolution mechanisms ahead of the P-GRM.

3.2 World Bank Grievance Redress Service

Project stakeholders who believe the IDEA Project has caused or may cause adverse effects on them, their community, or the environment may also submit their complaints to the Bank's Grievance Redress Service (GRS) or its independent Accountability Mechanism (AM).

The **GRS** enhances the World Bank's responsiveness and accountability by ensuring grievances are promptly reviewed and addressed. The **Accountability Mechanism (AM)** houses the **Inspection Panel**, which assesses whether harm has occurred or may occur due to Bank non-compliance with policies and procedures.

For more information on submitting complaints, please visit:

- Bank's Grievance Redress Service (GRS) <http://www.worldbank.org/GRS>
- Bank's Accountability Mechanism (AM) <https://accountability.worldbank.org>