LWR & ACCOUNTABILITY TO AFFECTED POPULATIONS

GUIDING PRINCIPLES

With nearly 75 years of demonstrated expertise helping to transform some of the hardest to reach places in the developing world, Lutheran World Relief (LWR) is committed to serving those otherwise cut off from basic human services and opportunities. Our Framework for Accountability to Affected Populations outlines LWR's accountability practices and core principles in working with the people and families around the world, who are directly and indirectly affected by LWR interventions.

LWR's accountability practices require that interventions be developed with sensitivity to the cultural norms and power dynamics of the local context.

LWR's Core Principles of Accountability to Affected Populations:

- Dignity
- Justice
- Inclusiveness
- Participation
- Accountability
- Transparency
- Compassion
- Commitment

LWR has zero tolerance for any form of abuse of power, sexual exploitation, fraud and corruption, physical or psychological abuse, or criminal offences and will quickly and fully respond to any such reports. LWR strives to respond to all questions and concerns raised by community members and other stakeholders in a timely, appropriate, inclusive, and transparent manner.

LWR has the following mechanisms in place to hold itself accountable to affected populations.

COMMUNICATIONS WITH AFFECTED POPULATIONS

Populations served by a development project are considered key stakeholders and must be consulted during project design, implementation, conclusion, and evaluation to ensure their ownership and increase the likelihood of the long term sustainability of project activities and outcomes. Therefore, throughout the project, LWR and our local partners continuously communicate with project participants and other stakeholders (government officials, community leaders, etc.) to share information about the project and to solicit their full participation and feedback. When planning a new project, LWR works closely with our local partners to determine the appropriate communication methods to use in all phases of the project.

LWR employs a variety of methods to share information about project related meetings, events, progress, and outcomes.

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- **Word-of-mouth:** LWR and partner staff work within communities and share information through local networks, which include both community leaders and vulnerable populations.

- **Public signage:** Prominently displayed signs, posters and community notice boards list project information and contact information for LWR and the local partner(s).

- **Other media:** Radio broadcasts and other forms of media, including social media platforms, are used when appropriate.

- **Public kick-off meetings:** Prior to the start of a project, LWR and our local partner(s) host a public kick-off meeting for project participants, local government officials, community leaders, and other interested stakeholders, such as financial institutions and journalists. The meeting is held in an easily accessible location, either in the project implementation area or as near as possible. During these meetings, staff provide information about the project objectives, activities, funding, and feedback mechanisms. Attendees are also able to ask questions or voice concerns regarding the project.

COMPLAINT RESPONSE MECHANISMS

As a project is implemented, LWR and partner staff continue to solicit feedback from participants and other stakeholders through complaint response mechanisms (CRMs). A CRM provides participants with a safe and documentable process to deliver feedback on a project and to receive a timely and — if necessary — actionable response. LWR identifies culturally and contextually appropriate CRMs when designing a project and carefully explains the CRM processes to all project stakeholders at the public kick-off meeting. LWR typically uses a combination of the following several CRMs throughout a project.

- **Face-to-face meetings:** Regularly scheduled feedback forums with community leaders and annual general meetings with all project stakeholders provide an opportunity for open dialogue about project progress and in-person feedback.

- **Suggestion boxes:** Project participants are able to anonymously write their feedback and drop their note in a locked box, which is mounted in an openly visible and accessible location within the community. If necessary, multiple boxes can be placed in safe locations throughout a community to ensure marginalized groups, including women, have access. Project staff or a designated, trained community member routinely open the box in the presence of others, and project staff

then sort, record, analyze, validate authenticity, seek appropriate input from organizational leadership, and take the necessary actions to respond.

- **Live radio broadcasts:** LWR invites people to call or text into the station with their feedback and questions for project staff, who then either respond in real-time over the radio or record the issue raised for future follow-up.

- **Social media tools:** Some LWR projects are now using social media, such as Closed Group pages on Facebook, for collecting and responding to project stakeholder feedback.

EAST AFRICA: THE CAFÉ PROJECT

Jake Lyell for LWR

LWR's Climate Adapted Farming on Elgon (CAFÉ) project was implemented on both the Kenyan and Ugandan sides of Mt. Elgon to strengthen the resilience and livelihoods of coffee farmers.

To communicate with the project's numerous stakeholders and receive their feedback, LWR and local partner staff:

- Held a project kick-off meeting with leadership from the two partner coffee cooperatives, Farmers' Cooperative Societies (FCS) members, community knowledge workers (CKWs), government officials, and service providers (e.g. coffee millers/buyers, financial institutions, and crop insurance companies);

- Held quarterly meetings with coffee cooperatives' leadership and FCS members and communicated directly with participating farmers and CKWs during frequent site visits;

- Posted project and contact information on community notice boards in FCS offices and on prominent signs in project communities;

- Actively disseminated project information, solicited feedback, and shared responses through Facebook, Twitter, WhatsApp, and radio broadcasts.

CAFÉ project staff documented stakeholders' feedback and the responses provided in meeting minutes or monitoring reports. Feedback and responses were also shared with coffee cooperatives' and FCS management as well as CKWs for further transparency.