



**MINISTRY OF WATER AND ENVIRONMENT  
UGANDA WILDLIFE AUTHORITY**

Investing in Forests and Protected Areas for Climate Smart  
Development Project (IFPA-CD) P170466

Gender-Based Violence (GBV) Action Plan

November 2025

## **1. Introduction**

This GBV action plan outlines key activities, responsibilities, and timelines for strengthening GBV prevention, response, and accountability mechanisms for the project activities. The plan focuses on enhancing service mapping, grievance mechanisms, capacity building, community awareness, contractor compliance, and institutional strengthening.

## **2. Project Description**

The Government of Uganda (GoU) is implementing the “Investing in Forests and Protected Areas for Climate-Smart Development (IFPA-CD) Project”. The project is financed by the International Development Association (IDA) of the World Bank and GoU. The implementation of the project is led by the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) and Uganda Wildlife Authority (UWA). The development objective of the project is (i) to improve sustainable management of forests and protected areas in target landscapes and (ii) to increase benefits to communities from forests in target landscapes.

The project areas are located in the landscapes central to Uganda’s tourism industry and overall economy, focusing on enhancing ecosystem goods and services and generating revenue from forests and protected areas.

The project is structured around several components, including the improved management of government-managed forest and wildlife protected areas, investment in plantation forestry and wood value chains, and support for infrastructure and equipment for tourism development. Special attention is given to Uganda’s status as the largest refugee-hosting country in Africa, with approximately 1.9 million refugees. The project addresses environmental impacts in refugee-hosting areas by supporting forest management and increasing tree cover through agroforestry and woodlot establishment.

The project seeks to build resilient landscapes, promote climate-smart development, and ensure that local communities, including vulnerable and marginalized groups, benefit from improved natural resource management and sustainable livelihoods.

## **3. Country Context: Gender-Based Violence in Uganda**

GBV remains a pervasive challenge in Uganda, disproportionately affecting women and girls across both urban and rural settings. Despite progress in legal frameworks and national policies, such as the 2016 National Policy on GBV, the country continues to grapple with high rates of physical, sexual, and psychological violence. According to the Uganda Police Force, over 75 percent of domestic violence victims are women and girls, and all recorded rape victims in 2024 were female; females also accounted for the vast majority of defilement cases (cases involving sexual abuse of children).

Societal norms, entrenched gender inequalities and economic hardships contribute to underreporting and limited access to justice for survivors. Only a small fraction of GBV survivors seek help, hindered by financial constraints and inefficiencies within the judicial system. The situation is particularly acute in refugee-hosting regions, where overcrowding and social disruption heighten vulnerability to GBV.

The project has established the Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs) at various levels (From National to Village levels) to take into consideration the diverse stakeholder interest groups in the project areas including GBV issues. Within the GRCs, two people (male and female) with reasonable experience and exposure in managing GBV issues are assigned the task of handling GBV, SEA, SH, and VAC complaints issues with the confidentiality it demands. Their main responsibility is referring cases to the relevant government offices, such as the community development office, probation and social welfare office, psycho-social service providers, the police department for child and family affairs, and nearby health facilities for emergency care, contraceptives, and post-exposure prophylaxis to reduce the risk of HIV infection. The GBV committee is also charged with providing psychological support and legal advice for survivors and support reintegration into the workforce and community at large. These complaints are treated with strict sensitivity and confidentiality.

A wide range of channels have been put in place to facilitate access and use of the Project GRM, particularly by communities and vulnerable groups (e.g., youth and women). These include three toll free phone lines, WhatsApp lines and email for submission of project related grievances directly to the MWE or UWA. Suggestion boxes have been distributed by MWE and UWA to communities bordering the PAs to allow them to drop in their grievances, including anonymous written complaints. Posters with information on GRM channels have been widely circulated to local leaders and communities in the project districts. The posters have been printed in English and translated and printed in the different languages spoken in the project areas. The project also relies on the Inter-Agency Feedback, Referral and Resolution Mechanism (FRRM) operated by the Office of the Prime Minister and the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) in refugee settlements.

#### **4. Objectives of the Action Plan**

- Improve access to GBV services and referral pathways.
- Strengthen grievance mechanisms at community and contractor levels.
- Build capacity of project staff, contractors, and local institutions on GBV, SEA (Sexual Exploitation and Abuse) and SH (Sexual Harassment).
- Raise community awareness on available GBV support and reporting channels.
- Ensure compliance with GBV-related codes of conduct and reporting requirements.

## **5. Key Actions**

### **1. Accountability and Response Framework:**

- Conduct orientation training for the personnel of Implementing Agencies on IFPA-CD GRM including GBV and SEA/SH issues.
- Obtain and disseminate pre-existing GBV service provider map for all project areas.
- Complete Grievance Mechanism training for LC1 and LC3 levels from the project districts, including SEA/SH modules, and distribution of service provider maps.

### **2. Institutional Strengthening:**

- Awareness raising for PCU at MWE and PCU at UWA and other relevant civil servants through a half-day meeting led by WB.
- Enhance PCU technical capacity on GBV/SEA/SH by assigning qualified staff from MWE.

### **3. Community Awareness:**

- Conduct up to 10 radio talk shows in major towns within the project landscape to promote awareness of SEA/SH grievance mechanisms.
- Display 3,000 GRM posters (already completed)

### **4. Contractor Document Review: - Review Contractors' Environmental and Social Management Plans (C-ESMPs) and recommend changes if needed.**

### **5. Contractor Compliance:**

- Ensure contractors have established grievance redress committees and that all contractor staff have signed code of conduct.
- Train contractors' grievance redress committees on survivor-centered principles, SEA/SH verification and referral.
- Ensure, through spot checks, that code of conduct requirements are applied in contractors' ESMPs and contracts.
- Report compliance to the World Bank (WB) as part of regular E&S reporting.

## **6. Roles and Responsibilities**

### **Ministry of Water and Environment (Lead Implementer/ Project Coordinating Agency)**

Through the PCU,

- Ensures capacity building of implementing agencies including UWA
- Shares best practices with implementing partners including technical service providers
- Provide technical support to stakeholders
- Ensures the functionality of established GBV management systems including monitoring and reporting

- Conduct sensitization and awareness outreach to relevant stakeholders on the GBV issues
- Ensure that handling of GBV issues at various levels is in accordance with Government of Uganda laws and World Bank procedures.
- Coordinates and monitors the implementation of GBV interventions at all levels

### **Implementing Agency (UWA)**

- Conduct routine sensitization of stakeholders on rights and responsibilities and channels for addressing GBV issues.
- Ensures effective implementation of GBV interventions.
- Shares best practices with stakeholders.
- Provide technical support to stakeholders.
- Monitor compliance with established guidelines.

**World Bank:** Provide technical guidance, review documents, lead awareness sessions for key project staff.

**Contractors:** Establish and operate grievance redress committees, comply with codes of conduct.

**Grievance Redress Committees:** GRCs especially at the subcounty and village levels to support in handling project related grievances and facilitate referrals of GBV, SEA and SH issues. Other opinion leaders within the communities to support awareness activities .

### **7. Monitoring and Reporting**

- - Spot checks at contractor sites.
- Submission of compliance reports to WB.
- Tracking of training completion and awareness activities.
- Tracking of GBV complaints (if any) and follow up as required.
- Review and update of service provider maps and grievance mechanisms.

### **8. Table of Activities and Timelines**

<b>Activity</b>	<b>Responsible</b>	<b>Est Cost (USD)</b>	<b>Timeline</b>	<b>Output</b>
Finalize district-level GRC training on SEA/SH	PCU	0	Completed	Trained GCs
Finalize Sub county grievance Redress Committee training for LC3) incl. SEA/SH (For sub counties surrounding the protected areas)	PCU	0	Completed	Trained Sub county GRCs

Obtain GBV service provider map	PCU	5,000	30 Nov 2025	Map disseminated to GCs, LCs and contractors
GBV awareness session for key project staff	WB and PCU	0	30 Nov 2025	A half-day meeting led by WB
Assign GBV/SEA/SH technical capacity to PCU	PCU	N/A	Dec 2025	Staff assigned
Contractors form grievance mechanisms	Contractors, PCU	N/A	Dec 2025	Mechanisms established
Integrate code of conduct in contracts	PCU, Contractors	N/A	Dec 2025	Contracts updated
Review and Update (if needed) C-ESMPs	WB	N/A	Dec 2025	Updates completed
Radio talk shows on the project SEA/SH grievance mechanism	PCU	6,000	Feb 2026	10 talk shows aired
Finalize Sub county Grievance Redress Committee training for LC3) incl. SEA/SH (For the Refugee Hosting Districts	PCU	30,000	March 2026	Trained Sub county GRCs (Within Refugee Hosting Districts)
Finalize the training of Village Chairpersons LC1 on IFPA-CD GRM incl. SEA/SH	PCU (WB will review training materials and provide guidance)	20,000	March 2026	Chairpersons LC1 s trained
Training for contractors' grievance committees	PCU (WB will review training materials and provide guidance)	6,000	March 2026	Operators trained
Spot checks and compliance reporting	PCU	5,000	Ongoing	Reports submitted
Conduct orientation training for the personnel of Implementing Agencies on IFPA-CD GRM including GBV and SEA/SH issues	PCU	20,000	March 2026	Orientation training held