THE REGIONAL SCHOLARSHIP AND INNOVATION FUND (RSIF)

Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) Manual

PREPARED BY

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LIST OF ACRONYMS

AHUs   African Host Universities

ASET   Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology

GRC   Grievance Redress Committees

GRM   Grievance Redress Mechanism

icipe   The International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology, RSIF's RCU

IPIs   International Partner Institutions

MoM   Minutes of Meeting

OM   Operational Manual

PASET   Partnerships for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology

PDO   Project Development Objective

RCU   Regional Coordinating Unit

RSIF   The Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund

SSA   Sub-Saharan Africa

WB   World Bank

1.0 Project Background

The Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (RSIF) is the flagship initiative of the Partnerships for skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET). The World Bank, Individual African countries and the Government of Korea are supporting the Africa Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund for Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology Program in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) to address fundamental gaps in skills and knowledge necessary for increasing the use of science, technology and innovation for sustained economic growth in SSA. RSIF aims to support doctoral training and post-doctoral research and innovation in five priority sectors for growth and development across SSA. The priority sectors are: Minerals, Mining and Materials Engineering; Food Security and Agribusiness; Energy including renewables; ICTs including big data and artificial intelligence and Climate Change. Financing for RSIF project was approved by the World Bank in May 2018 and will be implemented over a six-year period ending 10 June 2024. The Project financing includes an IDA grant totaling approximately US$15 million and support from the Government of Korea (USD 9 million). Individual country governments join the PASET initiative by contributing US$2 million each, which is added to the RSIF General Fund. To date, contributions have been received, or are at advanced stages of discussion with Benin, Burkina Faso, Kenya, Mozambique, Nigeria, Ghana, Rwanda, Senegal and Cote d'Ivoire. Other countries are in the process of joining.

The International Centre of Insect Physiology and Ecology (*icipe*) was competitively selected to serve as the Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU) for the Project. The RCU is hosted at *icipe*'s headquarters in Kasarani in Nairobi Kenya and has recruited a team of experts to manage the Project. The RSIF World Bank Project Development Objective (PDO) is to strengthen the institutional capacity for quality and sustainable doctoral training, research and innovation in transformative technologies in SSA. The objectives and results will be achieved through two project components; i) Capacity for development for the operation and management of the scholarship, research and innovation fund; and ii) Scholarships and research grants for Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (ASET). RSIF is implemented through competitively selected host universities in SSA countries, who also host the doctoral students supported by the RSIF and where research and innovation in the ASET fields will be undertaken. Innovative research is expected to be in partnership with key stakeholders including industry and will be led by host university faculty and postdoctoral researchers. The host universities will develop strong networks with international partner institutions who will support research of PhD students in a sandwich arrangement (RSIF

Scholars will spend two years in an international partner institution as visiting researchers/ scholars). At present, 11 host universities have been selected (Nelson Mandela African Institution of Science and Technology, Kenyatta University, African University of Science and Technology, University of Ghana, Sokoine University of Agriculture, University of Port Harcourt, University of Nairobi, University of Rwanda, University of Gaston Berger, Bayero University and Université Félix Houphouët-Boigny). A few, initially up to four other AHUs are expected to be added to RSIF's current contingent.

2.0 Introduction
This Manual describes RSIF's Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) for ensuring transparency and accountability in the implementation of all RSIF project components. Besides, it will be used to address all complaints/ grievances, related to any components of RSIF by all the beneficiaries of the project. Moreover, this manual explains a set of procedures for receiving, recording, and handling of grievances. The Manual has been developed under the leadership of the RSIF-RCU, *icipe*, with inputs from African Host Universities and other key stakeholders.

Grievance redress mechanisms are institutions, instruments, methods, and processes by which a resolution to a grievance is sought and provided. In order to ensure transparency and accountability, RSIF has established a grievance redress mechanism with a clear set of goals and objectives and a well-defined scope for its interventions and a set of procedures for receiving, recording, and handling complaints during implementation of any RSIF activity.

2.1 Rationale for GRM
There is need to develop an effective channel through which grievances from RSIF scholars can be adequately addressed. Grievance redress mechanism is a core component of managing operational risk. Grievance redress mechanisms have proven to be an effective tool for early identification, assessment, and resolution of complaints which may arise during project implementation. Organizations must inculcate deeper understanding of the steps involved in grievance redress to enable them improve project outcomes and support both project teams and beneficiaries to improve results. There is a strong belief that lack of a proper grievance redress mechanism has occasioned the stalling of many development projects around the world due to misunderstandings and disputes over various issues. This has made the business case for a functional GRM even stronger as the costs of ignoring such disputes or responding too late have proven to be too high for organization to recover

from. An effective grievance mechanism has the ability to identify minor incidents affecting project beneficiaries before they escalate into unmanageable conflicts. The RSIF's stance on grievances as provided for in its Operation Manual (OM) is to resolve grievances through dialogue. The OM also provides guidelines to be followed in cases where after reasonable effort, grievances are not resolved. The guidelines are accessible to all faculty, researchers and scholars associated with the RSIF Scholarship Program.

2.2 Purposes of the RSIF GRM

The RSIF GRM has been developed with the following objectives:

i   To ensure that grievances, complaints and concerns are addressed and resolved in a fair, transparent and easily accessible manner in order to achieve the goals of restoring positive relationships with affected persons/ communities

ii   To be responsive to the needs of beneficiaries and to address and resolve their grievances

iii   To serve as a conduit for soliciting inquiries, inviting suggestions, and increasing stakeholders/beneficiaries' participation

iv   To collect information that can be used to improve operational performance

v   To promote transparency and accountability

vi   To deter fraud and corruption and mitigate project risks

vii   To facilitate timely feedback from stakeholders/beneficiaries in order to support the project's commitment to continuous improvement.

3.0 Types of Grievances

The grievance system as proposed will primarily handle issues that emerge from RSIF program activities or can be plausibly described as a consequence of these or to include any complaint related to one of RSIF components. The grievance system will continue to function in order to receive grievances with regards to the functioning of RSIF at *icipe* and African Host Universities (AHUs) including regular campus related grievances raised by local stakeholders and any beneficiary of the program. Most of the anticipated grievances are those that will be related to:

i.   Scholarships and their holders both at AHUs, IPIs and during field activities

ii.   Research/Innovations grants and related activities

iii.   Outcome Based Education

iv. Student Centered based Learning
v. Quality Assurance Accreditation
vi. Gender and social issues

4.0 Resources

The GRM will make use of the following resources whose use will be articulated within this manual:

- **People:** Trained staff or external resources experienced in social risk management and in dealing with community concerns and complaints
- **Systems**: Systems are needed for receipt, recording, and tracking of the process (for example, grievance logbook, database)
- **Processes:** A written procedure for handling grievances exists and responsibilities are assigned for each step as well as for management oversight

5.0 Approach to Grievance Redress

The approach proposes three interlinked steps which are further described in the ensuing sections:

i Risk-based assessment of potential grievances, disputes or conflicts that may arise during project preparation and implementation
ii Identification of the client's existing capacity for grievance redress
iii Preparation of an action plan that identifies priority areas for strengthening grievance capacity, or if necessary, establishing new mechanisms at the project level. Where applicable, dedicated resources should be allocated for realization of the action plan.

i. Assessment of risks and potential grievances and disputes

The project team at RCU office works with the AHUs to conduct a rapid review of contentious issues, stakeholders, and institutional capacity, strongly relying on existing social safeguarding information from *icipe*, individual AHUs and stakeholders. The exercise will start by understanding the issues that are likely to be at the heart of disputes related to the project, such as clarity on selection procedures for scholars, benefit distribution and supervision of scholars. The review will map who the key stakeholders to these issues are and what the nature of the debate. Attention will be paid to the local dispute resolution culture and, particularly, to the capacity and track-record of stakeholders to settle disputes through mediation or constructive negotiation.

ii. Capacity assessment

Categorizing both risks of disputes and institutional capacity to address those disputes is central to this approach. Where capacities of local institutions are low and the stakes are high, the risk of grievances going unaddressed will be significant. Issues and stakeholder reviews will be mostly desk-based and will initially and primarily rely on the information contained in the RSIF Operational Manual (OM) and other project documents. Review of institutional capacity will likely require desk work and interviews with key stakeholders. A credible capacity assessment should give considerations to the following:

i. Legitimacy: Is its governance structure widely perceived as sufficiently independent from the parties to a particular grievance?
ii. International standards? Does it restrict access to other redress mechanisms?
iii. Transparency: Are its procedures and outcomes transparent enough to meet the public interest concerns at stake?
iv. Capability: Does it have the necessary technical, human and financial resources to deal with the issues at stake?
v. Accessibility: Does it provide sufficient assistance to those who face barriers such as language, literacy, awareness, cost, or fear of reprisal?
vi. Predictability: Does it offer a clear procedure with time frames for each stage and clarity on the types of results it can (and cannot) deliver?
vii. Fairness: Are its procedures widely perceived as fair, especially in terms of access to information and opportunities for meaningful participation in the final decision?
viii. Rights compatibility: Are its outcomes consistent with applicable national and

iii. Action Plan

Action plan that suits the interest of RSIF stakeholders and beneficiaries would focus on key steps that shall be taken during project preparation and implementation to strengthen grievance redress across programme space. A lot of emphasis should be directed towards exploring opportunities and synergies for supporting improved organizational capacity to handle grievances.

6.0 Grievance Handling Procedure in RSIF
The received grievances will be registered into a standard database, analyzed, and categorized by the focal persons at *icipe*/AHUs. A grievances reporting and acknowledgement form is provided in annex i.

6.1 Grievance Redress Focal Persons

The RSIF will have grievances redress focal persons appointed or nominated at *icipe* and respective AHUs to redress the grievances from scholars and other project beneficiaries and stakeholders. The focal persons will be responsible for overseeing the management of the GRM at the various institutions with specific Terms of Reference as below.

6.1.1 Terms of Reference for GRM focal point at *icipe*

i   Collection of grievances, feedback and suggestions

ii   Registration of grievances

iii   Grievances categorization

iv   Grievances analysis

v   Briefing of new registered issues to the relevant Grievance Redress Committee (GRC) for further instructions

vi   Providing feedback to complainants

vii   Implementation of decisions taken by GRC

viii   Grievances record in soft and hard filing

ix   Follow up of pending issues with the responsible GRC

x   Identify gaps and areas for improvement to the RCU Manager

xi   Preparation of quarterly and annual reports to RCU and World Bank

xii   Be responsible for facilitating social safeguards trainings for RSIF stakeholders at *icipe*

xiii   Monitor compliance with social safeguards requirements by taking periodic audits of all RSIF activities within *icipe.*

xiv   Collation of appropriate social safeguards performance and monitoring indicators to input into the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework for RSIF.

6.1.2 Terms of Reference for GRM Focal Persons at AHU

i   He/She shall be the main contact person with overall responsibility for action and reporting on RSIF social safeguards activities for the specific Host University (HU).

ii   Ensure timely and appropriate liaison between specific HU and Regional Coordinating Unit (RCU).

iii   Participate in all RCU social safeguards meetings.

iv   Ensure distribution of all RSIF documents related to social safeguards.

v   Ensure compliance to all RSIF social safeguards documents by the AHU and other relevant stakeholders.

vi   Support the implementation of RSIF social safeguards requirement as contained in the various safeguards documents prepared by AHU or RCU.

vii   Be responsible for facilitating social safeguards trainings for RSIF stakeholders at the AHU.

viii Compile and prepare consolidated quarterly social safeguards monitoring reports for the AHU and submit to RCU.
ix   Monitor compliance with social safeguards requirements by taking periodic audits of all RSIF activities within the AHU.
x   Liaise with relevant departments at the AHU to ascertain if the grievance redress mechanisms established for RSIF are functioning appropriately.
xi   Collation of appropriate social safeguards performance and monitoring indicators to input into the Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) Framework for RSIF.
xii Review all relevant social safeguards documents and reports developed by the RCU or AHU and provide comments where necessary on their applicability in relation to RSIF.
xiii Support the RSIF project in the establishment of grievances and redress mechanism (grievance committees) within the participating AHU/Support the strengthening of existing committees.
xiv Coordinate the activities of the grievance redress committee and share their quarterly reports including grievances logs with RCU.
xv   Coordinate the activities of gender committee with regards to RSIF and share their quarterly report with RCU.
xvi Recommend appropriate social safeguards trainings for all staff involved in RSIF project at the AHU.
xvii Support the RCU in organizing targeted technical support on social safeguards for RSIF implementation staff at the AHU
xviii Perform any other safeguards duty assigned by the RCU manager.

6.2 Grievance Redress Committees (GRCs)

The RSIF will establish Grievance Redress Committees at *icipe* and AHUs level to redress the grievances from scholars and other project beneficiaries and stakeholders.

The complaints & grievances would be address through the following sequence by the GRCs:

i   Complaint resolution will be attempted at *icipe* or AHUs level GRC who has 30 days to decide on the case
ii   *icipe* may refer grievance to AHUs grievance committees and vise-versa
iii Grievances which are not resolved at AHUs level shall be referred to *icipe*-GRC
iv   All grievances should be addressed and the outcome communicated to the complainant within 60 days
v   Complainants can appeal to *icipe* management if they are not satisfied with the decision of *icipe*-GRC. The decision of *icipe* management shall be final and binding to all RSIF stakeholders
vi   The complainants may also seek legal redress in a court of law if they are not satisfied by the decision made by *icipe* management

6.2.1 Members of GRC at *icipe*
i   Focal persons from three campuses
ii   Head of HR
iii   RSIF Project Manager

6.2.2 Members of GRC at AHUs
i   Focal person
ii   RSIF contact person for the University
iii   A representative from student complaints handling office
iv   The head of the department/faculty/college/Institute hosting RSIF scholars
v   A representative from the dean of student's office

6.2.2 Terms of Reference for the GRC Members at *icipe* and AHUs
i   Ensure that handling of grievances is in accordance with relevant National laws, Institutional policies, RSIF and the World Bank procedures
ii   Registration of grievances in the GRM logbook
iii   Ensure that follow-up actions in response to grievances are taken within an agreed time- frame.
iv   Record the grievances from the scholars/ stakeholders, categorize and prioritize the grievances that need to be resolved by either committee.
v   Report to the aggrieved parties, about the developments regarding their grievances and the decision of the project management authority at *icipe* and AHUs
vi   Report on resolved or unresolved grievances on a quarterly basis to the RCU and World Bank
vii   Coordinate with RSIF stakeholders on the efficacy and usefulness of grievance redress procedures and recommend changes if any required to the RCU and World Bank
viii   Liaise with relevant government agencies to solve issues as practicable
ix   Assign tasks to different committee members
x   Oversee the work of focal persons

6.2.3 Meeting Schedule of GRC
GRC will meet quarterly to address any registered grievance or to review the progress of their work and Minutes of Meetings (MoM) will be taken by any one of the GRC members. Minute of this meeting will be circulated to all the GRC members. The quorum at the meeting shall be two third of the total membership to the committee. The progress on MoM will be discussed in next meeting and special emphasis will be given to pending

concerns/ issues. The proceedings of the meeting shall be recorded in the format provided in annex iii.

7.0 Grievance Redress Process Steps
Step 1: Reporting and Receiving Grievances
A communication campaign will ensure that beneficiaries, scholars, staff and other stakeholders know where and how to submit grievances. The RSIF related grievances should be received from different channels including:
Email: The official email for GRM for receiving the grievances is rsif-grm@icipe.org.
Verbal/ Personal visit: Grievances can be recorded from personal visits to project office at *icipe* or at the AHUs.
Project staff: Grievances can also be filed through project staff including focal persons or individual members of GRC.

Step: 2 Recording and processing of grievances
All submitted complaints and grievances will be entered into a database and GRM log book which will be updated regularly. Each complaint and grievance should be ranked, analyzed and monitored according to type, accessibility and degree of priority. A database will be established to track complaints and their resolution. At *icipe* and AHUs levels, all complaints will be documented and archived both physically (hard copies) and soft (computer/electronic database including all scanned documents received or related to the case along the process). Grievance redress log is provided in annex ii.

Step 3: Reviewing and Investigating Grievances
All grievances will need to undergo some degree of review and investigation, depending on the type of grievance and clarity of circumstances.

Step 4: Developing resolution options and preparing a response
Once the grievance is well understood, resolution options can be developed taking into consideration stakeholders' preferences, project policy, past experience, current issues, and potential outcomes.

Step 5: Feedback mechanism
One of the most important steps of the RSIF GRM is to provide clear feedback of outcome to the complainants. The GRM focal points at *icipe* and AHUs levels, are responsible to give feedback to the complainants via email, message or call. The complainants must know that their complaints were recorded by the Committee and that they are investigating the

issue. In case of anonymous complain/grievance, acknowledgement will not be possible. The means through which the complainant has been acknowledged shall also be recorded in the database. In this regard, the complainants shall receive acknowledgement feedback within 10 working days after the issue is reported.

Means of acknowledgment and communicating the grievance redress outcome

Email/ messaging: Either an automatic or manual reply will be sent to the complainants confirming the receipt of their complaints and getting back to them after analyzing it. The complainant, who has sent his /her grievance through email, will receive the final feedback through email.

Grievance feedback form: An offline either printed or soft Grievance feedback form will be used. The form is provided in annex iv.
Phone Call: The complainant, who has shared his/her grievance through mobile, will also receive feedback through a call by relevant Focal Point.

Grievance redress timeframe

After the grievance/complain is resolved, the Committees must provide a feedback to the complainant within 60 days from the date the grievance is reported. The Committees must also record the satisfaction of the complainant on the solutions provided in the feedback form. The solutions must also be recorded in the database for reporting to the appropriate authorities.

Step 6: Monitoring, Reporting and Evaluating a Grievance Mechanism

Monitoring and reporting can be a useful tool for measuring the effectiveness of the grievance redress mechanism and the efficient use of resources, and for determining broad trends and recurring problems so that they can be resolved proactively before they become points of contention. Monitoring and reporting also create a base level of information that can be used to report back to communities. To ensure smooth operation of GRM, RSIF management will conduct frequent supervisions and monitoring missions on grievances handling system to ensure the GRM is functioning and included in regular reporting mechanism. The status of grievances submitted and grievance redress will be reported by *icipe* and AHUs focal persons through quarterly reports. The grievance flow diagram and structure are provided in fig 1 and 2 below.

1: Grievance flow diagram

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┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐
│ Reporting   │      │ Recording   │      │   Review    │
│    and      │ ──▶  │ and         │ ──▶  │    and      │
│ Receiving   │      │ Processing  │      │             │──┐
│ Grievances  │      │ of          │      │ investigat  │  │
│             │      │ grievances  │      │     e       │  │
│             │      │             │      │             │  │
│             │      │    and      │      │             │  │
│             │      │ acknowledging│     └─────────────┘  │
└─────────────┘      └─────────────┘                       │
                                                           ▼
┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐      ┌─────────────┐
│ Monitor     │      │             │      │  Develop    │
│   and       │      │ Feedback    │      │             │
│             │ ◀──  │ mechanis    │ ◀──  │ Resolutio   │
│ Evaluat     │      │    m        │      │    n        │
│    e        │      │             │      │             │
│             │      │             │      │ Options     │
│             │      │             │      │   and       │
│             │      │             │      │ Respond     │
└─────────────┘      └─────────────┘      └─────────────┘
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Grievance Entry Channels

- Hotline
- Walk-ins
- Website/ E-mails
- Letters

Grievance Focal Point at ICIPE

Focal Point at AHU

Grievance log -Back office

Grievance committee -Assess, acknowledge and respond

Grievance committee resolve and follow-up

on the implementation of

Not resolved

Appeal *icipe* management resolve and communicate the outcome to the

Not resolved

The complainant is free to seek redress in a court of law or any other alternative legal system

Figure 2: RSIF Grievance structure

8.0 Institutional Arrangement and Capacity Building

8.1 GRM Institutional Arrangement

In order to implement the GRM and functionality of GRC, a social risk management and capacity strengthening consultant has been hired to oversee the establishment of RSIF grievance redress systems and to build the capacity of focal persons at *icipe* and AHUs to be able to uptake and resolve grievances appropriately. The Consultant will work closely with the RCU manager and focal point at *icipe* to support the institutionalization of the GRM.

8.2 GRM Implementation Training for GRC and Focal Persons

Based on the GRM manual, the consultant shall develop relevant GRM modules for Project Staff, contractors, GRC members, project stakeholders and beneficiaries/scholars. In order to have proper implementation of GRM, in the first instance, GRC members should be aware of their terms of references. Furthermore, they would be familiarized to best practice in collecting, redressing, and referring of some critical cases to referral points, reporting plus giving feedbacks in a proper way.

9.0 Publicizing Grievance Redress Mechanism Manual

GRM manual should be published to ensure the availability of the manual to all stakeholders. There is need to create stakeholder's awareness about GRM manual. Posters and brochures would be distributed among the target stakeholders so that the people can understand about GRM procedure of RSIF.

10.0 Annexes

Annex I: Grievance Lodging and Acknowledgement Form

Country: ……………………….…   Institution: …………………………………………….…

Name   of   Complainant: …………………………………………………….……

Contacts: Phone………………………….…..
            Email address …………….….…

Date of Complaint: ………………………….…… (dd-mm-yyyy)

Documents comprising the complaint: (petition, supporting documents etc.)
1)
2)

Summary of Complaint:
……
……
……………………….…
……
………………………………………………………………….
………………………………………………………………….…

Name   and   Signature   of   the   Complainant: …………………………………………………………………………….

Name and Signature of Officer receiving the complaint: ……………………………………………………….…

Annex II: Grievance Redress Log

	Complaint Received						Redresss Activities							
							GRM Level (AHUs/RCU/EB)			Rectification of Issues				
SN	Reg No.	Channel used	Name and address of complainant	Date of complaint	Grievance Summary	Category				Not Commenced	In Progress	Completed	Resolved	Referred

Annex III: GRC Meeting Recording Format
Country: ……………………………………………… Institution:
………………………………………….

Date of the Meeting: _____; Complaint Register No. _____
Venue of meeting: _____

Details of Participants:

Complainant(s) if present	GRC Members
1) 2)	1) 2) 3)

Summary of Grievance:

_____

Summary of key discussions:

_____

Decisions taken in the meeting / Recommendations of GRC:

_____

Issue solved / Unsolved _____

Signature of Chairperson of the meeting:

_____

Name of Chairperson: _____

Date: dd-mm-yyyy

Annex IV: Feedback on Grievance Resolution Form

Country: ....
Institution :..

1. Name of Complainant...

2. Date of Complaint...

3. Summary of the Complaint:
   ....
   ....
   ....

4. Summary of Resolution
   ....
   ....
   ....
   ....

5. Date of Redress of the Grievance: (dd-mm-yyyy)

   Signature of the grievance committee chairperson

   Name: _____

   Date: dd-mm-yyyy

   Signature of the Complainant in acceptance of the solution to his /her
   Grievance _____

   Name: _____