



REPUBLIC OF CROATIA  
Ministry of Science and  
Education

# **STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN (SEP)**

**Croatia: TOWARDS SUSTAINABLE, EQUITABLE AND EFFICIENT  
EDUCATION PROJECT**

**June 9, 2023**

---

## Contents

<b>1. Introduction .....</b>	<b>3</b>
1.1. Objectives of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) .....	3
1.2. Principles of the SEP.....	3
1.3. WDS Program.....	3
<b>2. Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan .....</b>	<b>4</b>
2.1. Information disclosure .....	4
2.2. Phases for SEP Action Plan.....	4
2.3. Stakeholder Mapping Table .....	5
2.4. SEP Preparation & Updates.....	7
<b>3. SEP Action Plan.....</b>	<b>8</b>
3.1. Phase 1: Pre-Consultation Process.....	8
3.2. Phase 2: Public Consultation on WDS Program, Call for Proposals for WDS Schools.....	9
3.3. Phase 3: WDS Program Implementation and Impact Evaluation .....	10
<b>4. Grievance Redress Mechanism.....</b>	<b>12</b>
4.1. Objectives of the Project-based GRM.....	12
4.2. Who can use the GRM .....	12
4.3. Principles of the GRM .....	12
4.4. Receiving Grievances .....	12
4.5. Processing Grievances.....	13

# 1. Introduction

## 1.1. Objectives of the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

The **Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)** aims to create a structured process through which the Ministry of Science and Education (MSE) can engage stakeholders around the objectives, benefits, challenges and process of the **Whole Day School Experimental Program (WDS Program)** implementation. In particular, the WDS program introduces several options where stakeholders will directly contribute to the implementation of the program within their schools, for which structured and well planned stakeholder engagement processes can make an important contribution.

Specifically, the SEP has the following objective:

- To enhance the implementation of the WDS Program by generating structured channels for agile communication and ongoing feedback from key stakeholders (school founders, principles, teachers, school staff, students, parents and guardians).

## 1.2. Principles of the SEP

Meaningful stakeholder engagement under this SEP is based on the following principles:

- Recognition that stakeholders are critical partners in the successful implementation of the WDS program and not just “beneficiaries”.
- Communication is based on a two-way flow that goes beyond a “public-relations” or information dissemination campaign (one-way flow).
- Transparent, agile and accessible means for informed participation by diverse stakeholders with varying means and capacities.
- Is based on a structured process, allowing for stakeholders to become informed, process and analyze information, provide feedback, and receive reports back on whether and how their feedback was taken into account.

## 1.3. WDS Program

### **Objectives and a brief description of the WDS Program:**

The experimental program "Elementary School as a Whole Day School" is organized and implemented with the fundamental goal of verifying the value of the framework, the model and organization of work of the elementary school as a whole-day school. In terms of programs, the whole-day-school model consists of four educational programs that represent:

- (i) The program of the national primary school curriculum, which is implemented through regular (compulsory and optional) classes (A1),
- (ii) Program of support, supported and enriched learning (A2),
- (iii) Program of extracurricular school activities (B1) and
- (iv) Program of extracurricular activities (B2).

The objectives of the WDS experimental program are as follows:

1. Improves school achievement and school outcomes of all primary students, with emphasis on reading, mathematics and science literacy,
2. Lowers the significance of social background on achievement and learning outcomes,
3. Enhances professional status and working conditions of teachers, pedagogical staff and school principals and improves their professional development,
4. Modernizes educational activities and increases quality and effectiveness of primary school,
5. Enhances students' and parents' well-being and quality of life and increases quality of life in school communities.

## 2. Stakeholder Engagement Action Plan

### 2.1. Information disclosure

The MSE will disclose information about project activities, documents and processes on the Ministry website, allowing interested stakeholders to understand the Project and potential opportunities for participation.

### 2.2. Phases for SEP Action Plan

Stakeholder engagement activities will be implemented as an ongoing process throughout the design, launch, implementation and evaluation of the WDS Program. This SEP is organized into the following three phases:

- **Phase 1: Pre-Consultation Process.** This phase encompasses the generation of feedback during the conceptual design of the WDS Program.
- **Phase 2: Public Consultation on WDS Program, Call for Proposals and Selection of WDS Schools.** This phase will entail the publication of the WDS Program for general public comments. All comments will be systematized and responded to as per Croatian national procedures for public consultations. This Phase will also entail the call for proposals for schools that seek to participate in the WDS Program. Finally, this phase includes the publication of the revised SEP with specific procedures for Stakeholder Engagement during the WDS Program implementation.
- **Phase 3: WDS Program Implementation and Evaluation.** This phase will be focused on obtaining feedback from direct beneficiaries and affected parties from the WDS schools in order to make adjustments to enhance implementation and outcomes and generate lessons learned.

### 2.3. Stakeholder Mapping Table

Stakeholder	Roles in Relationship to WDS and SEP
<b>Implementing Institutions</b>	
Ministry of Science and Education (MSE)	Responsible Institution for design and implementation of the WDS Program; Responsible implementing Institution for the World Bank Project that is financing important parts of the WDS Program; Lead in stakeholder engagement and consultations; and ensures the coordination of different reform initiatives and the complementarity of projects in the education sector.
Ministry of Finance (MoF)	Signatory Party to Contractual Legal Agreement, i.e., Borrower and primary World Bank counterpart; Provides budgetary approvals for the Project.
<b>Other Relevant Institutions</b>	
National Centre for the External Evaluation of Education (NCEEE)	Supports the MSE in the preparation of the strategic background for the Project and is responsible for Program's Impact Evaluation. The NCEEE will participate in the activities that will support the preparation of standardized tests aimed at measuring students' achievements in WDS schools; Implements other projects aimed at increasing the quality of education, which are complementary to the Project.
Education and Teacher Training Agency (ETTA)	Supports the MSE in the preparation of the strategic background for the Project; Main partner to the MSE for the activities related to the training of teachers and principals; Implements other projects aimed at increasing the quality of education, which are complementary to the Project.
Agency for Vocational Education and Adult Education	Supports the MSE in the preparation of the strategic background for the Project; Implements other projects aimed at increasing the quality of education, which are complementary to the Project.
Croatian Academic and Research Network – CARNET	Supports the MSE in the preparation of the strategic background for the Project;

Stakeholder	Roles in Relationship to WDS and SEP
	Implements other projects aimed at increasing the quality of education, which are complementary to the Project.
Agency for Mobility and European Union Programs	Supports the MSE in the preparation of the strategic background for the Project as the national focal point for Eurydice; Implements other projects aimed at increasing the quality of education, which are complementary to the Project.
Trade unions representative of teachers, education staff and principals	The trade unions are the main stakeholder in ensuring adequate conditions for teachers, education staff and principals.
<b>Direct Beneficiaries</b>	
Founders of WDS schools	Participants in the assessment of the needs for financing the renovation and equipping of schools. Stakeholders of the analysis of school networks and recommendations for its improvement.
Principals, teachers, expert associates and other administrative staff from WDS schools	Implementers of the WDS Program in schools. Beneficiaries of training and professional development;
Students from WDS schools, including students with special educational needs - gifted students, students with physical and learning disabilities, from disadvantaged families, minorities, migrants, etc.	Beneficiaries of the WDS Program, include enhanced education opportunities from extended instruction hours with trained professionals, support for enhanced literacy, access to free meals and a structured and stimulating environment for learning. The WDS Program includes a specific focus on students with special learning needs - including both gifted students and students with learning disabilities. The WDS should provide improved support in schools for students from disadvantaged families by enabling support in the form of in-class learning. Finally, infrastructure improvements give the opportunity to ensure accessibility according to universal access design principles and national legislation.
Parents/guardians, and especially mothers, of children from WDS schools	Beneficiaries of the Project should experience a reduction in the burden of helping their children with homework and learning outside of school

Stakeholder	Roles in Relationship to WDS and SEP
	hours, as well as the need to hire tutors and/or provide childcare services for additional hours each day as a result of the extended school day. As women disproportionately take-on the child care role in families, the extended school day should free additional time for these women to pursue other personal and professional activities.
<b>Other Stakeholders</b>	
Control schools participating in the impact evaluation	They will participate in the Project's impact evaluation.
Media	Dissemination of information in local and national news that will influence public participation and opinion.
NGOs and other service providers interested in offering extracurricular activities as part of B2 Program	Implement additional education activities offered as part of the WDS Program.

## 2.4. SEP Preparation & Updates

In line with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), and in particular, *Environment and [Social Standard 10 for Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure](#)* (ESS10), a Project level SEP was prepared by MSE for the WDS Program and disclosed on July 14, 2021.<sup>1</sup> As progress was made with the conceptual design of the WDS Program, the Project SEP was updated and is now reflected in the current document to reflect the operational steps and implementation of the WDS Program - highlighting specific phases and means to ensure structured and meaningful engagement with stakeholders. Any comments on this SEP can be sent to: [seecroatia@mzo.hr](mailto:seecroatia@mzo.hr).

<sup>1</sup> <https://mzo.gov.hr/poziv-na-javno-savjetovanje-o-dokumentu-o-angazmanu-dionika-sep-stakeholder-engagement-plan-i-planu-mjera-za-zastitu-okolisa-i-socijalne-standarde-escp-environmental-and-social-commitment-plan/4453>

### 3. SEP Action Plan

#### 3.1. Phase 1: Pre-Consultation Process

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN	
<b>Phase 1: Pre-Consultation Process</b> Timeframe: November 2022 - March 2023	
<b>Objectives of Phase 1:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Gather initial feedback on the conceptual design of the WDS Program.</li> </ol>
<b>Activities of Phase 1:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Meetings with stakeholder representatives on the key elements of the WDS Program.</li> <li>2. Identification of stakeholder opinions about the WDS Program through other channels.</li> <li>3. Preparation of initial communication related information (potential Q&amp;A, Talking Points, brochures, PPTs).</li> </ol>
<b>Inputs for Phase 1:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Expert and analytical work to inform conceptual design of WDS Program.</li> <li>2. Outline of the Conceptual design of the WDS Program.</li> </ol>
<b>Outputs/Outcome of Phase 1:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Feedback received during stakeholder meetings on the conceptual design of the WDS Program.</li> <li>2. Identification of recommendations/revisions to incorporate into the WDS Program, prior to public consultation of the WDS Program and call for proposals.</li> <li>3. Summary of communication related information for stakeholders and plan to facilitate feedback during the WDS program's public consultation phase (Phase 2 of SEP).</li> </ol>



### 3.2. Phase 2: Public Consultation on WDS Program, Call for Proposals for WDS Schools

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN	
Phase 2: Public Consultation on WDS Program, Call for Proposals for WDS Schools Timeframe: March 2023 - August 2023	
<b>Objectives for Phase 2:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Collect feedback from the interested public and other stakeholders on the WDS Program.</li> <li>2. Identify participating schools' preferences and challenges to allow for implementation of WSD Program.</li> </ol>
<b>Activities for Phase 2:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Launching a public consultation with the interested public about the WDS Program.</li> <li>2. Launching a call for proposals for WDS schools.</li> <li>3. Identification of stakeholder opinions, identification of recommendations/revisions to incorporate into the WDS Program.</li> <li>4. Organizing regional consultations with schools interested in participating in the project.</li> <li>5. Organizing consultations with school founders interested in participating in the project.</li> <li>6. As part of Infrastructure Needs Assessment and E&amp;S Screening Tool (to be carried out per Project ESMF), and in line with schools, identify strategies at a school, county or regional level to allow for structured and ongoing stakeholder engagement with direct beneficiaries. The school-level stakeholders should have the opportunity to provide feedback on an ongoing basis (through email and contact with the MSE-PIU). In order to optimize resources and avoid errors in the process of continuous consultation and to give qualitative feedback related to the WDS Program, it is necessary to prepare key questions that will be taken into account as part of the stakeholder involvement strategy at the school level.</li> <li>7. Based on the coordination with NCEEE, prepare an annual operational program to implement the school level engagement strategies.</li> <li>8. Revise and Enhance Communication Tools and activities for Phase 3 of SEP.</li> </ol>
<b>Inputs for Phase 2:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. WDS Program.</li> <li>2. Call for Proposals for the WDS Program.</li> </ol>
<b>Outputs/Outcomes for Phase 2:</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Report from public consultation on WDS Program.</li> <li>2. WDS Program updated based on the comments from the public consultation process.</li> </ol>

3. WDS Program schools selected and started preparation (needs assessment, E&S screening, teacher training, etc.) for WDS implementation.
4. School-level stakeholder representative groups identified and strategies established for engagement during the implementation of the WDS program.
5. Communications tools and activities package ready for roll-out with WDS schools and other stakeholders.
6. Annual operational program to implement the school level engagement strategies.

### 3.3. Phase 3: WDS Program Implementation and Impact Evaluation

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN	
Phase 3: WDS Program Implementation and Impact Evaluation	
Timeframe: September 2023 – June 2026	
<b>Objectives for Phase 3:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Ensure that diverse stakeholders, especially direct beneficiaries, are well-informed and have accessible and effective means to engage with project implementers in order to: (i) share and learn from each other regarding the WDS program implementation; (ii) have all information about the opportunities related to the WDS program; and (iii) resolve concerns or unforeseen issues that arise.</li> <li>2. Create valid conclusions about the achieved effect of the WDS Program through the comparison of WDS and control schools and stakeholder engagement.</li> </ol>	
<b>Activities for Phase 3:</b> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Implement school-level stakeholder engagement strategies at school, county or regional levels as agreed during Phase II.</li> <li>2. Receive, process, and resolve emerging grievances, suggestions and questions raised by all stakeholders through the Project's Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM- see SEP Chapter 4).</li> <li>3. Integrate stakeholder feedback into E&amp;S risk analysis and mitigation measures, as defined per the Project's ESMF.</li> <li>4. Prepare and submit to the World Bank, SEP and GRM monitoring reports every six months in accordance with a monitoring format pre-agreed with the World Bank.</li> <li>5. Conducting Impact Evaluation.</li> </ol>	

**Inputs for Phase 3:**

1. Guidance materials ready to support the WDS Program implementation, including GRM and stakeholder engagement strategies and reporting process and channels.
2. NCEEE annual operational programming.
3. Communications tools and activities package ready for WDS school stakeholders.

**Outputs/Outcomes for Phase 3:**

1. School-level Engagement Strategies implemented.
2. GRM logs and reports to the World Bank.
3. SEP semi-annual reports to the World Bank.
4. Inputs on feedback to NCEEE for impact evaluation.

## 4. Grievance Redress Mechanism

### 4.1. Objectives of the Project-based GRM

The Project-based GRM is intended to serve as a mechanism to:

- Allow for the identification and impartial, timely and effective resolution of issues affecting the project,
- Provide channels for project stakeholders and citizens at all levels to provide feedback and raise concerns.

Having an effective GRM in place will also serve the objectives of: reducing conflicts and risks such as external interference, corruption, social exclusion or mismanagement; improving the quality of project activities and results; and serving as an important feedback and learning mechanism for project management regarding the strengths and weaknesses of project procedures and implementation processes.

### 4.2. Who can use the GRM

The GRM will be accessible to a broad range of project stakeholders who are likely to be affected directly or indirectly by the project. These may include school staff, students and their parents or guardians, as well as the general public and media, all of whom will be encouraged to refer their grievances and feedback to the GRM. The GRM can be used to submit complaints, feedback, queries, suggestions or compliments related to the overall management and implementation of the project activities.

### 4.3. Principles of the GRM

The GRM's functions will be based on the principles of transparency, accessibility, inclusiveness, fairness, impartiality and responsiveness. It will establish clearly defined timelines for acknowledgement, update and final feedback to the complainant.

### 4.4. Receiving Grievances

The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) Social Specialist will be the GRM focal point for receiving and directing grievances to the appropriate authorities. All project stakeholders can write to [seecroatia@mzo.hr](mailto:seecroatia@mzo.hr) for project related concerns, questions and/or grievances, preferably utilizing the Grievance Form (see SEP Annex 1). Feedback will be provided in a timely manner.

The GRM focal point (PIU Social Specialist) will maintain an up-to-date grievance log of all complainants and the category of grievance received as well as the resolutions (and their respective timeframes). Any significant grievances or incidents should be reported immediately to the World Bank. The GRM log and a summary analysis will be prepared and submitted to the Bank on a semi-annual basis as part of all implementation support reporting activities.

#### 4.5. Processing Grievances

The project envisages the implementation of different types of activities for which grievance mechanisms are prescribed in different national legal acts or the procedures stem from the Act on Administrative Procedure. Since participation in the Project is voluntary and requires the consent of all the project-affected parties, the chances of complaints have been significantly reduced. However, six types of situations in which grievances may occur have been identified. Depending on the situation, the GRM focal point will address the grievance as follows:

- i. Grievances connected to the selection of WDS schools that will participate in the Project  
For the activities related to the selection of demonstration schools to participate in the Project, experience from other competitive projects implemented by the MSE will be used. The call for proposals will contain clear and measurable criteria for selection, measurement scales and available funds. The MSE will form a committee that will evaluate all the proposals according to the selection criteria, ensuring that conflicts of interest of the members are not present. The committee will be composed of MSE staff and staff from the PIU. The evaluation will result in a decision by the Minister on the selected demonstration schools. In the case of complaints, a separate committee formed by the MSE will evaluate the complaints. Each committee meeting will be followed by a written report that will contain information about the number and content of complaints.
- ii. Grievances connected to the implementation of the WDS model in schools  
If any grievance occurs regarding the implementation of the WDS in schools, national legislation for such situations will be used depending on the content of the grievance.
- iii. Grievance connected to public procurement  
Any grievances that may occur during the procurement of goods and services will be addressed according to national procurement legislation.
- iv. Grievances connected to construction  
Any grievances that may occur during the reconstruction of schools will be addressed according to national rules related to construction, as primarily defined by the Act on Construction and related legislation.
- v. Grievances connected to workers' rights  
Detailed information about workers' grievance mechanisms can be found in the Labour Management Procedure document.
- vi. Grievances related to sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse
- vii. All other grievances not related to the above specified situations

## Annex 1: Grievance Form of SEE Education Project (in Croatian and English)



**MINISTARSTVO ZNANOSTI  
I OBRAZOVANJA  
REPUBLIKE HRVATSKE**

## OBRAZAC ZA PRITUŽBE/ GRIEVANCE FORM

Podnositelj zahtjeva (ime i prezime / naziv ustanove / adresa / telefon i/ili e-pošta) The complainant (first and last name / institution / address / telephone and/or e-mail)
Opisati nepravilnost/pritužbu/žalbu Describe the irregularity/complaint/appeal

*potpis podnositelja zahtjeva/ signature of the applicant*

*mjesto i datum / place and date*