



GREEN  
CLIMATE  
FUND

Independent  
Redress  
Mechanism

29 November 2025

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# Problem Solving Conclusion Report

## IRM Case C-0012-Uganda

### GCF Project FP034: Building Resilient Communities, Wetland Ecosystems and Associated Catchments in Uganda

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#### **Summary**

This report provides information to the Board on the outcomes of a problem-solving process of the Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM)'s case C-0012-Uganda related to the GCF Project FP034: Building Resilient Communities, Wetland Ecosystems and Associated Catchments in Uganda, as per paragraphs 44 and 46 of the [Procedures and Guidelines of the IRM](#) (Board Decision B.22/22).



## Executive Summary

On 11 January 2025, the Independent Redress Mechanism (IRM) of the Green Climate Fund (GCF) registered a [complaint](#) from the parents of an eight-year-old child (complainants) who in March 2023 drowned in a water retention facility or ‘pond’ in southwest Uganda as part of the GCF-funded Project, FP034, “Building Resilient Communities, Wetland Ecosystems and Associated Catchments in Uganda” (the Project). The Project is intended to enhance Ugandan subsistence farmers’ ability to deal with climate change impacts by restoring wetlands and supporting farmers in diversifying their livelihoods. The Accredited Entity for this Project is the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP), and the Executing Entity is the Ministry of Water and Environment of the Republic of Uganda.

After reviewing the complaint and relevant Project documentation, the IRM team conducted a site visit to Uganda in January 2025 where they met with the affected family, as well as with the Executing Entity to hear their views on the concerns raised. Following the site visit, in February 2026 the IRM determined the complaint [eligible](#) for processing. During the initial steps phase, after numerous virtual engagements, both the complainants and the Executing Entity [indicated that problem solving](#) was their preferred modality to handle the case C0012.

On 19 June 2025, the IRM initiated the problem solving, a dialogue-based process which was facilitated by the IRM and UNDP’s Stakeholder Grievance Response (UNDP SRM) in relation to the concerns raised, seeking to support parties in reaching agreement. After a series of in-person and virtual engagements for four months, on 6 November 2025, the complainants and the Executing Entity, the Ministry of Water and Environment of the Republic of Uganda, reached an agreement. The UNDP Uganda Country Office (UNDP CO) observed the process and extended support in its role as the Accredited Entity. Parties decided to keep the agreement confidential but are comfortable disclosing that the agreement reached is not a resolution to the loss of the child’s life but rather focuses on providing livelihood support to the affected family members.

Considering the fact that during the last two years, the IRM has handled two cases regarding drowning incidents (IRM Case C-0011-Uganda and IRM Case C-0012-Uganda) and has been made aware of a third one, the IRM will continue engaging with relevant stakeholders, including the GCF Secretariat and UNDP, in relation to health and safety measures under this Project. Also, if deemed necessary, the IRM reserves the right to self-initiate a compliance review process as per its mandate, to ascertain that potential non-compliance with GCF environmental and social policies is addressed and the Project can continue in a sustainable manner.

This Problem Solving Conclusion Report, as required by paragraphs 44 and 46 of the [Procedures and Guidelines of the IRM](#), summarises the process and outcomes of the problem solving for case C0012. The IRM circulated this draft report and received feedback from parties prior to sharing it with the Board and publishing it on the [IRM Case Registry](#). As a next step, the IRM will monitor the commitments made by parties until all actions are completed and the case is closed.



## I. Introduction

The IRM is mandated to handle complaints received from a person or group of two or more persons or communities who have been or may be affected by adverse impacts of a GCF project or programme, under paragraph 11 of its Updated Terms of Reference (Decision B.BM-2017/10).<sup>1</sup> In handling a complaint, the IRM is required to offer problem solving to the parties as a means of resolving a complaint under the Procedures and Guidelines (PGs) of the IRM (Decision B.22/22).<sup>2</sup> When problem solving is agreed to by the parties and the parties resolve their dispute through an agreement or series of agreements, IRM informs the Board accordingly in line with paragraph 44 of the PGs.

## II. Background

### 2.1 The Project

The [complaint](#) relates to the GCF-funded Project FP034, “Building Resilient Communities, Wetland Ecosystems and Associated Catchments in Uganda.”<sup>3</sup> The Project is intended to enhance Ugandan subsistence farmers’ ability to deal with climate change impacts through three major components: 1) restoration and management of wetland hydrology and associated catchments; 2) improved agricultural practices and alternative livelihood options in the wetland catchment; and 3) strengthening access to climate and early warning information to farmers and other target communities to support wetland management.

The Project targets 24 districts in the southwestern and eastern regions of Uganda, was approved on 15 December 2016 and is expected to be completed by 31 December 2026, pending any official extensions. The Accredited Entity for this Project is the United Nations Development Programme, and the Executing Entity is the Ministry of Water and Environment (MWE) of the Republic of Uganda.

### 2.2 The Complaint

On 11 January 2025, the IRM registered a complaint submitted by the parents of an eight-year-old child (complainants) who, in March 2023, drowned in a water retention facility or ‘pond’ in southwest Uganda that at the time of the incident was under construction as part of the GCF-funded Project. According to eyewitnesses, the deceased was looking after goats grazing in the area and is said to have entered the pond, lacking a fence at that time, to retrieve a goat that had strayed into it. The complainants requested and were granted confidentiality in accordance with the IRM’s TOR and PGs.

## III. Eligibility and Initial Steps

On 10 February 2025, the IRM determined the complaint eligible under its TOR and PGs.<sup>4</sup> and moved the case C0012 to the initial steps stage. Consequently, the IRM started engaging with the complainants, the Executing Entity and the Accredited Entity to better understand the issues

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<sup>1</sup> The IRM’s Updated Terms of Reference is available at: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/document/irm-tor>

<sup>2</sup> The IRM’s Procedures and Guidelines is available at: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/document/2019-procedures-and-guidelines-irm>

<sup>3</sup> More information about FP034 is available at: <https://www.greenclimate.fund/project/fp034>

<sup>4</sup> The Eligibility Determination is available at: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/case/determination-eligibility-c0012-uganda.pdf>



raised and to provide further information on the two complaint handling modalities (problem solving and compliance), as indicated in paragraph 36 of the IRM PGs.

During the initial steps, the complainants shared additional details regarding the drowning incident. They indicated that on the day of the incident, they were working as day labourers outside of the village. They claim they needed to engage in this work to compensate for lost income and increased food insecurity due to restricted access to wetlands. The mother of the deceased reported that in the past she would usually practice subsistence cultivation in wetland areas near the village while taking care of her children. The family further mentioned that they had been promised alternative livelihoods but had not received them at that time. As a result, both parents sought employment away from home and could not provide the necessary oversight to their minor children.

Following numerous engagements with the IRM, both in person and virtually, on 19 June 2025, the initial steps concluded with the complainants and the Executing Entity indicating that problem solving was their preferred choice for handling the complaint, parties aiming at arriving at a mutually satisfactory agreement that would address the concerns raised.<sup>5</sup>

In June 2025, the IRM was informed by UNDP SRM, that they received the same complaint.<sup>6</sup> In accordance with the Principles for Cooperation among Independent Accountability Mechanisms,<sup>7</sup> the IRM engaged with UNDP SRM to inform them of the IRM steps in case-processing. After consultations with parties, for greater efficiency, the case was processed jointly by the IRM and the UNDP SRM.

## IV. Problem Solving

### 4.1 Process Design

Problem Solving is a participatory and flexible process focused on assisting the parties in finding and/or developing an effective solution to the concerns raised by complainants. A problem solving process focuses on addressing the concerns that gave rise to a grievance or complaint in a way that meets the interests of the complainants and the other parties and is mutually satisfactory. A problem solving process does not seek to determine culpability or assign blame, nor is it a compliance review. The entire problem solving process is conducted in confidence to enable the complainants and other parties to engage with each other, build trust, and collectively explore solutions in a safe space. All information used in a problem solving process by the parties is held in confidence by the IRM problem solving team and is not used in any future IRM processes focused on a respective project, including a compliance review. The mediation was conducted by staff from the IRM and UNDP SRM, supported by a local interpreter.

The main parties in the problem solving process were the complainants, who are the parents of the deceased child, and the Ministry of Water and Environment of Uganda, which is the Executing Entity for FP034. The UNDP Uganda Country Office participated in discussions and provided support during the process, and the GCF Secretariat received case updates when certain outcomes were achieved.

In line with good mediation practice, the parties agreed that the problem solving process would be confidential and that they would jointly decide what could be disclosed to third parties or to the public once the process has reached a substantive outcome.

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<sup>5</sup> The Initial Steps Report is available at: <https://irm.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/case/initial-steps-report-c-0012-19jun.pdf>

<sup>6</sup> The UNDP's Stakeholder Grievance Response case page on this complaint is available at: <https://srm.info.undp.org/case/srm013>

<sup>7</sup> [IAMnet-Criteria-for-Participation-and-Principles-for-Cooperation-september-2016-ENGLISH.pdf](#)



## 4.2 Engagement with Parties

Between June and October 2025, several bilateral meetings were held online and the IRM participated in in person meetings to build trust with the parties, discuss their needs and priorities, and explore options for resolution that would be mutually beneficial.

Most of the in-person and virtual engagement was held bilaterally between the IRM and UNDP SRM and each of the parties involved to help them reach agreement. The IRM team visited the family at their home in Uganda in June 2025 to better understand their needs and in September 2025 to brainstorm on potential options for resolution.

In June 2025, while in Uganda, the IRM team was able to confirm that a new fence was installed around the pond. A warning sign indicating risks of drowning hazards, along with information about grievance channels, was also posted on the fence.

The local interpreter visited complainants several times, stayed in touch with them via phone and provided translation and interpretation services when required.

## 4.3 Problem Solving Outcomes

After four months of intensive engagement, on 6 November 2025, the complainants and the Executing Entity, the Ministry of Water and Environment of Uganda, reached an agreement. Parties decided to keep the agreement confidential but are comfortable disclosing that the agreement reached is not a resolution to the loss of the child's life but rather focuses on providing livelihood support to the affected family members to promote "reconciliation and peaceful co-existence." The parties agreed on the agreement implementation timeline and understood that the IRM and UNDP SRM would play a monitoring role to ensure its full implementation.

## V. Lessons Learnt from the Problem Solving

**Challenge in engaging with complainants:** Complainants are in a remote area in Southwestern Uganda. The IRM team faced challenges in effectively engaging with them due to their limited access to technology, remoteness and language barrier. However, with the help of a local interpreter, the IRM team visited the family at their home three times throughout the process (January, June and September 2025) and stayed in touch with them via phone in between the site visits. The IRM is grateful to the complainants for their flexibility in engaging with us.

**Complexity in resolving the matter of the loss of a child:** The IRM fully understands that a loss of life cannot be remedied. During the initial steps process, the complainants indicated that they are in deep emotional pain and wish the IRM process to be expedited with the aim of reaching agreement. While parties managed to reach agreement, they agreed that this is not a resolution to the loss of the child's life but rather focuses on providing livelihood support to the affected family members. The complainants understand that they are not restricted from seeking other avenues to address the matter of the loss of life.

**Local-level grievance mechanism:** Going further, IRM considers critical that the local level grievance mechanisms be strengthened and used as a first access point in collecting feedback and complaints from community members. Ensuring that local redress mechanisms are accessible, transparent and efficient would support the resolution of issues in a timely, local, and early manner.



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## VI. Conclusion

On 6 November 2025 parties reached agreement on case C0012, however the agreement reached is not a resolution to the loss of the child's life but rather focuses on providing livelihood support to the affected family members to promote "reconciliation and peaceful co-existence." The parties agreed on the implementation timeline and understood that the IRM would play a monitoring role to ensure its full implementation.

Considering the fact that during the last two years, the IRM has handled two cases regarding drowning incidents (IRM Case C-0011-Uganda and IRM Case C-0012-Uganda), and has been made aware of a third one, the IRM will continue engaging with relevant stakeholders, including the GCF Secretariat and UNDP, in relation to health and safety measures under this Project. Also, if deemed necessary, the IRM reserves the right to self-initiate a compliance review process as per its mandate, to ascertain that potential non-compliance with GCF environmental and social policies is addressed.

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