



Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary

Concept Stage

(ESRS Concept Stage)

Date Prepared/Updated: 09/17/2023 | Report No: ESRSC03447



I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Region	Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any)
Dominican Republic	LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN	P180302	
Project Name	Support For The Implementation Of The Public Administration Reform And Modernization Plan		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Governance	Investment Project Financing	9/25/2023	11/28/2023
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)		
Dominican Republic	Ministry of Public Administration (MAP)		

Proposed Development Objective

The project development objective (PDO) is to improve the efficiency, accessibility, and responsiveness of selected administrative services for citizens and businesses.

Financing (in USD Million)	Amount
Total Project Cost	40.00

B. Is the project being prepared in a Situation of Urgent Need of Assistance or Capacity Constraints, as per Bank IPF Policy, para. 12?

No

C. Summary Description of Proposed Project Activities

The proposed project will support implementation of the Government’s Public Administration Modernization Reform Program by building upon lessons learned from ongoing WB technical assistance and using Govtech achievements and open government principles successfully implemented by the Government. Working backwards from the goal of providing more access to and transparent services through administrative service improvements that increase the efficiency of the public administration, the proposed project is designed to develop and strengthen the cross-cutting administrative and management platforms that provide the shared and consistent management tools, supported by accompanying technological infrastructure and enabling reforms that ensure whole-of-government standardized,



reliable and secure information. Project design will follow a building blocks approach where the improved services offered to citizens and business represent the most visible place in which the results of the project will show, but in fact, they represent only the tip of the iceberg in terms of the advances in tools and data that will make these results possible.

D. Environmental and Social Overview

D.1 Overview of Environmental and Social Project Settings

The Dominican Republic is well known for its abundant natural resources and biodiversity on which the economy relies. its geographical location, beaches, and productive landscapes have enabled robust development within the agricultural and tourism sectors. However, the country is highly vulnerable to extreme natural events and other impacts of climate change. The country is highly exposed to natural hazards. Potential losses from natural disasters can damage private and public infrastructure including housing and disrupt businesses and the provision of basic services. Vulnerability is being exacerbated by climate change, rapid and unplanned urbanization, and natural resource degradation. Excluded and poor people are often disproportionately impacted by climate change impacts and disasters as they often live in the most vulnerable and risk-exposed areas. The adverse impacts of disasters may also disproportionately affect women, migrants, Afro-descendants, and persons with disabilities, who often experience higher rates of mortality, morbidity, and diminished earnings. Immigrants are more vulnerable to climate change impacts, as immigrants have less access to basic services and social protection networks.

Over the past years the country has as expressed a strong commitment to improving their environmental commitment towards the sustainable development pathway. Improvements and reforms throughout different sectors have been made. In December 2020, the Government issued updated its NDC goals, which resulted in an increase of its climate ambition by committing to reducing GHG emissions by 27 percent compared with business-as-usual by 2030. Other longstanding and recently developed initiatives include the National System of Protected Areas (SINAP) and a national strategy for REDD+ xviii (ENREDD+), which aims to reduce emissions from deforestation and forest degradation and promote resilience and competitiveness for the forestry, agriculture, and livestock sectors. Among other milestones, the country signed in February 2021 the Electricity Pact (Pacto Eléctrico), which lays out a detailed roadmap for reforms, including commitments to improve service quality, improve efficiency and sustainability.

Citizen Engagement and Social Accountability in the Dominican Republic is well protected by its Constitution and the 176-07 Law. While the Dominican Constitution recognizes the Dominicans' rights to participate in the political decision-making process, the 176-07 Law adopted in 2007 promotes citizens' participation in overseeing municipalities' activities through their right to submit grievances, organize and participate in consultations, referendums, and participatory budget initiatives. However, migrants' rights and participation are not as well protected. Estimating the total population of immigrants in the country is difficult given the large number of undocumented migrants that reside in the country, but approximately around 5.6 per cent of the country's population is made up of foreign immigrants. Although people of Haitian origin continue to be the most represented migrant population in the DR, there has been a significant increase in the number of Venezuelans in the country in recent years. The DR receives people in increasingly vulnerable conditions (refugees, asylum seekers, stateless people



of Haitian origin or descent, forcibly displaced persons, and unaccompanied migrant children), as well as people who, due to their degree of social and economic vulnerability, cannot apply for a visa, residence permit, documentation or even some of the humanitarian statutes, harming their regularization. Sexual and gender-identity minorities are estimated to be overrepresented among the poor and migrant populations, according to the 2020 LGBTQI National Survey.

D.2 Overview of Borrower’s Institutional Capacity for Managing Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

The Ministry of Public Administration MAP will implement the Project through a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) (to be created) that will provide administrative support to project activities. The PIU will among other things prepare annual Procurement and Implementation Plans; ensure compliance with World Bank financial management and procurement regulations and environmental and social requirements; manage procurement following the procurement plan; oversee technical inputs from all institutions involved in the Project; liaise with the World Bank and monitor and report on progress.

MAP’s E&S capacity assessment shows that it has limited experience overseeing World Bank-financed projects and currently no experience with ESF. During project preparation the Bank will provide capacity building on ESF related matters to key staff at MAP. However, it is anticipated that the capacity of the MAP to manage E&S risks of the proposed project will require further strengthening, considering in particular: (a) ensuring robust implementation of a well-functioning Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) and required E&S instruments; and (b) increasing the ability of the MAP to effectively manage the implementation of multiple simultaneous activities and engage with multiple civil, private and public stakeholders.

During project preparation the Bank will further identify MAP’s institutional arrangements for implementation, supervision and reporting and the staff required to be part of the PIU dedicated fulltime to E&S risk management. Specific commitments for E&S staff to be hired and/or designated to the PIU, training in ESF, E&S risk management and instruments, and additional capacity building during implementation will be included in the ESCP to be prepared by the Client.

Public Disclosure

II. SCREENING OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISKS AND IMPACTS

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Moderate

A.1 Environmental Risk Rating

Moderate

The environmental risk rating for the Project is considered moderate at this stage. Project activities are not expected to generate adverse significant environmental risks and impacts. The project is focused on supporting the country’s implementation of the Government’s Public Administration Modernization Reform, as such it will support the technical, institutional, legal, and regulatory capacities to improve efficiency and access to selected administrative services for citizens and businesses. The project will finance the procurement and installation of hardware such as IT equipment to support government systems and platforms. The project will not finance any type of civil works (new infrastructure or retrofitting works). Key environmental risks and impacts are related to the potential generation electronic waste (e-waste) in case of the replacement of old electronics and occupational health and safety hazards for the workforce. Possible negative impacts are expected to be minor, site-specific, temporary and fully reversible.



A.2 Social Risk Rating

Moderate

The social risk rating for the project is considered moderate at this stage. The project will fund the hiring of fieldwork staff and supervisors, experts, and consultants to implement low-risk activities related to capacity building (revise and adapt the technical and regulatory framework for the delivery of public services, and issue guidelines related to the Service Delivery Strategy; modernize core Public Administration functions (back-office operations), technical, institutional, legal, and regulatory TA that constitute an enabling environment to enhance internal administrative efficiencies and collaboration across government entities; and TA to improve the digital infrastructure). In order to mitigate risks, the terms of reference, work plans or other documents defining the scope and outputs of TA activities will be drafted so that the advice and other support provided is consistent with the ESF/ESSs (risks relate to e.g., (1) the social implications of increased digital infrastructure, that could as stated below lead to the exclusion of users without Internet access, and (2) the current limited capacity of MAP, without ESF experience could lead to not include in the TA ToR the required stakeholder participation and consultation processes as per ESS10 (if applicable) or contracts and working conditions in line with ESS2). An additional risk is that while the project will benefit many users who are currently forced to navigate through complex bureaucratic processes and physically visit different Government offices (mostly in urban centers) to access specific services, the improvement of digital services could lead to limiting access to public services for groups of population without access to Internet. Furthermore, as stated in the CN there is an increase of demand for public services by migrants (mainly Haitian and Venezuelan) and there is a risk that irregular migrants may be (self)excluded due to fear of being expelled from the country if identified as irregular migrant; this aspect will be further examined during project preparation. The new operation “SPF: Dominican Republic Multisectoral Response to Human Mobility” (P179751) may provide important input and synergy as its objective is to improve the institutional, statistical, planning, and coordination capacities to inform policy dialogue towards a multisectoral and inclusive response to human mobility flows in the Dominican Republic and include piloting of increased access of migrant population to social protection programs. The project foresees the improvement of its technological infrastructure and the deployment of more and better features such as secure authentication for public services integrating different identification methods. During project preparation how data security and safety can be addressed will be further explored and defined. Finally, any type of automation or digitalization of products or processes might lead to the loss of current job positions; the magnitude of this risk will be further analyzed during project preparation and mitigation measures identified. The limited experience of the PIU (to be created) to manage social risks will be addressed by providing training to be delivered by the Bank’s E&S team. Additionally, the Project will have adequate GRM mechanisms for project workers and separately for beneficiaries and the community at large.

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B. RELEVANCE OF STANDARDS AND POLICIES AT CONCEPT STAGE

B.1 Relevance of Environmental and Social Standards

ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

ESS1 is relevant. The project will neither finance nor support any type of civil works activities (new infrastructure or retrofitting works) so it is not expected to result in significant negative environmental or social impacts. Some equipment is expected to be procured, including electronic equipment (for the functioning of the PIU and to hardware to improve the infrastructure of government platform.) that might generate e-waste in case (if electronics are replaced). All other project activities refer to acquisition of the technological infrastructure and technical



assistance and will fall under "Type 3: Strengthening Borrower Capacity" technical assistance (TA), therefore, a specific Environmental and Social Assessment is not needed. TA activities will consist of institutional, statistical, planning, and coordination capacity building, data collection and processing, training services, events, and awareness raising.

The terms of reference (ToRs), work plans or other documents defining the scope and outputs of the project's TA activities, including training materials, knowledge exchanges and analytical work, will be prepared so that the advice and other support provided is consistent with ESS1-10, out of which ESS1, 2, 3, 4, and 10 are relevant to the project. Activities implemented by MAP and other implementing agencies following the completion of the project that are not financed by the World Bank, or activities that are not directly related to the TA provided under the project, will not be subject to the World Bank ESSs.

Within ninety (90) days of project effective date, the PIU will prepare a stand-alone E&S screening checklist acceptable to the Bank (to also be included in the Project's Operation Manual) to ensure that activities under all Components are consistent with the ESF and in alignment with the principles of the relevant ESSs.

To ensure a proper management of the potential E-waste generated, the project will develop, adopt and implement a stand-alone E-waste Management Plan that will be developed by the PIU no later than ninety (90) days after the Project Effective date (to also be included in the Project's Operation Manual). The E-waste Management Plan will build upon previous plans prepared for the other projects in the country and it will comply with national legislation, the ESF, the WBG EHS Guidelines and other applicable GIIP as applicable. Occupational Health and Safety considerations required for the safely management of potential e-waste generation will be included in the Labor Management Procedures to be prepared as detailed in EAS 2 below.

Currently, the vulnerable groups identified include people without Internet access, digital illiterate, people with disabilities, and/or undocumented people; the latter group includes irregular migrants, stateless population, but also includes boys and girls between the ages of 0 and 5 who do not have their birth registered. The undocumented population is deprived of basic services and the exclusion of the other vulnerable groups could be exacerbated by further digitalization of certain services. During project implementation, these risks will be managed by: (i) conducting screening to ensure that activities under all components are consistent with the ESF and in alignment with the principles of the relevant ESSs and the Bank Directive on Disadvantaged or Vulnerable Individuals or Groups; (ii) further digitalization of government services will not lead to exclusion of access to such services by groups of the population without Internet access; (iii) ensuring that activities are widely consulted on with the key stakeholders and enjoy broad support of their main beneficiaries; and (iv) promoting transparency and public information disclosure. Further mitigation measures to address the situation of undocumented people will be considered during project preparation.

The E&S screening tool is a stand alone tool; the results of each screening process will be described in a screening report which will also identify any mitigation measures identified to address any gaps and how their implementation will be monitored. Importantly, in line with the overall capacity building nature of the project, responsible personnel in MAP will be trained to consider any E&S implications in the design and implementation of the project activities.



Areas where “Use of Borrower Framework” is being considered:

None

ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

ESS10 is relevant. The Client will prepare, consult, and disclose a draft SEP prior to Appraisal. The Client will update, consult, disclose and adopt a final SEP within ninety (90) days after the project Effective date. The SEP will be updated as needed during the project lifecycle. The draft SEP includes a mapping of relevant stakeholders, and a stakeholder engagement strategy and plan for consultations throughout the project life cycle, including potential project beneficiaries, relevant implementing agencies and government institutions at the central and local levels, and civil society organizations that represent identified vulnerable groups. This strategy considers different channels and mechanisms to ensure an effective disclosure of information, and other actions to promote beneficiary feedback.

The draft SEP will also provide guidance for citizen engagement activities foreseen under Component 3 “Modernization and innovation in service delivery”, as this component will harness active engagement of citizens and businesses to reimagine services and delivery channels, specifically: (i) stakeholder input and feedback to reimagine service journeys, (ii) a user feedback mechanism as part of the unified citizen portal (Gob.do), (iii) service channels assessment and (iv) awareness campaigns to promote the use of digital services by citizens.

The draft SEP will detail specific methods for stakeholder engagement and consultations for vulnerable groups using more adequate methods such as gatherings or meetings with small focus groups. Currently, vulnerable groups identified include migrants, people without Internet access, digital illiterate and/or people with disabilities. During project preparation the Client will consult (currently planned for May and early June 2023) the key stakeholders to be identified by the Client in the draft SEP; consultations will include several focal groups with (i) government institutions participating in project implementation, (ii) representative of users of key services to be improved, (iii) organizations that represent the vulnerable groups identified. All public gatherings will be designed taking into account relevant WB and local public health requirements in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Additionally, the project design foresees the development of a pro-active communication and stakeholder engagement strategy to sensitize the population on the benefits of targeted improved administrative services; and develop an engagement strategy with the targeted populations and institutions to gauge the level of demand in skills and development needs. This engagement strategy will be in line with ESS10.

The project’s GRM will be based on the existing Grievance Mechanism currently used by the Client and will during implementation be adapted in order to address and respond to project related grievances in accordance with the draft SEP. The project GRM allows for anonymous grievances. The channels identified until now by the Client include a website of the soon to be established “Observatorio de la Reforma y Modernización de la Administración Pública” with a form specifically designed for Project related grievances (<https://map.gob.do/xxxxxx>); additionally, the PIU will establish a specific email address and phone number for project related grievances. And finally, the claimant can also visit the PIU at their offices. These project specific channels would allow for accurate registration of project related grievances and will be specified in the draft SEP. The GRM allows for an appeal process in the case a complainant is not satisfied with the response provided and includes specific considerations for addressing Gender Based-Violence (GBV) or Sexual Exploitation and Abuse & Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) complaints, which include



measures to ensure confidentiality and development of a database of service providers for case referrals. The draft SEP foresees training of MAP personnel in charge of the GRM and the E&S specialist in the PIU as a measure for them to know how to identify and channel project related grievances and how to deal adequately with GBV and SEA/SH related grievances in accordance with the ESF. The project's GRM is available to all project stakeholders and is designed to guarantee confidentiality, accessibility.

ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions

ESS2 is relevant. The project activities will involve contracted field staff and supervisors, experts, and consultants, including trainers and facilitators. In accordance with ESS2, the Client will develop, disclose, and adopt a stand-alone Labor Management Procedures (LMP) within ninety (90) days after the project's effective date.

Although labor considerations will be limited to the standard aspects considering worker wellbeing and health and safety, the LMP will include a code of conduct acceptable to the World Bank to mitigate the risk of sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)/sexual harassment (SH) or misconduct in the workplace or when engaging with communities. There is no risk of potential forced or child labor use in this project. The LMP will assess national labor-related laws related to public service and related human resource policies, labor law, and institutional roles related to enforcement of the laws, including recruitment, discipline, appraisals, and dismissals and identify any gaps that may exist with ESS2 requirements and define measures to overcome such gaps.

Separate GRMs for work-related grievances will be provided to project staff and consultants, including necessary considerations for confidentiality and whistle-blower protection. These GRMs will be described in the LMP. The LMP will also include Occupational Health and Safety considerations in line with the WBG EHS Guidelines and national legislation to ensure health and safety of workers during the installation of equipment, management of e-waste, and throughout TA activities such as capacity building, training services, events, among others. To mitigate the risk of spread of the COVID-19 virus, the LMP will also include measures for infection control and prevention in line with national legislation and international best practices. The LMP will be applicable to direct and contracted workers of the Project.

In case members of the PIU will be civil servants assigned by MAP to the project, the limited coverage of the ESS2 for this type of workers will be described in the LMP. The need for training for project workers, including on workers' codes of conduct, will be included in the ESCP.

ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

ESS3 is relevant. Project activities will finance the procurement of hardware to support government systems and platforms. The procurement and installation of electronics may replace already existing computers and other equipment; thus, all e-waste generated as part of the Project will need to be managed and disposed following specific guidelines, national regulations, and international best practices. Appropriate mitigation measures will be developed in a project-level E-Waste Management Plan (EWMP) that will be developed following the WB's EHS Guidelines and will focus on establishing e-waste management measures to be adopted and implemented throughout project implementation as needed. The EWMP will be prepared and disclosed as a stand-alone instrument within 90 days of



the project effective date. However, the EWMP will also be required to be part of the POM. During implementation the EWMP will be adopted as deemed necessary.

Given that the existing capacity for ensuring proper e-waste management in the country varies and will therefore be subject of close supervision. Only reputable, legitimate, and licensed contractors will be retained for the transportation and disposal of e-wastes, and the Borrower must obtain chain of custody documentation to the final destination to ensure only licensed disposals sites are being used.

For all other equipment to be procured for the project, the procurement bidding documents will specify the need to meet certified energy standards, and this will also be outlined in the POM. The specific energy standard to meet will be based on the availability, cost, and utility of the item to be procured.

ESS4 Community Health and Safety

ESS4 is relevant. The project activities involving public gatherings and data collection in the field will be designed taking into account relevant WB and local public health requirements in the context of the COVID-19 pandemic. Labor influx risks related to community health and safety, hiring of security forces are not issues in the project. The project will ensure that measures and criteria are in place to reduce the risk of gender based violence (GBV) and/or sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA)/sexual harassment (SH) as a part of project activities that imply community engagement (e.g., surveys, qualitative and quantitative data collection). In addition, the mismanagement of E-wastes can potentially pollute water sources and soil, thus negatively impacting on neighboring communities. The EWMP aims at preventing pollution and protecting community health and safety.

ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

Not relevant

ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

Not relevant

ESS7 Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities

Not relevant

ESS8 Cultural Heritage

Not relevant

ESS9 Financial Intermediaries

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Not relevant

C. Legal Operational Policies that Apply

OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways No

OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas No

III. World Bank Environmental and Social Due Diligence

A. Use of Common Approach No

Financing Partners

None

B. Proposed Measures, Actions and Timing (Borrower’s commitments)

Actions to be completed prior to Bank Board Approval:

MAP to prepare, consult, and disclose a draft SEP with GRM and an Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) prior to Appraisal.

Possible issues to be addressed in the Borrower Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP):

1. Adequate monitoring of the overall project GRM and the labor-specific GRM.
2. Provide ESF-related training to project workers and stakeholders as relevant, including on workers' codes of conduct.
3. Screening the project activities to ensure that activities under all components are consistent with the ESF and in alignment with the principles of the relevant ESSs. The Client will develop, disclose, and adopt a stand-alone E&S screening checklist within 90 days after Project Effectiveness.
4. The Client will develop, disclose, and adopt an LMP within 90 days after Project Effectiveness.
5. The Client will prepare, disclose, and adopt an E-Waste Management Plan (EWMP) within 90 days after Project Effectiveness.
6. The Client will update, disclose, consult, and adopt a final SEP within 90 days after Project Effectiveness.

C. Timing

Tentative target date for preparing the Appraisal Stage ESRS 23-Jun-2023

IV. CONTACT POINTS

World Bank

Public Disclosure



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V. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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VI. APPROVAL

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Practice Manager (ENR/Social)	Maria Gonzalez de Asis Recommended on 28-Mar-2023 at 15:22:29 EDT
Safeguards Advisor ESSA	Marco Antonio Zambrano Chavez (SAESSA) Cleared on 17-Sep-2023 at 08:52:33 EDT