SUMMARY POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

Country:	Republic of Uzbekistan	Project Title:	Samarkand Solar Power Project

Lending/Financing Modality:	Project Loan	Department/ Division:	Central West Regional Department Energy Division

I. POVERTY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY

Targeting classification: general intervention

A. Links to the National Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Growth Strategy and Country Partnership Strategy

The Asian Development Bank (ADB) country partnership strategy (CPS) for Uzbekistan, 2012–2016 aligns with the Uzbekistan Welfare Improvement Strategy, 2011–2014. The CPS reflects Uzbekistan's recent efforts to sustain strong, inclusive economic growth through industrial modernization, infrastructure development, and integrated rural development. Environmentally sustainable and efficient power generation is a top priority. Solar energy technology is an important component in this sector. The Government of Uzbekistan has expressed its commitment to develop solar energy and to become the regional knowledge hub for solar technologies. On 1 March 2013, the President of the Republic of Uzbekistan issued a decree on measures for further development of alternative sources of energy. ADB has responded to the government's request with this proposed project.

B. Results from the Poverty and Social Analysis during PPTA or Due Diligence

1. Key poverty and social issues. The poverty rate in the Samarkand project area is 21%. The power shortage problem is severe in the area. The local power plant can only provide 35% capacity of customer demand. The rest of the energy has to be imported from outside, which is quite limited and unstable. Consequently, the power supply is frequently interrupted. The quality of power is also poor. The voltage can be 20% lower than normal. Poor sectors of the society are often the most affected by power supply shortfalls. A policy and advisory technical assistance household survey carried out in April–May 2013 shows that the duration of power outages is far higher in rural areas than in urban areas.

2. Beneficiaries. More than 722,557 people or about 130,500 households in the project area will benefit. A stable energy supply will improve living conditions, incomes, and hygiene and sanitation conditions. Other beneficiaries include local schools, hospitals, shops, and places of work. Poor and vulnerable groups will benefit the most from the project because those groups are least able to afford backup power during power cuts. New and thriving businesses and enterprises based on reliable power will also support job growth.

3. Impact channels. **Employment.** Reliable power supply will improve the operations of retail and service establishments and create new business opportunities, which will in turn improve the employment market and benefit job seekers. **Education.** The education system in the project area has suffered greatly from power cuts and voltage dips and spikes, impacting upon the ability to use electrical equipment as well as lighting. **Health.** Poor power supply impacts negatively on (i) heating, (ii) health care services, and (iii) potable water. This situation leads to a high rate of acute intestinal infections and cold-related illnesses. Poor and vulnerable groups are often the most affected because they are less able to afford backup power and doctor visits. Reducing the incidence of illness and disease will reduce household expenditure on medical treatment and increase economic activity, including for women who assume the burden of care for the sick.

4. Design features. The population of the Samarkand district usually has energy supply for 2 hours per day in winter and an average of 16–20 hours per day in the summer. Dissatisfaction with the level of service is high. The population of the project area will have better access to electricity, which will significantly reduce illnesses, particularly waterborne and cold-related infections and diseases.

II. PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERING THE POOR

1. Summarize the participatory approaches and the proposed project activities that strengthen inclusiveness and empowerment of the poor and vulnerable in project implementation.

Project preparation employed a participatory approach to share information about the project and seek feedback particularly from women, poorer segments of the population, and civil society. Fifty-four participants attended the public consultations, amongst them representatives of (i) Makhalla (village) Committees of Samarkand and Postargom Districts, (ii) Hokimiyats district, (iii) the Nature Protection Committee of Samarkand, (iv) Uzbekenergo, and (vi) Zarafshan and Dustlik Local Power Distribution Networks.

2. If civil society has a specific role in the project, summarize the actions taken to ensure their participation. There is no civil society role directly linked to project implementation. But Makhalla and local women groups as community-based organizations CBOs will play the role of liaison between the project and society to disseminate the project information and collect any concerns, complaints, and grievances.

3. Explain how the project ensures adequate participation of civil society organizations in project implementation. The executing agency (EA) will publish project progress information regularly to the public through CBOs and receive

opinions from the project area and affected people.
4. What forms of civil society organization participation is envisaged during project implementation?
☒ Information gathering and sharing (H) ☒Consultation (H) ☐Collaboration (L) ☐ Partnership (L)
5. Will a project level participation plan be prepared to strengthen participation of civil society as interest holders for affected persons particularly the poor and vulnerable? ☒ Yes.
The process and preparation of the Samarkand Solar Power Project is anchored on a consultative and participatory (C&P) process. The C&P framework is established in the project safeguards documents.

III. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT

Gender mainstreaming category: Some Gender Elements

A. Key issues.

Mainstreaming gender issues in the energy sector is important since men and women have different roles, needs, and perceptions in energy, and women are often disproportionately affected by energy scarcities. Women from low income families, single mothers, and female household heads are amongst the most vulnerable. There are 1,600 female headed households in the city of Samarkand (including widows, single mothers, and labor migrants' wives). Gender stereotypes are reinforced by the unreliable power supply, the high cost of energy, and the shortage and lack of gas during winter months since women need to spend more time on household tasks and cannot engage in income-generating and educational activities. Those engaged in small businesses in the project area spend about 12 hours a day for housework, but others are not engaged in productive work due to the lack of time and limited professional skills. Women's housework increases if family members fall ill. This is indirectly linked to energy for heating and water supply. According to official statistical data, there were 929 patients with cold-related diseases in the district of Samarkand in 2011 and 1,047 in 2012; in the city of Samarkand, there were 317 in 2011 and 581 in 2012. Numbers for diarrhea increased four times during 2011–2012, with 351 cases registered in Samarkand city in 2011 and 1,540 in 2012. The number of patients with hepatitis A also increased.

Women have limited representation in the male dominated energy sector and mostly occupy less important posts and have less access to training opportunities. There is a perception that jobs are physical or dangerous, therefore suitable only for men. The total number of employees of Samarkand Electric Networks (province and city) is 2,326, with only 2.2% (52 female staff) of them being women. In the city department, 24% of the employees are female (out of 411) with positions such as telephone operators, accountants, technicians, electricians, fitters, economists, dispatchers, and computer operators. According to the human recourses department of Zarafshan and Dustlik Power Distribution Networks (PDN), there are no women at the decision making and resource management levels. In Zarafshan PDN 18% of the employees are women, and in Dustlik PDN 26% are women with most working as accountants, receptionists, and cleaners. The facilities in the utility offices and work offices are also not conducive to female use. The outdoor toilets in local utility companies are single sex.

B. Key actions.

☐ Gender action plan ☒ Other actions or measures ☐ No action or measure

The proposed project will increase the availability and reliability of local energy supplies, which will result in better living and working opportunities for women. Some gender elements will include: gender and development (GAD) capacity building activities for stakeholders and beneficiaries; information campaigns to ensure and increase women's participation; collection and analysis of sex-disaggregated data including on related diseases; The main indicators include (i) 100% women of local Uzbekenergo offices participate in information campaigns, (ii) 2 local TV programs and 6 local newspaper articles to describe situation and future activities during project implementation, (iii) at least 60 trainees in GAD awareness seminars including 8-10% women participation from local Uzbekenergo offices and 30% women-participants from local households, (iv) 30 females will be trained on how to create and operate businesses, 6 of which may be involved as entrepreneurs at the power plant. Solar related training will have at least 10% of women participants. Separate toilet facilities for women will be provided in the power plant facilities.

IV. ADDRESSING SOCIAL SAFEGUARD ISSUES

A. Involuntary Resettlement	**Safeguard Category:** ☐ A ☒ B ☐ C ☐ FI

1. Key impacts. The project will acquire 410.56 hectare of land for construction of the photovoltaicpower plant, the 220 kilovolt transmission line, and widening of the 4 kilometer access road; 2.76 hectare will be temporary during construction.

Construction entails land acquisition impacts on 17 affected households. The census identified 109 affected persons. The project will not cause any physical displacement or unemployment. A project Land Acquisition and Resettlement Plan was prepared in line with national laws and the ADB Safeguard Policy Statement (2009).

2. Strategy to address the impacts. The strategy will include compensation for permanent land acquisition of agricultural land on a land-for-land basis, with land of equal value in a nearby location and with comparable services, or compensation to provide such services. It will also include monetary compensation for agricultural land at replacement cost (any transaction cost and registration fee will be borne by Uzbekenergo). Buildings (registered or not) will be compensated at full replacement cost without applying depreciation. For partial impacts (e.g., structure wall, fences), monetary compensation at replacement rates will be paid to restore the remaining structure to its original state. Unaffected portions of a structure will also be compensated if they become unlivable after impact occurs. Loss of income from crops planted on the affected land will be compensated in monetary terms.

3. Plan or other Actions. ☒ Resettlement plan	
B. Indigenous Peoples	**Safeguard Category:** ☐ A ☐ B ☒ C ☐ FI
1. Key impacts. There are four ethnic groups within the local community namely Uzbeks, Kazakhs, Russians, and Tajiks. None meet the ADB definition of vulnerable indigenous peoples. No strategy or plan is required. Is broad community support triggered? ☐ Yes ☒ No	
V. ADDRESSING OTHER SOCIAL RISKS	
A. Risks in the Labor Market	
1. Relevance of the project for the country's or region's or sector's labor market. (L) unemployment (L) underemployment (L) retrenchment (M) core labor standards	
2. Labor market impact. Local labor regulations prohibit exploitive labor practices, including the use of child labor. Preferential consideration will be given to firms who hire local workers. Adherence to core labor standards is included as a loan covenant.	
B. Affordability Analysis did not find any potential problems regarding affordability. The current electricity price is about 112 UZS/kilowatt-hour (kWh). The survey revealed that almost 85% of households would pay 140 UZS/kWh and 80% would pay 200 UZS/kWh for a stable power supply. Financial aid is available for low income families.	
C. Communicable Diseases and Other Social Risks 1. ☒ Communicable diseases (L) ☒ Human trafficking (L) ☐ Others (please specify) 2. Describe the related risks of the project on people in project area: The EA shall ensure that provisions are included in all civil work contracts on occupational safety norms, information on the prevention of HIV/AIDS and sexually transmitted infections, and protocols concerning acceptable behavior towards the local population.	
VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION	
1. Targets and indicators: As per the DMF plus those mentioned in Section B. 2. Required human resources: The project PMU will include social and environmental staff for monitoring. 3. Information in PAM: Implementation progress will be monitored and reported to ADB and EA. Monitoring reports of LARP will be submitted to ADB and Uzbekenergo every 6 months for the first 2 years of the project. A post evaluation report will also be submitted, as part of ADB's project completion report.	

Source: Asian Development Bank.