



# Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary

## Concept Stage

### ( **ESRS Concept Stage** )

Date Prepared/Updated: 02/01/2024 | Report No: ESRSC04081



**I. BASIC INFORMATION**

**A. Basic Operation Data**

Operation ID	Product	Operation Acronym	Approval Fiscal Year
P180508	Program-for-Results Financing (PforR)	Enhancing Women Economic Opportunities	2024
Operation Name	Enhancing Women Economic Opportunities in Jordan		
Country/Region Code	Beneficiary country/countries (borrower, recipient)	Region	Practice Area (Lead)
Jordan	Jordan	MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA	Social Protection & Jobs
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation	Central Bank of Jordan (CBJ), Jordan National Commission for Women (JNCW), King Abdullah II Center for Excellence, Ministry of Labor (MOL), Ministry of Social Development (MOSD), Ministry of Transport (MOT), National Council for Family Affairs (NCFA), Tehnical and Vocational Skills Development Commission, Vocational Training Corporation (VTC)	12-Feb-2024	27-Mar-2024
Estimated Concept Review Date	Total Project Cost		
14-Nov-2023	250,000,000.00		

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**Proposed Development Objective**

To address specific constraints that women face to enter and stay in the labor force related to the workplace conditions, financial inclusion, transportation, and childcare.

**B. Is the operation 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

*[Description imported from the Concept Data Sheet in the Portal providing information about the key aspects and components/sub-components of the project]*

The proposed project will be centered on four key dimensions, in line with the Government of Jordan's strategic vision and commitment to simultaneously increase women's labor force participation and expand economic growth. These dimensions are: (i) promoting a more enabling legal and workplace environment, (ii) enhancing women's financial inclusion and entrepreneurship, (iii) improving safety in public transport, and (iv) expanding access to quality childcare services. The project will be structured with a PforR component tied to specific output and result-oriented goals, and an Investment Project Financing component will support the expansion of quality childcare services, piloting various modalities for scale-up and establishing a collaborative learning platform on gender and jobs.

### D. Environmental and Social Overview

#### D.1 Overview of Environmental and Social Project Settings

*[Description of key features relevant to the operation's environmental and social risks and opportunities (e.g., whether the project is nationwide or regional in scope, urban/rural, in an FCV context, presence of Indigenous Peoples or other minorities, involves associated facilities, high-biodiversity settings, etc.) – Max. character limit 2,000]*

The intended outcome of the project is to establish a more enabling environment for women to work, while also addressing specific constraints women face to enter and stay in the labor market. Women's participation in the labor market in Jordan remains among the lowest in the world at 15 percent, compared to 65 percent among men (ages 15 to 64, WDI 2021 modeled estimate). Moreover, a fourth of women in the labor force are unemployed, compared to men (16 percent; WDI 2022 modeled estimate). The COVID-19 pandemic affected women's economic participation in Jordan where female labor force participation (FLFP) fell from 17.3 percent in 2017 to 14.2 percent in 2020 and further to 13.9 percent in 2022, accompanied by an increase in unemployment rates (SCD 2023). Low FLFP is more pronounced among poorer households, with the FLFP of women in the poorest income decile (13 percent) being half of that of women in the richest decile (25 percent), indicating greater barriers to entry and retention. Women also lag behind men on key indicators related to entrepreneurship, such as share of women led firms and access to financial and non-financial services.

The project will be implemented on national level (in urban and rural settings) and the PforR program will focus on enhancing the enabling and legal environment through Specific Results Areas that will be developed around Component 1 of the proposed design. The IPF Component is designed to support the expansion of access to quality childcare, which will be supported through grant funding. This will be done through testing and evaluating a range of potential modalities and to build the system to scale access to childcare and ensure quality. Expansion access to childcare services will not entail civil works or construction but there may be start-up grants for home based or women's associations nurseries – part of it will be used for things like refurbishing, safety measures, equipment, toys.

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

*[Description of Borrower's capacity (i.e., prior performance under the Safeguard Policies or ESF, experience applying E&S policies of IFIs, Environmental and social unit/staff already in place) and willingness to manage risks and impacts and of provisions planned or required to have capabilities in place, along with the needs for enhanced support to the Borrower – Max. character limit 2,000]*



The implementation arrangements for the project are still under development. At this stage, it's proposed that the Ministry of Planning and International Cooperation (MoPIC) would be the main implementing agency. MoPIC will ensure overall management of the project and the PforR Component. Other proposed implementing agencies could include the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), and the Ministry of Education (MoE), the Social Security Corporation (SSC). The Jordanian National Commission for Women (JNCW) might also be involved in implementation.

All the proposed implementing agencies (IAs) have their own GRM system, and they are also connected to the At Your service Platform (governmental centralized electronic complaints platform). They all have a range of uptake channels besides the At Your Service Platform and these comprise complaint boxes, hotlines, phones, walk-ins, etc. They also have some experience with stakeholder engagement strategies through media and communication departments. The proposed implementing agencies have varying degrees of familiarization and implementing the ESF.

At this stage, implementation arrangements envision a central project management unit (PMU) that will be responsible for overall coordination and managing the PforR component and will be hosted at MoPIC. This central PMU will include a central environmental and social team (such as the team at the Reform Secretariat at MoPIC) which will be responsible for the overall environmental and social risk management of the project. However, the IPF Component will be implemented by the MoSD and will be supported by the E&S team to be assigned to the PMU in MoPIC. The specific staffing arrangements and capacity-building measures including a training program will be further assessed and specified in the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).

## II. SCREENING OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISKS AND IMPACTS

### A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Moderate

#### A.1 Environmental Risk Rating

Low

*[Summary of key factors contributing to risk rating, in accordance with the ES Directive and the Technical Note on Screening and Risk Classification under the ESF – Max. character limit 2,000]*

Interventions to be supported under the IPF component of the program are expected to have minimal to no negative impacts on the environment, and accordingly are rated Low. The project will not support any civil works or constructions, only "soft" interventions will be supported to refurbish childcare facilities. Physical activities are limited to delivering training and awareness, and potential provision of operational support for start-ups (which may include buying furniture, toys, etc.). Minor, limited and site-specific impacts, especially OHS risks and impacts, might result from the potential support to renovating and operating childcare facilities which might require minor remodeling -e.g. painting- which will be done by the private sector, once engaged. Potential low environmental risks and adverse impacts are likely to be associated with the absence of environmentally responsible childcare provisions and licensing, improper handling and management of childcare waste. Such activities are commonly implemented and minor impacts which might result could be avoided or managed without requiring special or complicated measures. Adequate management of potential impacts of such activity should be ensured, mainly by including clauses in the contracts of the contractor(s) on the provision of required PPEs, and on compliance with applicable national regulations and good international practices, as appropriate, as well as preparing and enforcing environmentally responsible childcare services provisions and licensing.

#### A.2 Social Risk Rating

Moderate

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*[Summary of key factors contributing to risk rating, in accordance with the ES Directive and the Technical Note on Screening and Risk Classification under the ESF – Max. character limit 2,000]*

The interventions envisaged under the IPF Component for the project might entail different social risks and impacts and are rated Moderate. The proposed operation will yield multiple benefits under both the PforR and the IPF components. The different interventions under the project will boost women economic participation and inclusion in the labor market, will improve working environment for women’s financial independence, and will expand access to affordable childcare which has multiple positive impacts leading to overall economic growth. However, certain social risks and impacts are also expected under Projected social risks under the IPF. Under Activity 1 on expanding access to childcare facilities, social risks could include children safety and protection, exposure to safety hazards, discrimination against disabled children, SEA/SH risks by workers, limited social (family) conflict due to the entry of women in the labor market, and psychological impact. In addition, the implementation is highly dependent on the availability of grant resources for the envisaged interventions. Other risks also include the type of modalities and selection criteria for the beneficiaries in general of the different approaches proposed, definition and selection of vulnerable households, existing childcare facilities, etc. Under Activity 2 risks include lack of coordination between the different relevant entities, availability of reliable data and data sharing, availability of required staffing and capacities.

*[Summary of key factors contributing to risk rating. This attribute is only for the internal version of the download document and not a part of the disclosable version – Max. character limit 2,000]*

## **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**

Relevant

*[Optional Explanation - Max. character limit 1,000]*

The main environmental and social risks related to the IPF Component are mainly related to Activity 1 related to expansion of affordable childcare services. The program does not involve infrastructure, major or minor civil works, hence the IPF component will provide support to start-ups which may include refurbishment, safety measures, toys, etc. which can be associated with low OHS risks. Social risks might include children safety and protection, exposure to safety hazards, discrimination against disabled children, SEA/SH risks by workers, and psychological impact. Therefore, it is suggested to develop Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) as part of the POM that will include World Bank ESH General Guidelines and will also cover safeguarding aspects regarding child protection, safety, SEA/SH risks, etc. The IPF will include TA activities and they will be aligned with the ESF.

#### **ESS10 - Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure**

Relevant

*[Optional Explanation - Max. character limit 1,000]*

Identified Stakeholders: i) Primary Stakeholders of the project include direct and indirect beneficiaries 1) all women in Jordan of working age and searching for employment in the different regions of the country; 2) children of women searching for employment who will be accessing childcare services; 3) the vulnerable households who will be support to access childcare facilities; 4) existing childcare facilities 5) women’s associations. li) Other Interested Parties include

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other public sector institutions (MoH, MoEnv., MoL); local suppliers and vendors who will be providing supplies, furnishings, children intertwinement equipment (toys), suppliers of energy-efficient technologies, etc. ; NGOs and CBOs (local and International); development partners. iii) vulnerable groups include poor households in urban and rural areas, refugee women, disabled women and children. A Stakeholder Engagement Plan for the project will also be prepared and will include the GRM system for the project.

**ESS2 - Labor and Working Conditions**

Relevant

*[Optional Explanation - Max. character limit 1,000]*

However, the project will apply the existing borrower’s framework regarding labor and working conditions. Use of Borrower’s framework is envisaged under this project. We recommend the use of the existing Jordanian Labor Law No. 8 for the year 1996 and its amendments. The Bank has completed an assessment of the law in comparison with ESS2. The assessment identified gaps with ESS2 but also concluded that the national labor legislation is generally adequate and consistent with ESS2. Risks are more related to compliance and enforcement – especially in the informal labor market – rather than the letter of the law. One of the gaps concerns the workers Grievance Mechanism (GM), where the law does not have specific provisions on this requirement. This gap will be addressed, along with others as a requirement in the ESCP.

**ESS3 - Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management**

Relevant

*[Optional Explanation - Max. character limit 1,000]*

ESS3 is relevant to the Project. The standard has some relevance to project activities which will not result in the generation of pollutants or require substantial use of resources. Hence, the IPF component may consider supporting the installation of small-scale PV systems, and the use of energy-efficient technologies and practices by the childcare centers to enhance its resources efficiency, reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and strengthen its economic sustainability. The project will develop SOPs including Environmental, Health, and Safety (EHS) Guidelines, safeguarding aspects of childcare facilities, child protection and safety, data privacy and personal data protection, and others. The SOPs will also cover specific measures to manage waste generation under the project. The SOPs are stated as a requirement in the ESCP.

**ESS4 - Community Health and Safety**

Relevant

*[Optional Explanation - Max. character limit 1,000]*

Risks related to gender based violence may be associated with women entering the labor force owing to the expanded access to childcare services to be implemented under the project. This mostly related to possible family conflict due to women entering the labor market the fact that project will operate within the context of Jordan which has a rate of inter-partner violence that is above regional averages. Additionally, GBV risks might be stemming from workers of the suppliers delivering furnishings and children articles and gadgets (toys and others). Moreover, risks to child protection might also emerge which could include SEA/SH risks. Hence, these aspects will be covered under the Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs) that will be developed as part of the POM, which will include the World Bank ESH General Guidelines and will also cover safeguarding aspects regarding childcare facilities. (including also Life and Fire Safety considerations).

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**ESS5 - Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement** Not Currently Relevant

*[Optional Explanation - Max. character limit 1,000]*

**ESS6 - Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources** Not Currently Relevant

*[Optional Explanation - Max. character limit 1,000]*

**ESS7 - Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities** Not Currently Relevant

*[Optional Explanation - Max. character limit 1,000]*

**ESS8 - Cultural Heritage** Not Currently Relevant

*[Optional Explanation - Max. character limit 1,000]*

**ESS9 - Financial Intermediaries** Not Currently Relevant

*[Optional Explanation - Max. character limit 1,000]*

**B.2 Legal Operational Policies that Apply**

**OP 7.50 Operations on International Waterways** No

**OP 7.60 Operations in Disputed Areas** No

**B.3 Other Salient Features**

**Use of Borrower Framework** In Part

*[Optional explanation – Max. character limit 1,000]*

The project will apply the existing borrower’s framework regarding labor and working conditions. Use of Borrower’s framework is envisaged under this project. We recommend the use of the existing Jordanian Labor Law No. 8 for the year 1996 and its amendments. The Bank has completed an assessment of the law in comparison with ESS2. The assessment found that the national labor legislation is generally adequate and consistent with ESS2. Risks are more related to compliance and enforcement – especially in the informal labor market – rather than the letter of the law. However, key areas where the law is inconsistent with ESS2 include:

- Non-discrimination (general and gender-based)- No express provisions prohibiting gender-based discrimination in all aspects of employment
- Non-discrimination (non-Jordanian workers)- Differential minimum wage rates apply to Jordanian and non-Jordanians

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These gaps will be addressed through clear additional requirements under ESS2 in the ESCP.

**Use of Common Approach**

No

*[Optional Explanation including list of possible financing partners – Max. character limit 1,000]*

The project proposes to engage with the key implementing partners in pooling grant funding and co-financing for the investment component supporting childcare accessibility and quality. Under the IPF component, the project also proposes to maximize outcomes of government and donor programs and interventions through establishing a collaboration and learning platform for evidence-based learning, data collection and behavioral change interventions, which can be co-financed through grants, and operationalized through technical support by other development partners, with strong ownership from the government.

**B.4 Summary of Assessment of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts**

*[Description provided will not be disclosed but will flow as a one time flow to the Concept Stage PID – Max. character limit 5,000]*

Minor, limited and site-specific impacts, especially OHS risks and impacts, might result from the potential support to renovating and operating childcare facilities. Potential low environmental risks and adverse impacts are likely to be associated with the absence of environmentally responsible childcare provisions and licensing, improper handling and management of childcare waste. social risks could include children safety and protection, exposure to safety hazards, discrimination against disabled children, SEA/SH risks by workers, limited social (family) conflict due to the entry of women in the labor market, and psychological impact. Other risks also include the type of modalities and selection criteria for the beneficiaries, definition and selection of vulnerable households, existing childcare facilities, etc. Also lack of coordination between the different relevant entities, availability of reliable data and data sharing, availability of required staffing and capacities.

**C. Overview of Required Environmental and Social Risk Management Activities**

**C.1 What Borrower environmental and social analyses, instruments, plans and/or frameworks are planned or required by Appraisal?**

*[Description of expectations in terms of documents to be prepared to assess and manage the project’s environmental and social risks and by when (i.e., prior to Effectiveness, or during implementation), highlighted features of ESA documents, other project documents where environmental and social measures are to be included, and the related due diligence process planned to be carried out by the World Bank, including sources of information for the due diligence - Max. character limit 3,000]*

Borrower environmental and social instruments required before by Appraisal are:

- Appraisal-ESRS
- Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP)
- Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

Documents to be considered after project approval:

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- SOPs including World Bank General EHS Guidelines and safeguarding aspects of childcare facilities as part of the Project Operational Manual (POM)

**III. CONTACT POINT**

**Contact Point**

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**IV. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT**

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**V. APPROVAL**

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