



# Environmental and Social Review Summary

## Concept Stage

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

Date Prepared/Updated: 02/25/2019 | Report No: ESRSC00259



**BASIC INFORMATION**

**A. Basic Project Data**

Country	Region	Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any)
Mauritania	AFRICA	P162916	
Project Name	Mauritania Youth Employability Project		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Social Protection & Labor	Investment Project Financing	7/29/2019	9/26/2019
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)		
Ministry of Economy and Finance	Ministry of employment, vocational training and information and communication technologies		

Proposed Development Objective(s)

The Project Development Objective is to promote the employability of vulnerable youth in selected areas.

Financing (in USD Million)	Amount
<b>Total Project Cost</b>	<b>30.00</b>

**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 [including overview of Country, Sectoral & Institutional Contexts and Relationship to CPF]**

The project will seek to improve employment outcomes for vulnerable youth in Mauritania, taking into account the main constraints faced in accessing jobs: low job creation in the formal sector; employment concentration in low-productivity economic activities; and limited access to skills, capital, and information. The project will be centered around the provision of an integrated package of services for vulnerable youth. These services will be designed to facilitate economic inclusion and boost productivity by alleviating the most pressing constraints faced in accessing employment. The project will consist of two core components: (i) an economic inclusion program for vulnerable

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youth; and (ii) a component aimed at strengthening government capacity for the implementation of this program and project management.

**D. Environmental and Social Overview**

D.1. Project location(s) and salient characteristics relevant to the ES assessment [geographic, environmental, social] The project will focus on urban and peri-urban youth (aged 15 to 24) who are either: (i) not in employment, education or training (NEET); or (ii) in vulnerable employment situations. The focus on this group can be justified given they have amongst the poorest employment outcomes in Mauritania. The selection of this group also aligns with the Government’s objective to increase the number of youth accessing jobs in the Accelerated Growth and Shared Prosperity Strategy (2017 – 2030), as well as priority target groups outline in the National Employment Strategy. As highlighted earlier, this group is also large, growing due to urbanization and underserved by the existing government and donor-financed programs. The aim will be to complement existing interventions, which are already being targeted at rural youth in Mauritania. Given the newly devised geospatial approach to development devised by the CMU, the project will focus on four urban and peri-urban areas (Nouakchott, Rosso, Kiffa, and Nema) where there is direct alignment with both new demand for goods and services, as well as other projects being financed by the World Bank under IDA18 and IDA19. The project will also aim for gender parity amongst beneficiaries (50% male youth and 50% female youth).

D. 2. Borrower’s Institutional Capacity

he project will be implemented by the Ministry of Employment, Vocational Training and ICT (MEVTICT) in cooperation with its two subordinated semi-autonomous agencies: National Agency for Youth Employment (ANAPEJ) and The National Institute for the Promotion of Technical and Vocational Training (INAP-FTP). This ministry, by law has the mandate to develop, implement, coordinate, monitor and evaluate the national policies and programs related to employment, labor market insertion, and TVET. The precise institutional arrangements for project coordination and implementation will be defined once the detailed scope of the project is defined and a capacity assessment conducted. The capacity assessment will include all fiduciary aspects, including provisions for ESF compliance.

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**II. SCREENING OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL (ES) RISKS AND IMPACTS**

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

Low

**Environmental Risk Rating**

Low

The environment risk rating is classified as Low at this stage of project preparation. The core project activities are training and coaching in the areas of life skills, technical skills, job coaching, job placement, management training, and internship support. Cash transfers will be provided to launch self-employment. Most of these activities are aimed at conservation and will enhance environmental and social risks and impacts management as well as social protection since they offer opportunities for work and earnings at the same time. This project does not pose any indirect or long-term impacts. Based on the scope and the economic areas defined during further project preparation, this risk rating will be reviewed and revised if needed.

**Social Risk Rating**

Low

The social risk rating is classified as low at this stage of the project preparation. As the major project activities will concern training, coaching and cash transfers, each of which should be well defined, socially inclusive, and include beneficiaries consultations.



## B. Environment and Social Standards (ESSs) that Apply to the Activities Being Considered

### B.1. General Assessment

#### ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

##### **Overview of the relevance of the Standard for the Project:**

Following the completion of the business training, project beneficiaries will benefit from a cash transfer. These transfers will be made conditional on the beneficiary developing a plan of proposed expenditure of the funds, which could either: (i) be used as seed funding for a new income-generating activity; or (ii) used to provide a guarantee for additional funding, which could improve the productivity of an existing income-generating activity. The plans for proposed expenditure of funds will be screened against a negative list. As the cash transfers will not be followed beyond the initial transfer of funds, the provisioning of these funds will include a signature page stating that the youth grantee will use the funds as states in the plan for proposed expenditure. The size of the grants is so small that adverse environmental and social impacts are expected to be minimal to nonexistent.

##### **Areas where reliance on the Borrower's E&S Framework may be considered:**

Further consultation with the Borrower will indicate the extent to which we can rely on the Borrower's framework.

#### ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

The beneficiaries of the project will be vulnerable youth (aged 15 – 24). This category of people are generally difficult to reach, which poses identification problems. In addition, the government has recently emphasized the importance of enhancing transparency in beneficiary selection for employment services programs. The use of the existing Social Registry can greatly enhance the targeting of employment programs for vulnerable youth. This registry was created within the Department of Development Policy and Strategy (DDPS) of the Ministry of Economy and Finance in 2016. It is a cross-cutting tool, which contains key data on vulnerable households and individuals (age, level of education, occupation etc.) and is used to assist the government in optimizing targeting and enhancing transparency for beneficiary selection in social programs. The use of the Social Registry will be particularly relevant for identifying those that are currently engaged in low productivity employment. Application of ESS10 stakeholder engagement and disclosure of information is a central part of the Mauritania Youth Employability Project that will be closely monitored through a simple Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) as part of the overall ESF Management Framework. The SEP will outline the characteristics and interests of the relevant stakeholder groups and timing and methods of engagement throughout the life of the project. Project level Grievance Redress Mechanisms may be established as needed.

### B.2. Specific Risks and Impacts

#### **A brief description of the potential environmental and social risks and impacts relevant to the Project.**

##### ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions

The PIU is expected to include civil servants and/or direct workers. The plans for proposed expenditure of cash transfers are expected to include expenditures for self-employment, goods, and supplies. The small size of the grant does not allow for hiring of employees. However, Track 2 seeks to strengthen the employability of vulnerable youth (for formal or informal employment) through skills training and job placements within companies. Labor Management Procedures will be prepared to address key issues for the PIU (working conditions and management of



worker relationships, protecting the work force, grievance mechanism, and occupational health and safety), as well as including relevant guidance for employment of youth through the project's job placement activities (e.g. Mauritanian national labor law regulations; applicable international regulations which Mauritania has adopted through ILO).

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

The cash transfers are on a scale not expected to generate pollution to water, air, or land. A simple "good practices" guide will be provided to use as part of the technical training prior to the approval of the plans for proposed expenditure. These plans will include good practice guidance to reduce risks associated with safe use of chemicals and safe discharge of used water.

#### **ESS4 Community Health and Safety**

Any community health and safety concerns will be incorporated into the "good practices".

#### **ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement**

The cash transfer screening process will screen out any possible need of land acquisition or potential restriction of access. Cash transfers will be based on human capital and commercial sales and are not expected to include land use. If the land acquisition is required then the relevance will be reviewed accordingly.

#### **ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources**

The project is not expected to finance cash transfers which may have environmental and social impacts specific to biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of living natural resources, as this will be screened out through application of the negative list.

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

There are no Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities in the project area.

#### **ESS8 Cultural Heritage**

The project is not expected to finance cash transfer which may have environmental and social impacts specific on cultural heritage, as there are to be no civil works associated with the cash transfer activities.

#### **ESS9 Financial Intermediaries**

This standard does not apply.



**B.3 Other Relevant Project Risks**

Training sessions for youth will target both young men and young women, potentially in mixed groups. Suggestions for minimizing gender-based violence should be incorporated into the training plans and training-of-trainers. Low level safeguards awareness and capacity at regional levels could have an impact on the implementation of the project. Capacity building will focus on one safeguards focus point at the level of the implementing ministry/agency, with some training at level of the four regional centers.

**C. Legal Operational Policies that Apply**

**OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways**

No

The project is on youth employability. Potential areas of job creation and/or skills training do not intersect with international waterways.

**OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas**

No

The project is in urban and peri-urban areas of Mauritania, where there are no disputed areas.

**III. WORLD BANK ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL DUE DILIGENCE**

**A. Is a common approach being considered?**

No

**Financing Partners**

N/A

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

**Actions to be completed prior to Bank Board Approval:**

A good practice guide is expected to be drafted to address limited potential adverse impacts upstream through a negative screening list. A stakeholder engagement plan (SEP) will include sections to address stakeholder engagement, vulnerable groups, and gender-based violence. A Labor Management Procedure (LMP) applicable to all World Bank projects in Mauritania will be developed. A environmental and social component to support capacity building for youth employment should also be developed.

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

The Environmental and Social Commitment Plan is expected to contain (i) a negative list for screening of plans for potential expenditures, (ii) a template with language to include in signature of receipt of cash transfers stating that the funds will be used for the purposes intended, (iii) a good practices guide to accompany simple technical training prior to the receipt of cash transfers, (iv) a Labor Management Procedure developed to guide all World Bank projects in Mauritania; (v) any capacity building needed to assure that the technical training for cash transfer recipients is of acceptable quality; and (vi) a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP).

**C. Timing**

**Tentative target date for preparing the Appraisal Stage ESRS**

10-May-2019

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**IV. CONTACT POINTS**

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**Borrower/Client/Recipient**

Borrower: Ministry of Economy and Finance

**Implementing Agency(ies)**

Implementing Agency: Ministry of employment, vocational training and information and communication technologies

**V. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT**

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**VI. APPROVAL**

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