



Appraisal Environmental and Social Review Summary

Appraisal Stage

(ESRS Appraisal Stage)

Date Prepared/Updated: 06/26/2020 | Report No: ESRSA00790



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Region	Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any)
Afghanistan	SOUTH ASIA	P174119	
Project Name	COVID-19 Relief Effort for Afghan Communities and Households (REACH)		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Social	Investment Project Financing	7/9/2020	7/13/2020
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)		
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan	Kabul Municipality		

Proposed Development Objective(s)

To provide emergency support to selected households through communities in project areas during the COVID-19 outbreak.

Financing (in USD Million)	Amount
Total Project Cost	300.00

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

Yes

C. Summary Description of Proposed Project [including overview of Country, Sectoral & Institutional Contexts and Relationship to CPF]

This project contributes to the relief phase of the Government's response to the COVID-19 outbreak in Afghanistan, during which the priority is to protect households from the inevitable short-term economic damage caused by the pandemic. The relief phase is strongly linked to the health response as it supports households to weather the consequences of the income loss at a stage when traditional livelihood support activities are discouraged given their inconsistency with social distancing. This relief effort is expected to deliver Bank-financed benefits within 6 to 12 months to meet its objectives.



The proposed emergency project is intended to offset the impact of the economic shock by offering the Afghan households a minimally sufficient package of food and/or money. This project would operate only in areas not covered by the existing Citizen's Charter Afghanistan Project (CCAP). The coverage excludes the tiny minority of well-off households together comprising about 7% of the population. Nearly all remaining households in both rural and urban projects areas would receive a standard food hygiene package (or, in some areas, a cash transfer). The amount of the transfer (or food+hygiene package) would be in the range of US\$100 for urban areas and US\$50 for rural areas. The proposed transfer would compensate for the equivalent of two months' food consumption lost if household's income decreases by 50% (rather than a 100% subsidy).

D. Environmental and Social Overview

D.1. Detailed project location(s) and salient physical characteristics relevant to the E&S assessment [geographic, environmental, social]

Environmental

The project will be implemented at the national level, which will cover both urban and rural areas with diverse environmental, social, and institutional settings. The IPF will finance operations that assist the vulnerable communities, neighborhoods and households who might have financially impacted from Covid19 pandemic and those who do not have any other funding sources. The planned project operations are not expected to pose adverse impacts on environment and endanger natural habitats or cultural sites. However, REACH activities such as physical cash distribution and distribution of food and sanitary items will have minor environmental adverse impacts and risks, however risks related to spread of infection among and between project workers are fundamental issue which requires serious jurisdiction during project implementation stage. These risks can be escalated if relief package distribution triggers public gatherings.

Social

Although the project explicitly targets poor and marginalized households there are still a number of risks that could jeopardize the full realization of the project's objectives. The health and safety of those who are delivering the packages needs to be ensured. This includes physical safety and freedom from intimidation. Those delivering the packages in different parts of the country could be targets for intimidation and violence. Female headed or majority female households who qualify for assistance could also be potential victims of gender-based violence. People with disabilities may find it harder to access the services or indeed to access information. People with disabilities are disproportionately affected by pandemics and situations of high unemployment. The management of social distancing has been a challenge for Afghanistan during the pandemic and in some parts of the country it has been ignored in favor of searching for sources of food. The risk of a rise in the pandemic due to lack of social distancing measures or use of protective equipment is a substantial risk in this project.

D. 2. Borrower's Institutional Capacity

The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), Kabul Municipality (KM) and Independent Directorate for Local Governance (IDLG) will be the main institutions responsible for overall project implementation. However, these agencies will engage existing structures within local authorities and other implementing partners which will be responsible for the implementation and day-to-day activities under each component. The project will use the existing safeguards capacity within existing PIUs in Bank financed projects in all three institutions in addition to the CCAP project. MRRD, IDLG and KM have previous experience managing and implementing investment operations financed by the World Bank, however none of these agencies have experience of implementing the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and related standards. The existing environmental and social (E&S) staff of these agencies who will

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be working on the project will need to have some specific capacity building in the requirements of the ESF standards as may be applicable to the REACH project. Where staff gaps are currently existing the relevant staff will be recruited and trained.

II. SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL (ES) RISKS AND IMPACTS

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Substantial

Environmental Risk Rating

Moderate

The activities supported by the Project do not have a physical footprint and are not expected to have significant negative environmental impacts. No rehabilitation or construction of infrastructure or other actions having an impact on the physical environment will be financed through the project, however activities such as distribution of relief items have the potential to increase the spread of the corona virus by infected but asymptomatic workers or workers coming into contact with infected community/household members in the dispensation of their duties. The project will provide adequate Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) for staff and counterparts associated with the delivery of relief packages and cash . Th main concern for the project is the safe use and disposal of PPEs. The disposal of used Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) if improperly disposed could cause infections , but these can be minimized through the implementation of guidelines for disposal of PPEs. The project will also put screening measures in place to screen project staff and frontline relief delivery agents to ensure that potentially exposed or infected staff are adequately isolated and disinfection measures put in place within relief packaging areas to arrest a potential infection of items for delivery to households. Due to the capacity of the client to implement these mitigation measures, the project environmental risks are therefore considered to be moderate and can be minimized or eliminated by the implementation of relevant guidelines for observing social distancing and minimizing exposure and spread of the virus as a result of project activities. The Project ESCP have clearly defined necessary provisions for all activities

Social Risk Rating

Substantial

The social risk rating at this stage is classified as Substantial (S). There are a number of contextual issues that place this project in the substantial risk category. The social risk rating at this stage is classified as Substantial (S). The key factors for this risk rating include, the overall social risks are significant on human population and the project involves activities that have a high potential to both positively and negatively affect the local population and can bring reputational risk to both the government and the WB. Coverage includes over 40 million people in 4 of Afghanistan’s major cities (Hirat, Mazar-e-Sharif, Kandahar, Jalalabad), and rural areas. Considering the emergency response nature of the project, if not properly managed can lead to widespread social exclusion, corruption and nepotism resulting in decreased trust in local and national government and social conflicts among vulnerable, elite groups and local authorities. There are a number of different players in this project and different layers of authority with a potentially complex supply chain. Lack of security, and heightened violence due to the pandemic all contribute to a substantial risk. Recent anecdotal evidence suggest there is a high risk of elite capture with the distribution of aid packages where only those favored by a particular group will receive aid and not necessarily those who are most in need.

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The use of government security forces in managing crowds at aid distribution points is a risk, as demonstrated by recent fatal clashes in Ghor province during the ongoing bread distribution program of the Government. Although there will be good mitigation measures put in place such as the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan(ESCP) and The Operations Manual(OM) and the Stakeholder Engagement Plan(SEP), security issues and lax social distancing will fall out of the remit of these instruments which is another reason to classify this project as having a substantial risk. Additional measures, including COVID-19 specific measures will need to be added to the current project implementation manuals OM of the main PIUs. One supplementary OM combining the measures and guidelines of all 3 agencies can perhaps be developed within 30 days of effectiveness which addresses the specific challenges of the REACH project.

In addition, security challenges can lead to social exclusion, discrimination and marginalization in the beneficiary's selection process, specifically in insecure areas, where client's monitoring and evaluation services will not be present and areas out of media coverage.

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:

Some of the most salient issues under the project activity is the identification of extremely poor households, and vulnerable populations, including female headed households and people with disabilities, entitled to receive cash transfers and relief packages. It is critical to ensure that the measures to reach the extreme poor are effective, particularly with regards to access to social services, understanding of rights and responsibilities, multicultural approaches to service provision, and robust grievance redress mechanisms. The use of an almost universal 'exclusion based' targeting approach will help in this regard. MRRD and IDLG and relevant municipalities will provide implementation support to ensure that environmental and social standards are applied effectively. Mitigation measures would include increasing the capacity of local teams of implementation partners to support households. Complementary work for cash assistance to individuals who are capable of labor works will enhance their economic opportunities. The ESCP includes preparation of ESMP, which will be prepared within 30 days (distribution of relief packages should not start until the ESMP is in place) of project effectiveness. MRRD, IDLG and KM will appoint field supervisors from other existing WB financed project who are responsible for monitoring the implementation of REACH programs in their assigned territory (region, provinces and neighborhood).

Recent anecdotal evidence suggest there is a high risk of elite capture with the distribution of aid packages where only those favored by a particular group will receive aid and not necessarily those who are most in need. However, these implementing agencies will need to strengthen the local level monitoring and evaluation system to ensure that every office has the right tools and methodologies to enable more effective information collection and supervision of risk related to ESS1.

ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure



The COVID-19 pandemic imposes considerable challenges for stakeholder engagement and disclosure of information, as stakeholder engagement and consultation processes cannot be conducted as per normal ESS10 requirements. Methods and procedures in the light of limitations on social gatherings and other forms of personal contact must however be put in place to address the pandemic and the rapid roll out of the emergency operation. The approach to stakeholder engagement should be based on the principles of meaningful consultation and disclosure of appropriate information – with consultation and communication methods adapted in the light of the pandemic. A robust information and awareness raising campaign surrounding the project is critical in this regard.

Identification of project stakeholders, the project beneficiaries and analysis of their needs and levels of influence has been done during preparation of the draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), with the identification of vulnerable people who might be affected by the project requiring special attention as early as possible. The SEP will be updated within one month of effectiveness with as much information from stakeholders as becomes available, and the engagement and consultation processes would be continuous throughout the life of the project. Project-affected people should have access to a grievance redress mechanism (GRM) and a hotline to raise concerns and grievances as well as to request clarifications on various aspects of the project and its potential impacts. This GRM is identified and described in the SEP.

The SEP will address timing and methodologies for meaningful and participatory consultations, including arrangements for information disclosure to all stakeholders. The key ground level community representatives who will be closely consulted during the emergency response include: community development council (CDC) representatives, Mullah Imams (religious leaders), Wakil Guzars (appointed sub-district administrative officials), and street representatives. Consultation activities will be held with project affected and interested parties in locations that will be identified in consultation with the communities and their representatives to ensure meaningful consultation, transparency and accountability through the project implementation. The SEP also includes measure on how to engage with vulnerable and disenfranchised groups who are of most in need for receiving emergency support to tackle this critical situation. The project will finance the development and implementation of a robust communications strategy and full-scale awareness-raising campaign supported by a working group comprised of MRRD, IDLG, and KM communication staff.

The project will use the existing GRM of CCAP in areas where the project is functioning, but in non CCAP areas CDCs from previous NSP will be reactivated to establish GRCs and ensure GRM is accessible for all communities in the area. The SEP also include Citizens Engagement Indicators to track the implementation of participatory approach by the project. During implementation stage, it is envisioned that the client will carry out beneficiaries’ satisfaction survey to evaluate public satisfaction through phone surveys, workshops, and community score cards. The client will regularly assess the emerging stakeholder needs during implementation of the emergency response and will update SEP accordingly to address emerging needs of stakeholders.

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



ESS2 is considered relevant to this Project as the delivery of the food packages and cash will be labour intensive. The project will be conducted mainly by direct workers and contractors of the Project such as social mobilizers, employees of implementing agencies and implementing partners, i.e. civil servants, contractors employed by MRRD, IDLG and KM, although there may be some community workers as well from various NGOs and community-based organization involved. In urban areas, staff of retail shops and wholesale suppliers will be involved in delivery. Contracted workers may also be foreseen for temporary work such as door to door delivery of relief packages and/or monitoring. Whilst physical works are not envisaged under the project, the very nature of the circumstances of the pandemic requires occupational health and safety (OHS) issues to be considered in all contracts with workers in order to limit additional exposure to the virus, provisions for treatment if exposed and also to avoid transmission to local communities and beneficiary households. While the number of workers may not be estimated at the current stage, no large-scale labor influx is expected. The key occupational health and safety risk is in relation to the contamination with COVID-19 because of high risk of contagion. All workers will be coming into close contact with communities and the labour management plan will need to include a specific GBV code of conduct as well as a general code for interacting with communities and partners. In line with ESS2, the use of forced labor or the use of child labor for any person under the age of 18 in hazardous work situations is prohibited.

As mitigation measures, the Borrower will implement adequate OHS measures (including emergency preparedness and response measures) in line with the ESMP and the ESCP and other related guidelines on infection prevention during COVID19 pandemic. Measures relating to OHS, to protect workers from injury, illness, or impacts associated with exposure to hazards encountered in the workplace or while working, will be documented in labor management procedures (LMP) that will be included in the ESMP. The OHS measures will consider the World Bank Group's General Environment, Health, and Safety Guidelines (EHSGs). The OHS measures will include the provision of infection prevention and control precautions, adequate supplies of PPE, etc. The Borrower will also ensure a nondiscriminatory, decent work environment; including ensuring that all workers adhere to the WHO Code of Ethics and Professional conduct. A worker GRM will be established and operated through a grievance hotline and assignment of focal points to address these grievances within the MoH which will be outlined in the LMP. The project will mostly rely on local labor which will be identified through participatory approaches in close consultation of CDCs, Wakil Guzars, Mullah Imams and Street Representatives. The workers will not work in contaminated areas. Also, no large-scale labor influx is expected due to the same circumstance.

ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

The Project will neither finance nor support any civil works activities thus no pollution prevention and management measures will apply however disposal of used or contaminated PPEs may bolster pollution and may potentially pose risks to surface and ground water if not properly handled. Moreover, the project will not be a significant user of energy and other natural resources. The proposed project ESMF will have necessary guidance to effectively manage any foreseeable pollution risks as well as it will spell out the preparation of necessary pollution prevention and management tools as specified under ESS3.

ESS4 Community Health and Safety



ESS4 is considered relevant to the Project. Inappropriate exposure to communities and gathering of people can expose the community workers that could lead to further spread of the disease. Lack of provision of medical services and PPE to disadvantaged or vulnerable people is also a potential risk under the project interventions. Some project activities may give rise to the risk of GBV, in particular, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and Sexual Harassment (SH) risks. The widespread distribution of food or cash resources also carries risk for GBV, as women who are eligible for aid maybe more vulnerable to being targeted. Furthermore , according to the United Nations Population Fund(UNFPA) since the beginning of the 'lockdown' there has been an increase in GBV incidents in Afghanistan. As mitigation measures, the Borrower will put measures in place to prevent or minimize the spread of the infectious disease/COVID-19 to the community. Emergency preparedness measures will also be developed and implemented to manage unlikely cases e.g. a fire response or natural phenomena event. Measures will be in place to ensure that individuals or groups who, because of their particular circumstances, may be disadvantaged or vulnerable have access to the development benefits resulting from the Project. The Borrower will operate quarantine and isolation centers in line with WHO guidelines. Such guidelines will be included in the ESMP. The Borrower will ensure the avoidance of any form of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse to any project worker and or the project beneficiaries. In case of involving the security personnel; it will be ensured that the security personnel follow a strict code of conduct in line with ESS4 and avoid any escalation of the situation as well as the potential stress related to it. Regarding security personnel; it will be ensured that the security personnel follow a strict code of conduct in line with ESS4 and avoid any escalation of the situation as well as the potential stress related to it. To mitigate this, the Borrower will seek to ensure that government security personnel deployed to provide security services act in a manner consistent with ESS 4, and encourage the relevant authorities to disclose the security arrangements for the Borrower's facilities to the public, subject to overriding security concerns.

ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

No land will be either temporarily or permanently acquired for this project. There will be no physical or economic displacement.

ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

No construction or rehabilitation activities are expected in this project. Hence, likely impacts of the project on natural resources and biodiversity are low. However, if medical and chemical wastes are not properly disposed of, they can have impacts on living natural resources. The procedures outlined in the infection control and waste management plan will describe how these impacts will be minimized.

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

ESS7 is not relevant to the project as there are no IP/SSAHUTLCs in Afghanistan as per standard definition of ESS7.

ESS8 Cultural Heritage

ESS8 is not relevant to the Project for the suggested project interventions



ESS9 Financial Intermediaries

This standard is not relevant for the suggested project interventions.

C. Legal Operational Policies that Apply

OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways

No

OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas

No

III. BORROWER’S ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL COMMITMENT PLAN (ESCP)

DELIVERABLES against MEASURES AND ACTIONs IDENTIFIED	TIMELINE
ESS 1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts	
a. The ESMF is to be prepared 30 days after project effectiveness Screening under the ESMF shall be conducted before the carrying out of Project activities that may have environmental and social implications. Until the ESMF is approved, the Project will apply the WHO standards and guidelines on COVID-19 response in a manner consistent with ESS 1.	07/2020
b. ESMPs including Infection prevention guidelines, guidelines for PPE use and disposal, Environmental Health and Safety guidelines , Occupational Health and Safety guidelines or any other instruments acceptable to the Association, will be prepared before beginning the relevant Project activities, and thereafter implemented throughout the implementation of such activities.	07/2020
ESS 10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure	
A draft SEP has been completed . It will be further updated and disclosed and adopted not later than 30 days after the Effective Date. The SEP will be implemented and updated throughout the Project implementation period.	07/2020
ESS 2 Labor and Working Conditions	
Labour management plan to be completed within 30 days of effectiveness and adapted. Sensitization in the code of conduct should be conducted prior to any project activity.	07/2020
ESS 3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management	
The proposed project ESMF will have necessary guidance to effectively manage any foreseeable pollution risks associated with it will spell out the preparation of necessary pollution prevention and management tools as specified under ESS3	07/2020
ESS 4 Community Health and Safety	

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The Borrower will operate quarantine and isolation centers in line with WHO guidelines. Such guidelines will be included in the ESMP. The Borrower will update the PIM/ Operating Manual with a plan to manage and monitor security forces	07/2020
ESS 5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement	
ESS 6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources	
ESS 7 Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities	
ESS 8 Cultural Heritage	
ESS 9 Financial Intermediaries	

B.3. Reliance on Borrower’s policy, legal and institutional framework, relevant to the Project risks and impacts

Is this project being prepared for use of Borrower Framework? No

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

The borrower Framework is not being used in this project

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IV. CONTACT POINTS

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Borrower/Client/Recipient

Borrower: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Implementing Agency(ies)

Implementing Agency: Kabul Municipality

V. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT



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VI. APPROVAL

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