



# Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary

## Concept Stage

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

Date Prepared/Updated: 01/23/2024 | Report No: ESRSC04055



I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Operation Data

Operation ID	Product	Operation Acronym	Approval Fiscal Year
P504420	Investment Project Financing (IPF)	INSON Project	2024
Operation Name	Uzbekistan INnovative SOcial Protection System for inclusiON of Vulnerable People Project		
Country/Region Code	Beneficiary country/countries (borrower, recipient)	Region	Practice Area (Lead)
Uzbekistan	Uzbekistan	EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA	Social Protection & Jobs
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Republic of Uzbekistan	National Agency for Social Protection	19-Feb-2024	24-May-2024
Estimated Concept Review Date	Total Project Cost		
24-Jan-2024	100,000,000.00		

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Proposed Development Objective

To improve the equitable access and quality of social services and benefits for vulnerable people in Uzbekistan.

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 consists of three inter-related components aiming to strengthen Uzbekistan's social protection delivery system and improve the coverage and quality of social services and benefits. Component 1 will contribute to improving the integrated provision of social protection by (1) supporting development of the NASP's social protection IT platform, operations of INSON centers, the methodology and business procedures for social case management; and (2) enhancing the capacity of the social protection system to respond to shocks, which includes development of Adaptive



Social Protection (ASP) policy and legislation, improvement of the targeting system and needs assessment for the Low Income Family Allowance (LIFA) Program, and expansion of the functions of the social registry and the broader IT platform to make them more responsive to shocks. Component 2 will contribute to improving coverage and quality of social services through (1) developing some concepts of care services, providing community-based social services; supporting survivors of gender-based violence; and (2) designing and piloting activation and economic inclusion services for vulnerable people. Component 3 will focus on strengthening the NASP capacity through improving its management information system (MIS), M&E functions, and communication. The project includes a Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC) to help the Government quickly deploy the project's uncommitted funds to respond should a crisis occur.

## 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 project interventions will be country-wide (14 provinces and 200 districts). Despite the wide coverage of means-tested low-income family allowances (LIFA), only one in four poor families is receiving the benefit, and mechanisms are not in place to enable timely and inclusive responses to climate-induced disasters and other shocks.

The inclusion error (beneficiaries from the richest two quintiles) is high and comprises around 18 percent of total program beneficiaries. Between 2021 and 2023, almost 90 percent of the total beneficiaries had to apply between 2 and 4 times to be eligible, which indicates inefficiencies in the system. Predefined response mechanisms and operational procedures to activate the social benefits response in a timely manner during and after climate-related shocks are inexistent, nor are there information systems to strengthen crisis preparedness.

The provision of social care services is currently concentrated in residential institutions, characterized by poor quality and significant coverage gaps. Home care services are provided by community social assistant workers to less than 20 thousand people (mostly older persons with functional disorders and limited number of persons with disabilities); these services are provided only to lonely persons (without relatives) on free of charge basis.

### 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 primary implementing agency for the proposed project will be the National Agency for Social Protection (NASP) which was established in June 2023 to centralize social protection policy, implementation, monitoring, and evaluation. The NASP's ongoing interaction with the World Bank team has been marked by strong commitment, their staff have consistently demonstrated competence, efficiency, dedication, and a high level of proficiency in managing projects of similar scale and complexity. Assessment of the institutional capacity of the NASP shows that the NASP does not have prior performance under the Safeguard Policies or ESF. It is envisaged to establish PIU and dedicated Environmental and Social Specialists will be appointed.

NASP with the support of Bank will prepare by appraisal relevant ESF instruments based on the triggered ESSs, and social dimensions and risks related to the project will be embedded to the project's activities, particularly labor



management, stakeholder engagement, grievance management (including managing exclusion errors), and measures to promote inclusion of vulnerable groups. The Bank suggests the Borrower to consider the following areas during the preparation of ESF instruments:

- Stakeholder engagement
- Grievance management (as part of the broader system)
- Social inclusion, including registration processes
- Provision of appropriate services, especially those made available to people with disability, survivors of GBV, children, etc.

## 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]*

The environmental risk rating for the Project is assessed as Low. The project primarily focuses on social aspects, including the enhancement of social protection services and benefits for vulnerable populations nationwide in Uzbekistan, encompassing both urban and rural areas within a non-Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situation (FCAS) context. While the project's activities, such as social work, case management, and community-based care, are not inherently high-risk from an environmental perspective, there may be indirect environmental impacts, such as increased energy and resource demand due to expanded services. However, there is no foreseen construction of emissive infrastructure or energy-intensive activities. Uzbekistan's diverse ecosystems are not directly impacted, but climate change adaptation measures will be integrated to mitigate climate-related risks. PIU will monitor alignment with environmental and social priorities, and comprehensive safeguards will be developed to ensure compliance with Uzbekistan's environmental regulations and World Bank standards, mitigating any identified environmental risks.

#### A.2 Social Risk Rating

Moderate

*[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 social risk rating is classified as Moderate. "The overall social outcomes are expected to be positive and the project aims to address the existing systemic issues and gaps in the current social protection programs that result in the exclusion of vulnerable groups". Potential social implications are expected to be associated with lack of engagement with vulnerable groups, especially on certain policy and regulatory reforms and changes in the benefit package. Other risks envisaged may also stem from lack of appropriateness of support services to vulnerable groups, including survivors of GBV and violence, people with disability, etc. Adverse risks can be anticipated as residual risks due to poor implementation of the required measures. To mitigate these risks and to ensure strong engagement with the project beneficiaries, the following instruments is to be prepared: Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) checklist applicable to components where construction or reconstruction work is envisaged, Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Labour Management Procedures (LMP) as part of the ESMF checklist, SEA/SH prevention and response plan as a part of the ESMF checklist and the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), which includes the preparation of any follow-on mitigation plans agreed. SEP shall also include strategy for the

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dissemination of project information in a format accessible to relevant stakeholders, particularly to all categories of persons with disabilities.

*[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]*

Environmental and social (E&S) risks are assessed based on the draft PCN. Both E&S risks associated with this project are considered as moderate. Key social risks and impacts include limited accessibility for disabled persons during the project design and implementation, exclusion risks during the hiring of in social workers, impacts on worker and community health and safety during rehabilitation of centers, absence of inclusive grievance mechanism for workers and beneficiaries, especially persons with disabilities, and risks of SEA-SH in various project covered establishments, particularly affecting vulnerable women and children with disabilities. To mitigate these risks, the following instruments is to be prepared: ESMF checklist, and the ESCP by appraisal. The CERC will be designed as a mechanism for rapid response in the event of an eligible emergency, which can be activated upon request from the Government. ESMF may require a revision depending on the scope of CERC if activated.

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

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

During Project preparation the NASP will carry out stakeholder engagement activities including (i) identifying the Project stakeholders, making a distinction between those directly affected by the project and other interested parties, ; (ii) carrying out consultations with key stakeholders on project activities prior to appraisal; (iii) broaden the Grievance Mechanism (GM). During the preparation stage Borrower shall meet and get feedback from vulnerable groups and their representatives. Separate GM for Project workers under ESS2 will also be established. During implementation, NASP/PIU will hold annual public consultation with stakeholders on the implementation of the project and produce and publish an accessible annual report on the progress of the project. Above measures shall be included in the project’s stand alone SEP and ESCP which will be disclosed by appraisal. Engagement with stakeholders will continue throughout Project implementation as will be indicated in the ESCP.

**ESS2 - Labor and Working Conditions** Relevant

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

Project encompass direct and contracted workers. The direct workers could be either government civil servants or those deployed as ‘technical consultants’ by the project. While the former are governed by a set of civil services code, the latter will be by a set of mutually agreed contracts. Employees of implementing partners, are considered

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contracted workers under ESS 2. Civil works contracts will incorporate social and environmental mitigation measures (ESMP; the Environmental Health and Safety Guidelines; other referenced plans e.g., Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) etc.). All civil works contracts will include industry standard Codes of Conduct that include measures to prevent Gender Based Violence/ Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (GBV/SEA) and to avoid of the forced and child labor. A locally based project specific GRM, proportionate to the potential risks and impacts of the project, will be established. The GRM will be formally established by project effectiveness.

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

Relevant

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

While the project does not explicitly mention civil works, resource-intensive activities or pollution generation, it should consider resource-efficient practices and pollution prevention measures wherever applicable. This includes: - Promoting sustainable resource management in the delivery of social services. - Minimizing waste generation and pollution associated with project activities to reduce the environmental footprint.

**ESS4 - Community Health and Safety**

Relevant

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

The project's central focus on improving social protection services for vulnerable populations necessitates a strong commitment to community health and safety. Detailed steps should include: - Implementing robust safety measures to protect vulnerable communities during the delivery of services and benefits. - Ensuring that project activities do not pose health risks to vulnerable populations, including families, children, persons with disabilities, and older persons that the provisions of tailored and appropriate services to these groups based on their specific needs, challenges and risks. These measures will be consulted as part of the stakeholder engagement activities with these groups and their representatives.

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

Not Currently Relevant

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

ESS 5 is not currently relevant to the Project since all the reconstruction works will be implemented on the existing rehabilitation centers.

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

Not Currently Relevant

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

ESS6 is not currently relevant to the Project, since the project's activities do not involve infrastructure development or construction with potential biodiversity impact, given the frequent human presence and modifications at project sites.

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

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

Not relevant as there are no IP/SSAHUTLCs in Uzbekistan as per standard definition of ESS7.

**ESS8 - Cultural Heritage** Not Currently Relevant

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

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

**ESS9 - Financial Intermediaries** Not Currently Relevant

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

No involvement of Financial Intermediaries (FI) is proposed or envisaged in the project.

**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** No

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

Use of Borrower Framework has not been considered. The World Bank’s Environment and Social Framework (ESF) will apply to the project.

**Use of Common Approach** No

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

Not applicable

**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]*

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Environmental and social risks are assessed based on the draft PCN. Environmental risks associated with this project are assessed as low and social risks are considered moderate, with overall risk rate as Moderate.

Implementation of project activities under its three components are to improve the access, efficiency, and quality of social services and benefits for vulnerable people and implement a monitoring system. Potential environmental risks have been screened and are predictable, expected to be temporary, low in magnitude, and site specific. The expected environmental impacts associated with small scale civil works may include increased pollution due to improper care, handling and storage of construction material and waste, generation of excessive noise and dust levels, and health impacts related with inadequate disposal of asbestos-containing material. The Bank will also require adoption of adequate work-related health and safety practices (OHS aspects) during construction both for the construction workers and the office workers. The client will prepare an ESMP as part of the ESMF to identify, mitigate and monitor the environmental and social risks and impacts prior to the project appraisal and disclose the document both locally and at the World Bank.

Initial screening of social risks and impacts at project preparation stage reveals that: the interventions, by design, may not result in any adverse impacts. However, key social risks and impacts include limited accessibility for disabled persons during the project design and implementation, exclusion risks during the hiring of in social workers, impacts on worker and community health and safety during rehabilitation of centers, absence of inclusive grievance mechanism for workers and beneficiaries, especially persons with disabilities, and risks of SEA-SH in various project-covered establishments, particularly affecting vulnerable women and children with disabilities.

Mitigatory measure for the above risks is at the bottom of the hierarchy – anticipation and avoidance. Towards this, the client will undertake environmental and social assessment, including initial stakeholder engagement activities and results of which will be fed into designing. Overall, ESS1, ESS2, ESS4 and ESS10 will be triggered by project interventions.

To mitigate above risks the following instruments is to be prepared by the Borrower by appraisal: ESMF checklist, which includes Labor Management Procedures (LMP) and SEA/SH prevention and response plan as an annex. ESMF checklist will be applied for the components and activities where construction or reconstruction work is envisaged. Additionally, Borrower will prepare and submit to the Bank for review and no objection by appraisal standalone Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) which reflects the findings and comments from the stakeholder engagement meetings, and the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) which includes the preparation of any follow-on mitigation plans agreed. All above mentioned risks and mitigation measures shall be incorporated with relevant guidelines into the POM.

## 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]*

The following documents/actions would be required prior to Bank Appraisal for this operation to allow for an informed decision-making, commensurate with issues/risks identified during project preparation:

By appraisal:





- 1) Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF) checklist (to guide preparation and implementation of multiple sub-projects/building works located across the state for standardization/uniformity and to deal with a situation when sub-projects would be known after appraisal/Board presentation)
- 2) Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) which includes strategy for the dissemination of project information in a format accessible to relevant stakeholders, particularly to all categories of persons with disabilities.
- 3) Labor Management Procedure (LMP) as part of the ESMF checklist
- 4) Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP)
- 5) SEA/SH prevention and response plan as a part of the ESMF

Above documents is to be disclosed in line with requirements set forth in the World Bank policies on Disclosure.

Prior to Effectiveness:

- 1) Environmental and Social Safeguards management to be incorporated into the Project Operational Manual (POM)
- 2) Grievance Mechanism is established

During implementation:

- 1. Implement the SEP during preparation as well as implementation stages as agreed with the Bank in terms of content and time framework.
- 2. Implement mitigation measures set in the ESMF checklist including, labor management plans and SEA/SH prevention and response plan.
- 3. Monitor the progress made on implementing the agreed measures for mitigating social risks and report to the Bank.
- 4. Implement the agreed capacity building plans per ESCP.

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### III. CONTACT POINT

#### Contact Point

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### IV. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT



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**V. APPROVAL**

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