



Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary

Concept Stage

(**ESRS Concept Stage**)

Date Prepared/Updated: 02/15/2024 | Report No: ESRSC04076



I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Operation Data

Operation ID	Product	Operation Acronym	Approval Fiscal Year
P504421	Investment Project Financing (IPF)	RSPG	2024
Operation Name	Regional Solar Park of The Gambia		
Country/Region Code	Beneficiary country/countries (borrower, recipient)	Region	Practice Area (Lead)
Gambia, The	Gambia, The	WESTERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA	Energy & Extractives
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Ministry of Finance and Economic Affairs , Ministry of Finance and Petroleum	National Water and Electricity Company		31-May-2024
Estimated Concept Review Date	Total Project Cost		
29-Feb-2024	1,350,000.00		

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Proposed Development Objective

The Project Development Objective is to support the Government of The Gambia in piloting the implementation of a sustainable solar and battery energy storage system (BESS) competitive bidding program to mobilize private investments

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]

To support the Gambia develop a competitive solution for a regional solar park of 50MWp with Battery Energy Storage System (BESS) via a competitive tender process thereby mobilizing private sector investment into the energy sector. This



is the first phase of the operation earmarked for local consumption. A possible expansion to 150MWp is planned for potential exports to the sub-region.

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]

Component 1 of the RSPG will support the selection of an IPP through a competitive bidding process to develop a solar park. The site of the solar park has been identified and is near the Karantaba Village and Soma Town in the Jarra West District of the Lower River Region of The Gambia and very close to the Senegal-Gambia boundary. The proposed project is approximately 2.50 km away from the international border of Senegal. The nearest major town is Soma, about 1 km northwest of the project site. The proposed Project site is located at Latitude 13°25'54.37"N and Longitude 15°31'0.06"W. An ESIA and RAP have been prepared for the site under the WB financed IPF WAPP Project (P162580). These E&S instruments have been prepared under the Operational Policies of the World Bank. The ESIA has received the necessary environmental permits from the National Environment Agency (NEA) of The Gambia and non-objection from the Bank. The RAP was approved in October 2023 for the compensation of approximately 239 ha of land, used mainly for the cultivation of agriculture, held under private and/or customary tenure. In total, 17 landowners have been identified and there are 165 PAPs. The estimated budget of the RAP is 11,100,000 USD.

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 overall responsibility for the implementation of project activities will be under IPP. NAWEC and MOPE will facilitate/support IPP to get the necessary approval/permit/license from the relevant national authority in The Gambia. NAWEC will be responsible for implementing this recipient executed trust fund (RETF). NAWEC has previously worked on bank-financed project under the Safeguard Policies including the GERMP Project (P163568) that has developed a solar park and associated transmission lines. NAWEC also has a well-established Project Implementation Unit (PIU) staffed with Environmental and Social Experts that are experienced in implementing and monitoring environmental and social standards.

NAWEC will work in close collaboration with the NEA for ensuring compliance with national environmental laws, policies, and regulations. The responsibility of the NEA will be to exercise general supervision and coordination over all matters relating to the environment.

II. SCREENING OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISKS AND IMPACTS

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Moderate

A.1 Environmental 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 environmental risk classification of the proposed TA associated with the solar project is rated as moderate given that its deliverables are limited only to studies and do not include any infrastructure that could potentially generate direct adverse environmental impacts and risks. The TA activities do not themselves have direct adverse environmental impacts. However, the outcomes of the TA support could have important environmental impacts linked to the selection of project sites, the location and dimensions of infrastructure for the solar parks, and the construction, operation and dismantling of the solar plants as well as solar batteries and waste management.

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 is rated Moderate. The direct negative social impacts/risks of the TF are relatively limited and will be low risk. They relate to (i) the mobilization of transaction advisory consultants supporting NAWEC in implementing the TF activities; and (ii) the risk of failure to integrate E&S requirements in TORs and the TF-generated outputs (legal, procurement and technical documents). The TA activities do not themselves have direct adverse social impacts. However, the outcomes of the TA support could have important social impacts, including adverse impacts associated with land acquisition during preparation, labor and working conditions, and community health and safety concerns arising from worker influx for plant and substation construction and operation.

[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 trust fund grant will not finance any civil works or other activities that could potentially generate direct adverse social and environmental risks and impacts. Interactions between the physical, biological, and socio-economic components of the existing environment and the proposed solar project's environmental and social aspects were used to identify and evaluate the potential risks and impacts. The project and its key components will likely have environmental impacts on baseline parameters such as land use/land cover changes (conversion from agricultural land and Savana grassland to industrial), ambient air quality (dust emission), ambient noise quality, waste generation (solid, liquid, hazardous, and e-waste), aesthetic and visual impact, terrestrial flora, groundwater, occupational health and safety, community health and safety, and labor influx, etc., especially during the construction phase. The RSPG activities do not themselves have direct adverse social impacts.

ESS10 - Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

Relevant

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

The Project affected parties include implementing agencies at national level (NAWEC, NEA, Ministry of Land), regional level (OMVG), local authorities in the Lower River Region of The Gambia, private investors – IPPs and concerned communities. In addition, other interested parties include media, local/international NGO and development partners (such as the PTFs of the OMVG, MCC), construction companies, working in the same region. Consultations were undertaken as part of the development of the ESIA and RAP under the World Bank financed WAPP project. The SEP used for WAPP will be revised to include pertinent sections on stakeholder engagement for the Solar Park component. The ESCP will also include stakeholder engagement requirements for the trust fund development. Stakeholder engagement and consultations will be conducted throughout the project cycle. The SEP, along with other E&S instruments, will be subject to public consultation and disclosure per requirements of ESS10.

ESS2 - Labor and Working Conditions

Relevant

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

The TF's primary activity will be to finance the IPP and its sub-consultants prepare the project bidding documents for the solar park. There are potential for labor management issues related to pay, working conditions and occupational health and safety issues (including SEA/SH). The ESCP will include specific labor management directives to be implemented in the project, with specific timelines and monitoring measures. NAWEC will be required to make that the IPP implements strong labor management requirements in line with ESS2 and national laws throughout the duration of the TF. NAWEC must include these conditions in their main contract with the IPP and ensure that the IPP includes the same standards for all sub-consultant contracts. Failure to meet these obligations should have financial repercussions in their contract. In addition, NAWEC employees working on the RETF, the IPP and all of its agent, and any other persons working on the sub-project must sign a CoC and receiving training.

ESS3 - Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

Relevant

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

The Project itself has no direct adverse impact of pollution, as it is a TA. It has significant indirect positive impacts due to reduction of water generation and GHG emission. Given the scale of the infrastructure development for the solar parks, construction and operation of solar power plants, significant use of materials and resources including water and energy would not be expected. It is also anticipated that the project will not generate significant amount of GHG emissions during construction and operation. During construction phase which is not financed by the TA, there will be some negative environmental and social impacts including, air quality deterioration due to dust and exhaust emissions during construction activities. Increased traffic flow towards subproject site could be a nuisance to nearby communities. There are chances of water quality deterioration, in particular during rainy season, due to spills from construction equipment.

ESS4 - Community Health and Safety

Relevant

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

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The Project is financing TA activities. The Project activities have no direct impacts on community health and safety as it is a TA. The major community health and safety risks associated with the project are limited to the construction stage. NAWEC will ensure that the IPP has measures in place for road safety as part of their contract. They will also implement a Code of Conduct to be signed by the IPP and all of their agents that presents appropriate the expectation of appropriate conduct, including non-tolerance of EAS/HS. ESS4 requirements will be included in the ESCP and the different tender documents.

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

Relevant

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

A RAP has been prepared for the RSPG activities under the WAPP project (P162580) in line with OP 4.12. It has been validated by the national approval process. The RAP has not been implemented, and it will not be implemented until after the TA activities are completed. The IPP will make sure that all bidding documents, including for RAP implementation and construction, include E&S clauses that are in line with the ESF.

ESS6 - Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

Relevant

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

The Project is financing TA activities, it is not expected that any adverse impact on biodiversity. However, project activities, during the construction phase will lead to vegetation removal, damage on habitat for terrestrial fauna. Project planning should be ensured that the project takes appropriate measures to minimize potential impacts on biodiversity.

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

Not Currently Relevant

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

This standard is not relevant as there are no groups and individuals that meet ESS7 criteria.

ESS8 - Cultural Heritage

Relevant

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

It is not expected that TA activities will have any negative impact on cultural heritage. The Project will make sure that all bidding documents, including those for the construction contractor, will have a chance- find procedure. This will be included in the ESCP for the RETF.

ESS9 - Financial Intermediaries

Not Currently Relevant

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

This standard is not relevant as this TA does not involve financial intermediaries.

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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]

The project will not rely on the Borrower’s Framework but will comply with all environmental and social laws, policies and regulations.

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]

Interactions between the physical, biological, and socio-economic components of the existing environment and the proposed solar project's environmental and social aspects were used to identify and evaluate the potential risks and impacts. The project and its key components are likely to have had environmental impacts on baseline parameters such as land use/land cover changes (conversion from agricultural land and Savana grassland to industrial), ambient air quality (dust emission), ambient noise quality, waste generation (solid, liquid, hazardous, and e-waste), aesthetic and visual impact, terrestrial flora, groundwater, land acquisition and physical and economic displacement, occupational health and safety, community health and safety, and labor influx, etc., especially during the construction phase.

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 Project ESCP will be developed, approved and disclosed,

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The SEP will be reviewed and redisclosed.

III. CONTACT POINT

Contact Point

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IV. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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V. APPROVAL

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