

INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET

IDENTIFICATION / CONCEPT STAGE

Report No.: ISDSC13142

Date ISDS Prepared/Updated: 13-May-2015

I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country:	Armenia	Project ID:	P155630
Project Name:	Implementation of the National Strategy Program for Strengthening of the National Statistical System		
Team Leader(s):	Gregory Kisunko, Moritz Meyer		
Estimated Date of Approval:	30-Sep-2016		
Managing Unit:	GGO15	Lending Instrument:	Lending Instrument
Sector(s):	Central government administration (60%), General public administration sector (20%), General information and communications sector (20%)		
Theme(s):	Other public sector governance (50%), Poverty strategy, analysis and monitoring (25%), Managing for development results (25%)		
Financing (in USD Million)			
Total Project Cost:	3.00	Total Bank Financing:	0.00
Financing Gap:	0.00		
Financing Source			Amount
Borrower			0.00
Program to Support Statistical Capacity Building in ECA			3.00
Total			3.00
Environment Category:	C - Not Required		

B. Project Development Objective(s)

The overall objective of the proposed project is to further improve the capacity of statistical system of Armenia and technical capacity of the staff at NSS to produce and disseminate relevant, reliable and timely statistics in a cost-effective manner that are in line with international standards and will be responsive to user needs.

C. Project Description

The NSSRA has been open to reforms and follows international good practices such as the preparation of a three-year work program guiding strategic and priority capacity building activities. The strategic directions of the work program are reflected in the annual program adopted by the State Council on Statistics.

The NSSRA was one of the first subscribers to the IMF's Special Data Dissemination Standards among the CIS countries. The NSSRA makes data available through the website (www.armdevinfo.am) that offers user-friendly ways to submit database queries, create tables, charts and maps. The technical assistance and financial support provided by various international organizations and donors, such as the World Bank, the IMF, European Union, UNSD, UNFPA, and SIDA, have resulted in substantial progress in the development and improvement of the statistical system, and modernization of statistical methodologies in different areas.

Yet there remain several areas for further improvement. In 2009, an assessment led by the European Commission (Eurostat), UNECE, and European Free Trade Agreement, identified strengths as well as areas where further work was needed. These shortcomings will be addressed through advisory services, training, and Trust funded technical assistance from the World Bank, the EU Twinning Facility, UNDP and other partners.

i. Institutional environment: The assessment found that the NSSRA has a strong and clear mandate for collecting and disseminating administrative and sample survey data. Two challenges identified were a) lack of a quality management and training system, and insufficient resources in the regional offices, and b) limited development and renewal of the IT equipment, despite good staffing, which in turn reduces staff efficiency.

ii. Coverage and quality of statistical thematic areas: The assessment noted the large number of statistics produced in a timely manner using both administrative and survey approaches. The assessment also noted that the NSSRA broadly follows international classification systems. However, the statistics in the following areas need further work to be consistent with international systems: demographic outcomes, labor markets, education and health, environment, transport, business registry, national accounts, and prices indices.

iii. Overall recommendations: The assessment concluded that within the national statistical system, the NSSRA has a strong coordinating role, especially since the management of the NSSRA also acts as the State Council on Statistics with specific legislative power. The agency also has regular contacts with data users and other stakeholders. The assessment recommended that the NSSRA could further strengthen consultations with users, respondents, and other stakeholders. Another finding was that the agency was fragmented and organized in a multiplicity of very small units. This was viewed as a major challenge to managing human resources in the organization. The assessment also recommended that the NSSRA do its part to promote evidence-based decision making and trust in state statistics by undertaking activities that increase statistical literacy among data users.

D. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

E. Borrower's Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

F. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

II. SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
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Environmental Assessment OP/ BP 4.01	No	
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	No	
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	
Physical Cultural Resources OP/ BP 4.11	No	
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	No	
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	No	
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	

III. SAFEGUARD PREPARATION PLAN

Appraisal stage ISDS required?: No

IV. APPROVALS

Team Leader(s):	Name: Gregory Kisunko, Moritz Meyer	
<i>Approved By:</i>		
Safeguards Advisor:	Name: Agnes I. Kiss (SA)	Date: 11-Nov-2015
Practice Manager/ Manager:	Name: Adrian Fozzard (PMGR)	Date: 12-Nov-2015

¹ Reminder: The Bank's Disclosure Policy requires that safeguard-related documents be disclosed before appraisal (i) at the InfoShop and (ii) in country, at publicly accessible locations and in a form and language that are accessible to potentially affected persons.