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Project Information Document/ Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet (PID/ISDS)

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 23-Sep-2016 | Report No: PIDISDSC18753



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country India	Project ID P160331	Parent Project ID (if any)	Project Name Achieving Excellence and Equity in Higher Education in Odisha (P160331)
Region SOUTH ASIA	Estimated Appraisal Date Mar 08, 2017	Estimated Board Date Aug 31, 2017	Practice Area (Lead) Education
Lending Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Department of Economic Affairs	Implementing Agency Department of Higher Education	

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Proposed Development Objective(s)

The development objective of the proposed project is to improve the quality and equitable access of participating higher education institutions and to improve effectiveness of the higher education system in Odisha.

Financing (in USD Million)

Financing Source	Amount
Borrower	51.00
International Development Association (IDA)	119.00
Total Project Cost	170.00

Environmental Assessment Category B-Partial Assessment	Concept Review Decision Track II-The review did authorize the preparation to continue
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Other Decision (as needed)



B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

India, a lower middle income country with a Gross Domestic Product (GDP) per capita of US\$ 1,582 (current 2015 US\$), has become one of the world's fastest growing economies. India experienced high economic growth over the past five years, with GDP growth rate averaging 5.4 percent from 2011-15¹. Despite the challenges of drought, flattening private investments and declining exports, GDP growth accelerated to 7.6 percent year on year in FY16. Rapid growth has been accompanied by a significant reduction in poverty levels and improved human development outcomes.

India will soon have the largest and youngest workforce the world has ever seen. The demographic dynamics and a rising age-savings profile are likely to generate significant volumes of savings and investment over the coming years. It is essential that this increase in the availability of capital is complemented by higher worker productivity to result in higher incomes. The average schooling of the working age population, and consequently worker productivity, will increase by at least a full year until 2030 even with no further improvements in the educational attainment of today's youth simply because younger cohorts are better educated.

A key challenge India faces is that the growth and the attendant improvements in human development outcomes has been distributed unevenly and there are significant inequalities, including across states and social groups. The seven low income states (LIS)², in particular, lag behind on key indicators. As of 2011, 39.5 percent of the population in the LIS was poor against the national average of 23.6 percent³, and per capita Gross State Domestic Product (GSDP) was US\$494 in LIS against US\$1,410 nationally in 2011. Further, other than the states of Bihar and Rajasthan, the LIS have grown at a slower rate than other states since 2005. Poverty reduction in these states has also been less responsive to growth than in the rest of the country, which can be attributed, at least in part, to poor human development outcomes in these states. Among social groups, poverty rates are highest for the Scheduled Tribes (STs)⁴ who also lag behind on education outcomes, particularly at the secondary and higher education levels. The STs have shown the least improvement in intergenerational mobility in education and also display the worst indicators of child nutrition and mortality⁵.

The vision of India's 12th Five Year Plan (2012-17) is "Faster, sustainable, and more inclusive growth" with strong emphasis on increasing the supply of highly-skilled workers to drive the economy, as well as helping low-income states catch up with their more advanced neighbors. The Government of India (GoI) has developed an ambitious plan to transform India into a competitive, high growth, and high productive middle-income country. Improving the quality and market relevance of tertiary education with more equitable access for ST, Scheduled Castes (SC) and women is a key component of the GoI's overall effort to improve the country's competitiveness and address inequalities.

The state of Odisha is one of the LIS located in the Eastern coast with a population of 43.7 million. Income from agriculture, forestry and fishery, on which most of the poor depends, remains volatile and excessively dependent on rainfall. In 2015-16, the state's economy grew at a real growth rate of 6.24 percent at market prices with 2011-12 as

¹ CAGR calculated using GDP at constant (2011-12) prices.

² Bihar, Chhattisgarh, Jharkhand, Madhya Pradesh, Odisha, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh.

³ HCR based on a poverty line of \$1.25 per day (2005 PPP).

⁴ 46 percent in 2011.

⁵ The World Bank Group India Country Partnership Strategy 2013-2017.



the newly revised base year. With a per capita income of US\$1150 in 2014-2015⁶, Odisha is among the poorest states in India, and has grown below the national average since 2005. The state has performed better in terms of poverty reduction, 8.2 million poor people moved out of poverty between 2005 and 2012, moving Odisha from a rank of 30 in 2004 to 25 in 2012 amongst Indian states⁷. STs comprise 22.8 percent of the state's population, against an average of 8.6 percent nationally. The poverty rate of STs in Odisha is the highest nationally, at 63 percent, and educational attainment for STs is particularly poor with only 2.1 percent of STs in Odisha having completed higher education (HE), against 13.7 percent of the general category population⁸.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

India has made significant progress in expanding access to primary and secondary education over the past decade.

Access to primary education is nearly universal, with more than 98 percent of the school age population having access to a primary school. Despite disparities by State, income and gender, the overall transition rate at the national level is now at 89.7 percent from primary to upper primary schools and at 92.6 percent from upper primary to secondary. The secondary education gross enrolment rate is 74 percent. At the primary and secondary levels, the policy focus is increasingly on quality of education and learning outcomes.

HE in India has been expanding rapidly, but the enrolment rate lags compared to BRICs or middle income countries.

Enrolment has almost tripled from 8.4 million in 2001 to 22.5 million in 2014-15 with the gross enrolment rate (GER) of 23.6 percent. While this is comparable to the average of lower-middle income countries (23.2 percent), it is lower compared to other BRICs or relatively large middle income countries such as Brazil (33 percent), China (30.2 percent), Indonesia (31.3 percent), Malaysia (38.5 percent), Mexico (29.2 percent), Russia (78 percent).

The HE system in India today suffers from many shortcomings, especially the state universities and colleges which enroll about 90 percent of the students.

In addition to very low access to HE in general, there are wide disparities between various social groups. The Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) for SCs, STs and Other Backward Class (OBCs) are far below the average GER and those of other social groups. There is also a wide gender disparity; GER for males is 20.9 percent while that for females is only 16.5 percent. There are also differences in the quality of institutions and enrolments between rural and urban areas and between developed states and less developed ones. There are a series of governance challenges beyond the limited autonomy for colleges. The affiliation system⁹ has reduced the relationship between affiliating universities and affiliated colleges to a minimalistic administrative one. One consequence is that a single university with hundreds of colleges affiliated to it imposes the same curriculum and examinations on all; individual colleges cannot adapt curricula to the needs and interests of their students. Further, quality assurance processes at the level of the affiliating universities are often weak, affiliation related inspection are infrequent and affiliation criteria are poorly enforced.

To address these issues the GoI has launched a HE scheme Rashtriya Uchhatar Shiksha Abhiyan (RUSA) in 2014 to improve the quality of state universities and government colleges across India.

RUSA foresaw four key changes: (a) funding will be more impact and result oriented, (b) various equity related schemes will be integrated for a higher impact, (c) instead of unplanned expansion, there will be a focus on consolidating and developing the existing system by adding capacities and (d) there will be a greater focus on research and innovation. In reality, the first two years of implementation hardly addresses these key changes as more than 95 percent of the RUSA funding has gone to infrastructure funding. In Odisha, about INR4.29 billion (US\$64 million) for infrastructure development at nine state

⁶ Ministry of Statistics and Program Implementation 2015.

⁷ Odisha Economic Survey 2015-16, Government of Odisha, 2016.

⁸ Calculated using NSS 68th round (2011-12) data.

⁹ Colleges in India are affiliated to universities, which are responsible for curricula and examinations in their affiliated colleges. Affiliations are conditional upon colleges meeting criteria (usually related to infrastructure and faculty) laid down by the affiliating universities.



universities and 127 government and government-aided colleges have been approved to receive support under RUSA over the next three years for infrastructure development.

The HE system in Odisha faces several challenges. First, the GER at 17.5 percent is low compared to national average (23.6 percent) and there are major inequalities in access to HE in Odisha across gender and minority groups. The majority of students (639,000) are in the 1,054 degree colleges and the remaining 90,000 students are in 18 universities including 12 state/public universities, 1 central university, 2 deemed universities, and 3 private universities. 43 percent of the college students in Odisha are attending government-aided and block grant colleges and 20 percent of the students are enrolled in private un-aided colleges. GER for female students was 15.7 percent, 11.7 percent for SC students and 7.6 percent for ST students in Odisha in 2014-15 compared to national ratios of 22.7 percent, 18.5 percent and 13.3 percent respectively. The high incidence of poverty amongst SC and ST, combined with the outdated HE curricula with poor market relevance and, consequently, low private returns to HE are important factors behind low enrolment rates for these groups.

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Second, the system in Odisha is facing multifaceted governance challenges. The decision-making processes on administrative and financial matters are highly centralized in the GoO's Department of Higher Education (DHE) and most of the academic matters for the affiliated colleges are centrally managed by the affiliating universities. For instance, only 7 percent of the total expenditures on HE in the state of Odisha is made directly by the Higher Education Institutions (HEIs) as per their own priorities as 93 percent of the expenditures are made directly by the DHE. The similar figures at the national level are 43 percent and 57 percent. Affiliating universities are burdened with administrative responsibilities for their affiliated colleges (e.g. Utkal University has more than 300 affiliated colleges) which makes it difficult for them to attend to the varied needs of individual colleges. There are thus few interactions between the colleges and the university except that the affiliating universities provide most of the curriculum, conduct examination and declare results.

Third, there are growing concerns on quality and relevance of HE in Odisha. Only 162 of more than thousand affiliated colleges in Odisha have National Assessment and Accreditation Council (NAAC) accreditation with only six colleges having A grade status. One of the factors for insufficient quality is shortage of qualified teaching staff at HEIs. In March 2014, the Comptroller and Auditor General Report noted that 42 percent of teaching posts in government colleges, 35 percent in universities and 15 percent in government-aided colleges were vacant. Since then the GoO has made an effort to recruit new teachers. However, there are still a sizeable number of vacancies especially in districts with high number of STs. Another factor is lack of professional development opportunities for the teaching staff. Few teaching staff receive updated training in their disciplines and pedagogical training. Existing training facilities also remain inadequate and under-developed for the large pool of teachers in HEIs. In addition, lack of relevance of HE and highly skilled jobs is hindering the employability of college and university graduates. According to the National Sample Survey (66th Round), 43 percent of post-graduate degree holders and 23 percent of under-graduate degree holders in Odisha were unemployed. The curriculum at universities and colleges needs to be updated to incorporate relevant skills development (job specific/technical skills, soft skills, computer literacy, on-the-job industrial training) to make the students more job-market ready and job oriented.

Lastly, there are inadequate resources for HE in Odisha. Odisha's per capita expenditure on HE for population between 18-23 years old is INR 2,700 (approximately US\$ 40.3), compared to the national average of INR 3,865 (approximately US\$ 57.7). Odisha spends about 0.5 percent of its GSDP on HE (both plan and non-plan, for revenue and capital expenditure) which is grossly inadequate to support the expanding HE system in the state.



In 2014-15, the Bank carried out technical assistance for the Department of Higher Education under the Odisha Non-Lending Technical Assistance (NLTA). The capacity building activities resulted in two reports 'Governance for Quality in Higher Education in Odisha' and 'Financial Analysis and Performance Based Funding of Higher Education Institutions in Odisha' and several stakeholder workshops. The two reports concluded that there are systemic challenges in HE for which adequate responses are needed in the form of expanding the HE system in a sustainable way, eschewing ad hoc short-term solutions; taking on board complex issues of quality and relevance; addressing inequalities of access and outcomes; and putting into practice more decentralized and flexible government structures and management practices.

Relationship to CPF

The proposed operation is closely aligned to and supports the Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) for 2013-17, specifically, in the engagement areas related to integration and inclusion. Both engagement areas foresee an expansion of quality HE opportunities for graduates who will be more readily employable in the labor market, given that continued economic growth for India will require more skilled worker. The operation will place special focus on improving equitable access to and quality of HE with integration of appropriate skills development for students from STs and those from other disadvantaged communities in some of the most backward tribal districts. Further, it supports the CPS strategy of working in a low income state.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

The development objective of the proposed project is to improve the quality and equitable access of participating higher education institutions and to improve effectiveness of the higher education system in Odisha.

Key Results

The project is likely to track the following key results to be refined during preparation:

- Number of institutions participating in the 'university and college governance score card' benchmarking exercise [effectiveness and quality]
- Increase in the share of women, ST and SC in supported HEIs [equitable access]
- Improved satisfactory scores of beneficiaries (students and faculty) in supported HEIs [quality, effectiveness of the system]
- Number of institutions with operational internal quality assurance cells [quality]
- Number of autonomous colleges [effectiveness of the system, quality]

D. Concept Description

1. Description

The proposed Project contributes to the Bank's twin goals of eliminating extreme poverty and boosting shared prosperity by improving access to and retention in higher education, including for students in disadvantaged areas and tribal communities, and by ultimately improving their employability. These objectives will be achieved through the combination of a more relevant curricula aligned with labor market needs, high-end infrastructure and learning facilities, more qualified professors, and an enhanced management of the system. The supply side and institutional interventions



supported by the project are complemented by demand-side interventions such as communication campaigns, information and awareness programs on the employment prospects of tertiary programs, and the scholarship programs for the poorest financed by GoO. Together, these interventions are expected to improve higher education especially for the lower quintiles of the population.

It is proposed that the project will use an Investment Project Financing (IPF) lending instrument. The project will have two components: (i) Improving equitable access to and quality in participating institutions and (ii) Technical assistance. While Component 2 would follow transaction-based disbursement, Component 1 would use a Results-Based Financing (RBF) modality. Disbursements would be made upon achievement of pre-specified results as measured by Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs). Disbursement would be made against selected (eligible) key budget line items. The first component will support two sub-components: (i) Institutional development and (ii) Increasing effectiveness of the higher education system. The second component on Technical Assistance (TA) will focus on technical support to the DHE on project management, monitoring and evaluation, and setting up of robust management information systems for the project.

Component 1: Enhancing equitable access to and quality in participating institutions

This component will have two sub-components:

Sub-component 1.1: Institutional Development of Participating Institutions:

This will focus on the following areas:

- 1) Institutional Development Grant support to selected colleges:** The project will directly fund approximately 70 colleges out of about 300 government and government-aided across the state of with about 20 out of 46 colleges in the 11 tribal dominated districts will be selected. The Grants will on average be US\$ 1.5M. Eligibility and selection criteria will be determined by the DHE. The criteria will be designed to ensure that each participating college meets the minimum requirements (such as a full-time principal, sufficient faculty etc.) to enable effective implementation. To ensure adequate representation of colleges in tribal districts, lower eligibility criteria will apply to these colleges. To be selected for grant support, the shortlisted colleges will develop an Institutional Development Plan (IDP) with performance indicators that are time-bound and measurable with substantial capacity building support.
- 2) Revision of existing curricula and development of innovative curricula:** The Project will engage the affiliating universities to revise existing curricula and course offerings to make them more relevant and linked to the needs of the job market, with integration of Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) and relevant skills development programs.
- 3) Establishing Internal Quality Assurance Units:** The affiliating state universities will support the participating colleges to conceptualize, plan and conduct self-assessments and establishing a process of continuous quality improvement of teaching and learning.
- 4) Strengthening of staff development programs:** Various approaches will be used to enable faculty from universities and colleges to access continuous professional development programs - blended models of face to face training, on line training programs such as Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs), Open Educational Resources (OERs) and networking platforms between different colleges and institutions.
- 5) Development of Centers of Excellence (CoE) under the State Higher Education Council (SHEC):** The Project will support the creation of CoE under the model of a consortium of several HEIs which agree to combine efforts in a particular field of research. The CoEs will also support specialized training at the postgraduate level



and provide opportunities for doctoral students to engage in cutting edge research. The SHEC will fund and manage the selection of the CoEs based on competitive criteria.

Sub-component 1.2: Strengthen governance and management of higher education institutions

The following activities will be included under this sub-component:

- 1) **Governance benchmarking analysis aiming at increasing the number of autonomous colleges:** An initial governance benchmarking, in conjunction with the IDP, will serve as a basis to support actions aimed at improving areas in which significant weaknesses are identified. Participating institutions will receive a benchmarking report covering a diagnostics of five dimensions of institutional performance (Context, Mission and Goals, Management, Autonomy, Accountability, and Participation) and will have access to an online tool allowing them to compare their performance with other institutions. A second benchmarking diagnostics will be conducted in the final stage of the project. These institutions will also become members of an international network of institutions participating on the same initiative aimed at sharing best practices. Based on results of the benchmarking analysis, the best performing colleges will be supported to obtain NAAC accreditation and become autonomous colleges approved by the University Grant Commission (UGC).
- 2) **Strengthening HR management systems:** In addition to the professional development of the teachers, the project will strengthen the HR management system at both the state and institutional level to enable filling up of vacant teaching posts and systemic reforms in faculty appraisal systems, career progression and promotion mechanisms, including faculty satisfaction surveys.
- 3) **Support for student examination system reform:** The Project will work with affiliating universities, through the State Higher Education Council (SHEC), to improve the process of exam setting and put in place a more efficient and transparent grading system, drawing upon the experience of other universities in India and abroad that have successfully implemented examination reform.
- 4) **Student Scholarship and Loans:** The Project will support the efficient implementation of existing student scholarships and loan schemes (various GoO departments administer targeted scholarship schemes for women, SC, ST, and low-income groups e.g. the GoO's new loan scheme for low-income groups called Kalinga Shikshya Sathi Yojana at 1 percent interest rate) in the context of improving equitable access. The Project will recommend changes to the design, targeting and implementation strategies of these schemes based on a comprehensive evaluation of their effectiveness.

Component 2: Technical Assistance

This component will strengthen the capacity of the DHE and the HEIs to implement the project. Support under this component will cover capacity building (on development of IDP, governance bench marking analysis), monitoring and evaluation, policy research (analysis on existing student scholarships and loan schemes), communication program management, and building a MIS for the higher education sector. Policy studies would include tracer studies and beneficiary feedback surveys of staff and students of institutions and programs supported by the Project.

SAFEGUARDS

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

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The project will be implemented in the state of Odisha. While the capacity building initiatives under the project will reach all higher education institutions in the state, the bulk of direct grant support will be limited to about 70 Government supported colleges. These colleges will also be spread across the state and about 20 of them will be located in the 11 backward districts of the state (8 districts in the Kalahandi – Balangir – Koraput Region, as well as 3 additional tribal districts of Kandhamal, Boudh and Gajapati).

The salient physical characteristics of this location, relevant to the environmental safeguard analysis are:

- **Forests:** The state of Odisha has about 37.34% of its geographic area under forest. The protected areas in the state cover 5.34% of its geographic area and include 19 wildlife sanctuaries, 1 national park, 2 tiger reserves and 3 elephant reserves. 14 elephant corridors have also been identified in the state.
- **Disasters:** The state has a 480 km coastline and is prone to tropical cyclones, storm surges, tsunamis as well as riverine flooding. A large part of the state comes under Earthquake Risk Zone-II (Low Damage Risk Zone), while some parts come under Earthquake Risk Zone-III (Moderate Damage Risk Zone).

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According to the 2011 Census, 22.85% and 17.13% of the population in Odisha belongs to ST and SC categories, respectively. According to the Ministry of Tribal Affairs, 13 of the existing 63 tribes belong to the Particularly Vulnerable Tribal Groups category. Entire districts of Mayurbhanj, Sundargarh, Koraput, Malkangiri, Nabarangapur and Rayagada, and some blocks from Sambalpur, Keonjhar, Khondamal, Balliguda, Ganjam and Balasore are identified as Scheduled Areas of the state.

The significant presence of disadvantaged groups in Odisha underscores the need for Borrowers and Bank staff to identify indigenous peoples, consult with them, ensure that they participate in, and benefit from Bank-funded operations in a culturally appropriate way. This is in synergy with the project’s objective to ensure equitable access to higher education for students belonging to disadvantaged communities.

B. Borrower’s Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

The Department of Higher Education (DHE), Government of Odisha is the key implementing agency for the project, and will establish a Project Management Unit (PMU) to manage the project implementation. The DHE has no prior experience in implementation of Bank projects and related safeguards management. While the implementation arrangements for the civil works to be supported under the project are yet to be finalized, the Public Works Department (PWD), Government of Odisha is likely to be involved. The PWD has prior experience in implementation of Bank projects (in the road sector). A plan for capacity enhancement of the DHE and PWD for the project’s safeguards management will be developed as part of the project preparation. The PMU will consider recruiting a social development/safeguard specialist for implementation of the social management framework and the Indigenous People’s Plan.

C. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Neha Pravash Kumar Mishra, Kalyani Kandula, Kanchan Rajeevsingh Parmar

D. Policies that might apply

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
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Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	<p>The project will involve support to higher education institutions (HEIs) across the state based on participatory Institution Development Plans (IDPs). The IDPs could include a limited amount of infrastructure development such as construction of additional classrooms/hostels, refurbishment of existing ones, purchase of equipment, etc., within the existing campuses of the identified HEIs. There could be environmental issues associated with the design, construction, operation and maintenance of the infrastructure works – such as poor ventilation, inadequate sanitation facilities, unreliable energy access, etc. The impacts are site-specific and can be mitigated with proper planning, design and execution.</p>
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	TBD	<p>As the project involves sub-projects (implementation of the IDPs) whose location and nature cannot be fully identified at the preparation stage, an Environmental Management Framework (EMF) has been chosen as the instrument to meet the EA requirement, and will be prepared as part of project preparation. The EA will also include an assessment of climate risk and an identification of the required mitigation measures.</p> <p>All the civil works to be supported as part of the project will be located on existing campuses of the HEIs and will not involve any forest land or other natural habitats. However, it is likely that some of the HEIs may be located in close proximity of forests or other important natural habitats (such as wetlands). The EA will examine this aspect and if any of the HEIs are located in close proximity of forests or other important natural habitats, OP 4.04 will be triggered.</p>
Forests OP/BP 4.36	TBD	<p>All the civil works to be supported as part of the IDPs will be located on existing campuses of the HEIs and will not involve any forest land. However, it is likely that some of the HEIs may be located in close proximity of forests. The EA will examine this aspect and if any of the HEIs are located in close proximity of forests, OP 4.36 will be triggered.</p>
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	No	
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	Yes	<p>While the capacity building initiatives under the project will reach all higher education institutions in the state, the direct grant support will be limited to about 70 Government supported colleges which will</p>



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include colleges in backward districts of the state.

In adherence to the requirements of OP 4.10, the project is required to prepare a detailed Indigenous People Development Plan(IPDP)/ Tribal development Plan(TDP) in the first year of implementation based on a Social Assessment which will be prepared as a part of project preparation.

This assessment will analyse the needs of the tribal population, identify existing gaps within the purview of the project and suggest measures and recommendations towards ensuring equitable access for disadvantaged groups.

The project will involve support to higher education institutions (HEIs) across the state based on participatory Institution Development Plans (IDPs). Civil works focussing on infrastructure upgradation, such as building extra classrooms, refurbishment of hostel facilities, labs, computer rooms, etc. are expected under the project. However no requirement for land acquisition or land transfer is foreseen. In case of civil works to be undertaken under the project, the possibility of presence of makeshift structures/squatters cannot be completely ruled out. While the project intends to avoid any impact resulting in loss of shelter, assets or livelihoods, screening through a checklist is being suggested to identify such impact in advance, if any and undertake avoidance/mitigation measures in accordance with OP 4.12

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

E. Safeguard Preparation Plan

Tentative target date for preparing the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

Feb 28, 2017

Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing should be specified in the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

The safeguard studies that are being undertaken include preparation of the Environmental and Social Management



Framework.

The studies and their disclosure will be completed prior to Project Appraisal (that is prior to 6th March 2017).

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APPROVAL

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