



Program Information Document (PID)

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 10-Apr-2023 | Report No: PIDC281606

**BASIC INFORMATION****A. Basic Program Data**

Country India	Project ID P180634	Parent Project ID (if any)	Program Name Sikkim: Integrated Service Provision and Innovation for Rural Economies Program
Region SOUTH ASIA	Estimated Appraisal Date 02-Oct-2023	Estimated Board Date 29-Mar-2024	Does this operation have an IPF component? No
Financing Instrument Program-for-Results Financing	Borrower(s) India	Implementing Agency Planning and Development Department, Government of Sikkim	Practice Area (Lead) Social Sustainability and Inclusion

Proposed Program Development Objective(s)

The PDO is to promote economic inclusion opportunities for women and youth in non-farm sectors.

COST & FINANCING**SUMMARY (USD Millions)**

Government program Cost	819.72
Total Operation Cost	269.74
Total Program Cost	269.74
Total Financing	269.74
Financing Gap	0.00

FINANCING (USD Millions)

Total World Bank Group Financing	100.00
World Bank Lending	100.00
Total Government Contribution	169.74



Concept Review Decision

The review did authorize the preparation to continue

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. **India's growth is expected to moderate in FY23/24 to 6.3 percent, from an estimated 6.9 percent in FY22/23, due to easing consumption growth and global growth spillovers:** Despite the global growth slowdown, real GDP is expected to have expanded by 6.9 percent in FY22/23.¹ This robust growth was underpinned by buoyant private consumption in the first half of FY22/23 and strong expansion in investment activity supported by a sustained increase in public capital spending. In contrast, government consumption growth moderated due to the central government's commitment to reduce current spending. Robust domestic demand and elevated food prices kept headline inflation above the Reserve Bank of India's tolerance range (2 – 6 percent) in FY22/23. The growth momentum eased in the second half of FY22/23 as high inflation, higher borrowing costs and global spillovers weighed on domestic demand and dampened exports growth. Real GDP growth is expected to moderate further to 6.3 percent in FY23/24. Consumption is likely to be constrained by rising borrowing costs, slower growth in incomes and continued fiscal consolidation. The government's sustained investment push, healthy corporate profits, and a reduction in bank NPLs will likely buoy investment despite reduced risk appetite and elevated input costs. Slowing imports growth and ongoing strength in services exports is expected to contribute to a narrowing of the current account deficit to 2.1 percent of GDP in FY23/24. Despite the increased public investment, the government is likely to continue pursuing fiscal consolidation. The general government deficit will decline to 8.7 percent in FY23/24 (9.4 percent: FY22/23), due to lower current spending and modest revenue growth, reflecting the withdrawal of pandemic-related support programs. The current level of the fiscal deficit stabilizes the debt-to-GDP ratio around 83 percent.

2. **India has made remarkable progress in reducing extreme poverty over the past two decades. The share of the population living below US\$2.15 per person per day (2017 PPP) is estimated to have halved between 2011 and 2019.**² This was accompanied by a sharp decline in the incidence of multidimensional poverty, from 27.7 percent in 2005/06 to 16.4 percent in 2019/21.³ However, the pace of poverty reduction has slowed in recent years, with key welfare indicators being slow to improve.⁴ More recent estimates suggest that the pandemic induced spike in extreme poverty (\$2.15), of up to 4 percentage points, moderated in 2021-22. Facilitated by widespread access to vaccines, extreme poverty rates are estimated to have declined to 13.8 percent in 2021-22, although not as low as pre-pandemic levels. More than 40 percent of India's population lived below the lower-middle income poverty line even before the pandemic.⁵ Inequality in consumption has remained stable, with a Gini index of around 35 over the past two decades. Child malnutrition has remained high, with 35.5 percent of children under the age of 5 being stunted and 67 percent of children aged 6-59 months being anemic in 2019-21.⁶ Headline employment indicators have improved since 2020 but concerns about job

¹ World Bank real GDP forecasts published in India Development Update, April 2023.

² Estimates are based on the methodology documented in a World Bank Policy Research Working paper by Roy and van der Weide (2022), which relies on imputed consumption from the Consumer Pyramid Household Surveys (CPHS) implemented by the Centre for Monitoring the Indian Economy, a private data company. The CPHS sample is re-weighted to make it more nationally representative. The series has been revised to incorporate recent survey years (Macro Poverty Outlook, Spring 2023). In 2004, India's extreme poverty rate was 39.9 percent using the same international poverty line. In 2011, this rate was 22.5 percent.

³ UNDP (United Nations Development Programme), OPHI (Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative). 2022. 2022 Global Multidimensional Poverty Index (MPI): Unpacking deprivation bundles to reduce multidimensional poverty. New York.

⁴ World Bank Poverty and Inequality Platform. <https://pip.worldbank.org/country-profiles/IND>.

⁵ US\$3.65 per capita per day (2017 PPP). World Bank Poverty and Inequality Platform. <https://pip.worldbank.org/country-profiles/IND>.

⁶ Government of India, Ministry of Health and Family Welfare, 2022. National Family Health Survey (NFHS - 5), 2019–21 report.



quality and real wage growth remain.⁷

3. **Sikkim has achieved high rates of economic growth while ensuring sustainable development outcomes:** The Himalayan State of Sikkim, with an area of 7,096 km⁸, is in the north-eastern part of the country, shares international borders with China, Nepal, and Bhutan and is strategically important to the Government of India's Act East Policy, and one of the states growing fastest economically⁹. Since FY04/05, Sikkim has its per capita GDP growth in double digits, while similar-sized North Eastern states barely registering growth¹⁰. Further, Sikkim reduced its poverty rate from 30.9 percent in FY04/05 (170,000 people) to 8.2 percent (51,000) in FY11/12¹¹. Sikkim ranked third lowest state with a Multi-dimensional Poverty Index (MPI) value of 0.019, with a decline of 0.157 between 2005-06 and 2015-16.

Sectoral (or multi-sectoral) and Institutional Context of the Program

4. **Sikkim's economy is witnessing a structural transformation with increasing contribution from manufacturing and services:** In the last decade, there is a shift of the state's GDP out of agriculture into manufacturing, construction, and electricity (hydropower)¹². These sectors now contribute around 51 percent to the state's GDP while the agriculture sector has stagnated at 8 percent. The key industries in Sikkim are pharmaceuticals, distilleries & breweries, food processing, and ancillary units in the manufacturing sector; and tourism as well as hydropower.¹³
5. **While Sikkim's economic structure has changed markedly, corresponding transformation in employment is lagging:** Manufacturing and services, particularly tourism, pharmaceuticals, and hydropower have registered remarkable growth rates and are vital to the state's economic growth. For instance, between 2011 to 2017, Sikkim has witnessed an increase of 1.5 times in the number of tourists. Domestic tourism grew at an average annual rate of between 10 percent to 25 percent and footfalls of foreign tourists grew at 8 percent¹⁴. In pharmaceuticals, the state has attracted over forty companies with a total investment of about US\$ 415 million (till 2014-15)¹⁵. Each of these sectors also offer considerable potential for non-farm wage employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. Yet over 70 percent of the state's workforce is employed in agriculture¹⁶. There are significant gaps between output transformation and employment transformation, particularly for women and youth, which is likely to impede sustainable growth for the state.
6. **Sikkim's women continue to be employed in low-paying jobs, mostly in agriculture:** The state has one of the highest rates of female labor force participation (FLFP) in the country at 58 percent¹⁷. However, in 2022, almost half of Sikkim's women in the 15-59 age group were employed in agriculture and related occupations as compared with 20 percent men who worked in agriculture. Moreover, women's urban labor force participation was at 34 percent, much lower compared with the rural labor force participation rate of 64 percent (Figure 1). The sectoral composition of FLFP in

⁷ World Bank Macro Poverty Outlook. Spring 2023. Estimates from PLFS data.

⁸ Government of Sikkim

⁹ India Brand Equity Foundation, 2019

¹⁰ Centre for Monitoring Indian Economy, 2020

¹¹ UNDP India, 2020

¹² Sikkim Economic Census, Department of Statistics, 2019

¹³ Government of Sikkim, 2019; Report of the Comptroller and Auditor General of India on Economic, Revenue and General Sectors for the year ended March 2018. Government of Sikkim. Report No. 2 of 2019.

¹⁴ Department of Tourism, Government of Sikkim; 2005-2017

¹⁵ [Sikkim's tryst with pharma sector - Express Pharma](https://www.expresspharma.in/sikkims-tryst-with-pharma-sector/), <https://www.expresspharma.in/sikkims-tryst-with-pharma-sector/>

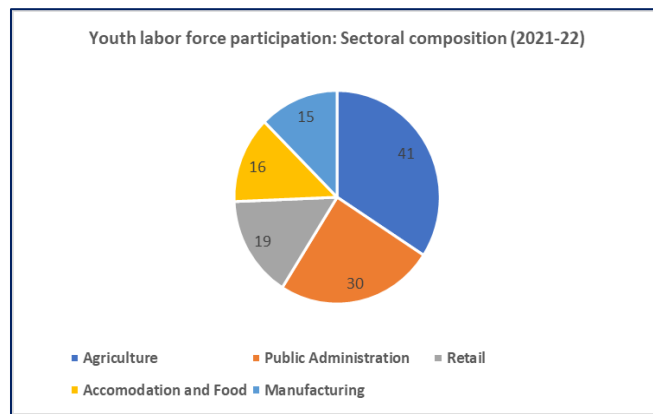
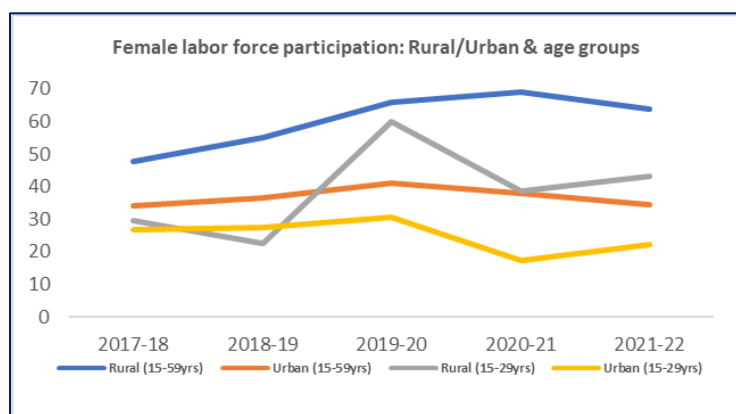
¹⁶ Periodic Labor Force Survey, GoI; 2021-22

¹⁷ Periodic Labor Force Survey, GoI; 2021-22



Sikkim is high skewed; only 3 percent of women workers are employed in manufacturing. Interestingly, the FLFP and workforce participation rate for young women in the age-group of 15-29 years was significantly low - 27 percent and 22 percent respectively, mirroring the India average. The unemployment rate for young women in urban areas was also considerably **Figure 1** percent, compared to 3 percent for young men¹⁸. Women-led enterprises in Sikkim face challenges in the areas of sustainability, autonomy, formalization, and employment generation¹⁹. Less than one-fifth of enterprises in Sikkim are women-led – these are mostly in trade and services with very few in the manufacturing sector²⁰. Most of these enterprises are concentrated in low-return sub-sectors and remain at subsistence levels and lack growth-orientation.

Figure 2



7. **Sikkim’s youth find limited economic opportunities outside of agriculture:** The unemployment rate for Sikkim’s youth population was significantly lower compared to the India average. In 2022, the unemployment rate for youth (15-29 years) was about 13 percent, significantly lower compared with the India average of 29 percent. However, almost 41 percent of Sikkim’s youth population were employed in agriculture (Figure 2), with limited exit options and transition opportunities to gainful employment in non-farm sectors. The sectoral composition of the youth workforce shows that 28 percent women and 13 percent men were employed in agriculture. This can be partially explained by high drop-out rates at secondary grades which stood at 15 percent for boys and 10 percent for girl students. While formal vocation training is offered in secondary schools, these trainings do not match the demands of emerging sectors, and often, trained youth remain unemployed in Sikkim²¹. Overall, Sikkim’s economy is reflective of a clear mismatch between the aspirations of women and youth and creation of jobs²². On the other hand, most of the jobs being generated are for unskilled laborers, which youth do not find desirable. As a result, the inadequacy of opportunities for skilled jobs within the state forces skilled young people to migrate in search of jobs (the out-migration rate of Sikkim is 0.020 which is the highest among all the NER states)²³.

¹⁸ Periodic Labor Force Survey, GoI; 2021-22

¹⁹ NITI Aayog, Government of India. 2022. *Decoding government support to women entrepreneurs in India*.

²⁰ NSS 2015-16, 73rd Round; Table T6: 193 per 1000 enterprises have female proprietors (800 have male proprietors and 6 are partnerships). Trade enterprises with female proprietors are 220 per 1000. Service enterprises with female proprietors are 202 per 1000. Manufacturing enterprises with female proprietors are 16 per 1000.

²¹ UNICEF, 2019, Tara et al 2016

²² Roadmap for Mainstreaming Climate Action and Disaster Risk Management in Sikkim, GFDRR, World Bank, 2019

²³ Roadmap for Mainstreaming Climate Action and Disaster Risk Management in Sikkim, GFDRR, World Bank, 2019; Kumar, N. Interstate Migration in India. IES. [Seminar-neerajkumar.pdf \(ies.gov.in\)](#). Out-migration rate is the volume of out-migration from the state divided by enumerate population of the origin state.



8. **The Government of Sikkim (GoS) recognizes the urgent need for creating employment opportunities for women and youth:** Sikkim is a small market, with negligible economies of scale and limited connectivity. Yet the GoS has been able to capitalize on its unique natural resource base and biodiversity and encourage income-generating activities such as community-based tourism and green jobs. However, three critical challenges persist. **One**, planning capacities needed to unpack barriers that restrict reallocation of labor to non-farm sectors remain weak. **Second**, Sikkim is largely dependent on federal fund flows to meet its financial requirements²⁴. As a consequence, skills training delivery, entrepreneurship support and delivery of enabling services is channeled through multiple centrally sponsored and central sector schemes.²⁵ However, these schemes are not tailored to the state’s socio-cultural, geographic and economic context. **Three**, private sector demand and partnerships with non-state actors do not factor in state policy and programming decisions. To drive economic inclusion for women and youth in emerging sectors, the GoS has acknowledged the need to build planning capacities at the state and sub-state levels, integrate supply- and demand-side interventions in existing government programs, finance catalytic investments in partnership with the private sector, and promote institutional coordination across different government agencies.

Relationship to CAS/CPF

9. **The Program is well aligned with the Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for India.** The focuses CPF on building state capabilities, human capital, gender and engaging the federal nature of India through state governments. The proposed Program will contribute to two of the three priority areas (“Whats”) and three of the “Hows” of the CPF. Amongst the “Whats”, the Program will support Focus Area 2 “Enhancing Competitiveness and Enabling Job Creation”, in particular objectives 2.4 and 2.5, namely “Increasing access to quality, market-relevant skills” through the increase in accessibility of women and youth to quality and marketable skills required for the smooth transition to digital and green economy. Amongst the “Hows” of the CPF, the first phase of the Program will contribute to (i) strengthening public sector institutions by strengthening the capacities of the line department(s) and the implementing agency (State Planning Department) at all levels to deliver economic inclusion for women and youth; and (iii) supporting Lighthouse India by facilitating design and implementation of an innovative intervention for youth and women’s access to quality jobs. Additionally, all phases of the Program will support two of the three cross-cutting themes of the CPF on reducing gender gaps and harnessing high impact technologies for increasing access to quality health, education, and skills for economic inclusion.
10. **The proposed program relates directly to the World Bank Group Gender Strategy (2016-2023) and the Green Resilient Inclusive Development (GRID) Approach.** Both the Gender Strategy and its GRID Approach focus on creating more and better jobs for women and green growth. Equally important is the Bank’s focus on strengthening policies and institutions for improved investments to build back better. The proposed Program is fully aligned with this strategy given its support towards institutions, infrastructure, and services for linking women and youth to economic opportunities and improvements in female labor force participation.

Rationale for Bank Engagement and Choice of Financing Instrument

²⁴ **Note:** The overall ratio of resources between Sikkim’s own resources and transfers from Centre remains the same with its own resources (including fiscal deficit and consequential borrowings) being less than 30% of total expenditure. The finances of the state have been vulnerable on two counts. While the first is its excessive dependence on central transfers by way of taxes and grants, the second source of vulnerability is the low buoyancy of its own revenue sources.

²⁵ **Note:** Examples include schemes under the National Mission for Empowerment of Women (including Protection of Women from Domestic Violence; Swadhar Greh; State Resource Centre for Women; One Stop Crisis Centre; Ujjwala Scheme; Beti Bachao Beti Padhao; AAMA scheme; Mahila Shakti Kendra; implementation of Sexual Harassment of Women at Workplace Act 2013; etc.)²⁵, Working Women’s Hostels, State Women



11. **Results-based financing through the PforR lending instrument.** The PforR instrument will incentivize creation of a transformative policy architecture for economic inclusion of women and youth. The results-based financing modality will support formation of a state-led platform housed under the Chief Secretary’s office, coordinated by the Planning and Development Department, and involve seven priority departments: rural development, commerce and industries, skills development, tourism, forest & environment, health, and IT. The PforR instrument will lay the foundation of a results orientated approach to economic inclusion of women and youth by linking funding to key employment and entrepreneurship outcomes. In doing so, the instrument will develop planning capacities at the state and district-level, provide the state the flexibility to design, deploy and iterate initiatives in line with the local context (for example, community-led transport management – including identification of and negotiation with transporters – to facilitate easier and cheaper transport for women). A PforR operation would further strengthen the use of country systems for program management, implementation, and monitoring. The use of Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs) will be critical in validating progress on key employment and entrepreneurship outcomes.

C. Program Development Objective(s) (PDO) and PDO Level Results Indicators

Program Development Objective(s)

The PDO is to promote economic inclusion opportunities for women and youth in non-farm sectors.

PDO Level Results Indicators

The achievement of the PDO will depend upon the results on the following indicators:

- I. A state-led platform on economic inclusion for women and youth is created
- II. Districts that have developed and implemented ‘Integrated Economic Inclusion Plans’ (IEIPs) (number)
- III. Project beneficiaries who are wage employed or self-employed in non-farm sectors (percentage) (disaggregated by sectors – emerging sectors, other sectors) (disaggregated by sex and age (18-29 years)).

12. **Program Result Areas (RA): The Program will support three RAs that will contribute towards the achievement of the Program Development Objective.** The overall scope of the program, results framework, DLIs and Disbursement Linked Results (DLRs) will be finalized prior to appraisal. Each indicator and result will have a detailed description and a verification protocol. The verification arrangements including hiring of an Independent Verification Agency (IVA) will be agreed to with the GoS. A brief description of Program result areas follows:

Results Area 1: Strengthened institutional structures for economic inclusion planning for women and youth: Under Results Area 1, the state will leverage results-based financing to develop state capacities and plan for economic inclusion. The Program will incentivize setting-up of a ***state-led multi-sectoral platform*** anchored with the Chief Secretary’s office with seven priority departments, private sector players and technical partners. The platform will drive investments, innovations, and outcomes on new economic opportunities for women and youth in emerging sectors through improved analytics, stronger market linkages, inter-departmental coordination, and cutting-edge technical inputs. Further, the Program will incentivize ***convergence at the district-level***²⁶ and accelerate effective planning for economic inclusion. Integrated Economic Inclusion Plans (IEIPs) to be developed by each district, will use area-based planning to channel investments in critical infrastructure and enabling services to deliver economic inclusion for women and youth. Under this RA, the government will consolidate programming and investments in: (i) creating diversified, whole-of-community tourism experiences for high-value, low volume tourists; (ii) promoting eco-tourism and responsible adventure tourism;

²⁶ Note: The Program chooses district as the unit of administration for the Integrated Economic Inclusion Plans based on existing capacities at the district-level and administrative abilities to manage trade-offs required to promote economic inclusion and cross-departmental linkages.



(iii) digital connectivity and IT/ITeS - enabled services; (iv) comprehensive business support to promote market linkages for women/youth entrepreneurs and mature collectives in non-farm sectors; (iv) transport subsidies and/or enhanced transport options for women and youth; and (v) critical infrastructure investments in last-mile upgradation and maintenance (e.g.: feeder roads, learning environments in livelihood schools, etc.).

Result Area 2: Improved labor market performance for women and youth in emerging sectors: Results Area 2 introduces an outcome-driven approach to enhance relevance, accessibility, quality and efficiency of skills training and entrepreneurship support for youth and women in Sikkim. Under **skills training**, the government will complement existing central government schemes with targeted and employment-oriented courses in emerging sectors. Leveraging existing skills training initiatives, the RA will incentivize adoption of innovative approaches such as (i) deepening industry relations through joint needs assessments; (ii) introduction of new courses in partnership with Sector Skills Councils in emerging sectors such as tourism, care, IT, creative design and green jobs, to respond to local market needs; and (iii) strengthening emphasis on soft skills development. Under **entrepreneurship support**, the government will leverage existing GoI schemes targeting women and youth entrepreneurs with a focus on non-farm, emerging sectors. Related interventions will emphasize on: a) Entrepreneurship promotion, which includes creating awareness and knowledge of different entrepreneurship opportunities in emerging sectors; b) Easy and affordable access to finance to set up, run and grow the business; c) Training in technical, business development and soft skills; d) Mentoring and networking from industry experts to guide and incubate budding entrepreneurs and for peer networking; e) Market linkages with domestic and global markets; and f) Access to business, legal, digital, and other higher support services for better efficiency and productivity.

Result Area 3: Enhanced delivery of enabling services for economic inclusion of women and youth: Results Area 3 will incentivize outreach, improved quality, and impact of enabling services in care, financial inclusion, mental health, digital literacy, and information services to promote economic inclusion outcomes for women and youth. To achieve this, the RA will incentivize strong, on-ground **collaborations with established technical partners** such as the National Institute of Mental Health and Neuro Sciences (NIMHANS) (mental health services), NASSCOM (digital inclusion), Indian Institutes of Management (life skills and incubation support for young adults) and private players such as Microsoft (mentorship for young women) to mainstream innovative approaches in delivering enabling services. Potential partnerships will improve results on (i) strengthening access and quality of mental health services through Adolescent Friendly Health Clinics and community based service models; (ii) delivering financial and digital literacy to women and youth entrepreneurs, including on financial products, insurance, e-marketing, etc., utilizing digital platforms; (iii) establishing a quality framework and developing a cadre of trained caregivers in geriatric and child care; and (iv) scaling-up information service delivery, career counselling and mentorship to young adults in higher secondary schools and under graduate colleges.

D. Program Description

PforR Program Boundary

Government program

- 13. The GoS implements a multi-sector program that focuses on delivering enhanced economic opportunities to people in Sikkim through skill building, enterprise support, infrastructure development and service delivery interventions.** The State's Economic Growth Strategy (2021) aims to deliver comprehensive support to women and youth and identifies priority sectors such as tourism and green jobs for employment and entrepreneurship opportunities. To deliver on this mandate, the GoS intends to make investments in adopting an integrated and forward-looking



approach, crowding in knowledge on economic inclusion from development partners, and nurturing results orientation. The GoS multi-sector program (referred to as ‘program’) covers multiple state government departments and comprises of central- and state-led schemes. These include the departments of skill development, industrial development, rural development, tourism, forests, information technology, health, and planning. The focus across these departments is on strengthening institutional capacities; enhancing scale, quality, and efficiency of service delivery; tailoring skills development and enterprise development for women and youth and infrastructure development. However, gaps exist in terms of responding to evolving needs and aspirations of women and youth, tapping potential of emerging sectors, supporting innovative and community-led solutions, strengthening planning across government levels and sectors, providing critical infrastructure, partnering with non-state actors, etc. The government program has an estimated budget of US\$ 819.72 million over the period 2024-2029.

PforR Program

14. **The proposed Sikkim: Integrated Service Provision and Innovation for Rural Economies Program (Sikkim-INSPIRES) PforR Program (“P”) will support a subset of the government program (“p”) to boost economic inclusion for women and youth in emerging sectors.** The elements of the government program that are excluded from the PforR Program include farm-based livelihoods and enterprises, employment in public works, investments in Gram Panchayat Development Plans, investments that are on the exclusion list as determined by the Environmental and Social Systems Assessment, and investments that target neither women nor youth beneficiaries. The PforR Program has a budget of US\$ 269.74 million over the period 2024-2029.

E. Initial Environmental and Social Screening

15. The Program is expected to have positive environmental and social (E&S) outcomes, resulting from reduced dependence on agricultural sector; increased employment of women and adolescents, improved reproductive and mental health; and strengthened rural institutions and resilient communities. The Program is not expected to involve any major civil works and will exclude activities that will trigger potentially significant adverse impacts that are sensitive, diverse, or unprecedented on the environment and/or affected people.
16. **The concept stage E&S risk rating for the proposed PforR operations is Moderate.** Environmental concerns of the program are expected to be minimal and residual risks are related to poor construction and safety practices, improper waste management etc. The key social risks for the Program include potential exclusion and/or lack of representation of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups; lack of clear two-way information flow for sustained stakeholder engagement; and other social risks related to challenges with community mobilization. The risk of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (SEA/SH) of the project emanates from the safety needs of female trainees and workers. The risk relating to institutional capacity is moderate as the institutional implementation setting is complex involving multiple departments. The reputational and political risk related to social is moderate as the program is being implemented by the Department of Planning and Development, GoS, in coordination with seven priority departments. While there is an existing statutory grievance redressal mechanism, it will need to be strengthened to ensure citizen feedback, consultation and effective communication during the preparation and implementation phase.
17. The Environment and Social System Assessment (ESSA), to be carried out by the Bank during preparation in close collaboration with the counterparts, will identify potential environmental and social impacts to be supported under the proposed PforR; assess the adequacy of provisions of legal and regulatory framework, institutional capacity, past



performance, and methodology, including processes to adequately manage E&S risks and impacts. ESSA will result in an action plan for improving the overall system of the borrower for achieving better environmental and social sustainability results in the Proposed Program.

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