



Appraisal Environmental and Social Review Summary

Appraisal Stage

(ESRS Appraisal Stage)

Date Prepared/Updated: 03/25/2020 | Report No: ESRSA00552



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Region	Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any)
Mauritania	AFRICA	P173837	
Project Name	Mauritania COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Project (SPRP)		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Health, Nutrition & Population	Investment Project Financing	3/23/2020	3/30/2020
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)		

Proposed Development Objective(s)

To strengthen the national public health preparedness capacity to prevent, detect and respond to the COVID-19 pandemic in Mauritania

Financing (in USD Million)	Amount
Total Project Cost	6.00

B. Is the project 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 [including overview of Country, Sectoral & Institutional Contexts and Relationship to CPF]

The MoH with the support of WHO has developed and is implementing the National COVID-19 preparedness and Response Plan. The plan focuses on scaling-up and strengthening all aspect of preparedness and response including coordination, surveillance, case management, communication and social mobilization, psychosocial as well as logistics and safety. The implementation is already supported by the Regional Disease Surveillance Systems Enhancement (REDISSE) Projet (IDA-D3140). Activities that will be financed under the COVID-19 Fast-Track Facility will be coordinated by the MoH with the support of WHO to ensure that gaps are covered, and duplication is minimized. The proposed Project will address critical country-level needs for preparedness and response for COVID-19. The scope and the components of this project are fully aligned with the COVID-19 Fast Track Facility and adapted to the country urgent preparedness and response needs related to the COVID-19 outbreak. The proposed Project will consist of two



components supporting the country’s detection and response efforts in the fight against COVID-19. It will support activities aimed at strengthening the country’s capacity to: (i) identify, isolate, and provide care for patients with COVID-19 in a timely manner to minimize disease spread, morbidity and mortality; (ii) prepare and strengthen the health system for increasing levels of demand for care; and (iii) provide timely, transparent and evidence-based information to support healthcare interventions. The total Project cost is US\$ 6 million of which 0.8 million is in counterpart funding (CF) from the Government of Mauritania.

D. Environmental and Social Overview

D.1. Project location(s) and salient characteristics relevant to the ES assessment [geographic, environmental, social]

The proposed Project will be implemented throughout Mauritania and will contribute to improved COVID-19 prevention, detection and response. The project has national coverage, with some specific existing facilities identified as treatment and isolation centers for the care of patients which will be renovated and equipped. Although the project may be able to most immediately respond to COVID-19 outbreaks on two wilayas with high poverty and large rural populations (Guidimagha and Hodh Gharbi), which are currently being supported by the Mauritania Health System Support Project “INAYA” (P156165), this is a national program. No greenfield works will be supported under the project.

D. 2. Borrower’s Institutional Capacity

The Ministry of Health, as the main recipient and executing agency of the project, has previous experience implementing the INAYA project (P156165) as well as its Additional Finance operation (P170585). The Department of Public Hygiene of the Ministry of Health has been responsible for INAYA environmental and social safeguards implementation and will continue with the COVID-19 activities. The scope of the proposed project can be accommodated by drawing on existing capacity in the Directorate of Public Health as well as the environmental and social specialist in the INAYA project. Environmental and social safeguards compliance in the INAYA project is Moderately Satisfactory. Project-appropriate EMP checklists have been prepared for each participating health facility. The Department of Public Hygiene has carried out a strong, nation-wide training program on public health and hygiene for health workers and community-based health and sanitation workers.

The borrower has some demonstrated experience in applying the National Health Care Waste Management Plan (NHCWMP). INAYA is assisting the participating health care centers to carry out medical waste management assessments and prepare simple site-specific medical waste management plans. In addition, the review and improvement of the NHCWMP has also been integrated as an INAYA project activity.

The Department of Public Hygiene of the Ministry of Health has been responsible for the environmental and social safeguards implementation of the INAYA project (P156165) and its Additional Finance operation (P170585) and will continue with the COVID-19 activities. To this end, the INAYA project environmental and social safeguards specialist will support the implementation of the Mauritania COVID-19 project.

Lastly, the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) developed for this project will be adapted from the INAYA AF ESMF and will include measures to integrate lessons learned from the implementation of the INAYA project, especially those voiced through their stakeholder consultations. The Department of Public Hygiene has adapted medical waste management plan formulation and implementation to local contexts and local languages. The AF for INAYA has, as a lesson learned from INAYA, a stronger emphasis on public health related communications. These will be further emphasized in this operation. Finally, the World Bank team will prepare and implement a capacity building and training program to help the Borrower manage environmental and social risk throughout the project timeline.

Public Disclosure



II. SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL (ES) RISKS AND IMPACTS

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Substantial

Environmental Risk Rating

Substantial

The environmental risk classification for the project is Substantial under the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), mainly because of the risks linked to the management of biomedical waste (especially handling highly infectious medical wastes that could carry the COVID-19 virus). The risks linked to the renovation of isolation and treatment centers are moderate given that they revolve largely around rehabilitation of existing facilities and are focused mainly on managing site-specific occupational health and safety for construction and project workers and construction waste management. Labor management and health and safety risks will be taken into account across the project through the application of WHO protocols. The capacity of the MOH to manage the environmental and social (E&S) risks will be built through ongoing support and training by World Bank specialists.

The Directorate of Public Hygiene with the support of the Environmental Specialist of INAYA will ensure the proper implementation of the environmental and social framework elements of the project.

Social Risk Rating

Substantial

Misinformation and rumors regarding COVID-19, and stigma for those who will be quarantined or admitted to isolation and treatment centers are project risks. However, one of the components of the proposed project entails risk communication, social mobilization and community engagement to raise public awareness and knowledge on prevention and control of COVID-19 among the general population and vulnerable groups. Beyond conflicts resulting from false rumors, vulnerable groups are at risk being excluded from vital services, and quarantine interventions could entail sexual exploitation and abuse; as well as culturally inappropriate accommodation and services. The project’s ESMF will outline how these risks will be managed, through both project design that focuses on public disclosure, communications, and behavior change around the pandemic, and specific application of WHO protocols for managing quarantine and isolation facilities.

The project will also ensure that the medical isolation of individuals does not increase their vulnerability (for example, to gender-based violence, GBV) especially in rural areas of the country. Handling of quarantining interventions (including dignified treatment of patients; attention to specific, culturally determined concerns of vulnerable groups; and prevention of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Harassment (SEA/H) as well as meeting minimum accommodation and servicing requirements) can also be listed as issues that will require close attention while managing the social risks of the project.

The project will not support activities that involve land acquisition or lead to physical and/or economic displacement.

B. Environment and Social Standards (ESSs) that Apply to the Activities Being Considered

B.1. General Assessment



ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Overview of the relevance of the Standard for the Project:

The project will have positive impacts as it should improve COVID-19 surveillance, monitoring and containment. However, the project could also cause significant environmental, health and safety risks due to the dangerous nature of the pathogen (COVID-19) and reagents and other materials to be used in the project-supported laboratories and quarantine facilities. Healthcare associated infections due to inadequate adherence to occupational health and safety standards can lead to illness and death among health and laboratory workers. The laboratories and relevant health facilities which will be used for diagnostic testing and isolation of patients can generate biological waste, chemical waste, and other hazardous bioproducts.

Social risks include: conflict resulting from rumors or misunderstandings about COVID-19 and various mitigation strategies and measures and additional vulnerability in terms of SEA/H. It will include measures for outreach, communication and stakeholder engagement that take into account social distancing. Special attention will be given to vulnerable poor in remote areas, as well as refugees/IDPs (with the aim of avoiding conflict between them and host communities).

To mitigate against the risk of project staff contracting the virus, the project will revise and update the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) for INAYA and its AF within one month of effectiveness based on WHO protocols for managing risks associated with COVID-19. The ESMF will adequately cover environmental and social infections control measures and procedures for the safe handling, storage, and processing of COVID-19 materials including the techniques for preventing, minimizing, and controlling environmental and social impacts during the operation of project supported laboratories and medical facilities. The relevant parts of WHO's COVID-19 Quarantine Guideline and COVID-19 biosafety guidelines will be incorporated into the ESMF. These guidelines include provisions to address the needs of patients, including the most vulnerable. They also include provisions for the establishment of quarantine and isolation centers and their operation considering the dignity and needs of patients. The proposed project will also provide emergency medical and non-medical supplies including Personal Protective Equipment (PPEs) such as gloves, surgical masks, respirators, eye protection and isolation gowns to health workers for their safety and other infection prevention and control materials (such as detergents and disinfectants, and safety/sharps boxes). The firms that will be recruited for renovation of isolation and treatment centers must develop a contractor Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), integrating the risks and mitigation measures outlined in the project's ESMF into their operations during the preparation and construction phase. This document must be approved before the start of works. Further, each laboratory that is handling COVID-19 will also develop an ESMP that builds on WHO protocols to ensure safe handling and infections control.

To manage healthcare waste, the final ESMF will incorporate the National Health Care Waste Management Plan (NHCWMP), developed by the Mauritanian Ministry of Health. The NHCWMP will be complemented with WHO COVID-19 specific protocols for collection, storage, transportation and final disposal of wastes.

ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure



Stakeholder engagement is a critical tool for social and environmental risk management, project sustainability and success. The proposed project will support a communication, mobilization, and community engagement campaign to raise public awareness and knowledge on prevention and control of COVID-19 among the general population and contribute to strengthening the capacities of community structures in promoting coronavirus prevention messages. The Project's draft Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) will be updated throughout project implementation as the client engages in continuous, meaningful and safe consultations on policies, procedures, processes and practices (including grievances) with all stakeholders throughout the project life cycle, and provide them with timely, relevant, understandable and accessible information. The World Bank team will provide advice to the client on managing stakeholder engagement in the constrained circumstances brought on by COVID-19. A project-wide grievance redress mechanism (GRM), proportionate to the potential risks and impacts of the project, will be established in the updated SEP that will be disclosed within two months of effectiveness.

B.2. Specific Risks and Impacts

A brief description of the potential environmental and social risks and impacts relevant to the Project.

ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions

Project activities will be performed by mostly healthcare and laboratory personnel and firms that will be recruited for the renovation of isolation and treatment centers, thus falling under the category of contracted workers under ESS2. The key occupational health and safety (OHS) risk is in relation to the contamination with COVID-19 (or other contagious illnesses as patients taken seriously ill with COVID-19 are likely to suffer from illnesses which compromise the immune system, which can lead to illness and death of workers). Direct workers will include civil servants working in the PIU, who will be covered by the safety and OHS provisions of ESS2. The ESMF will include Labor Management Procedures (LMPs) which will set out the way in which project workers will be managed in accordance with the requirements of national law and the ESS2, and these will build on WHO guidelines on the best approach to managing OHS risk during a global pandemic. Key issues to be addressed in the LMPs for the construction companies include terms and conditions of employment, nondiscrimination and equal opportunity, and establishing/managing worker's organizations. Due diligence is also needed to ensure the client meets requirements on child labor, forced labor and occupational health and safety. The LMP will include measures to ensure that labor is provided on a voluntary basis and will further ensure that the health and safety of workers, especially women, are given adequate attention. It will also have the details of the grievance redress mechanism for workers and the roles and responsibilities for monitoring such workers.

ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

Vegetation and soil loss: The clearance and loss of areas of vegetation and faunal habitat is not expected. The environmental impact of the infrastructure activities will be assessed in the ESMP. The required building material will potentially include stones, sand, concrete blocks or timber must be obtained from authorized quarries.

Air emissions: During the rehabilitation of infrastructures, air emissions may include fugitive dust. Those most likely to be affected are people living within the proximity of these infrastructure sites but also the workers. The implementation of mitigation measures such as dust suppression and vehicle maintenance will be applied to



minimize the impact of air emissions during construction, wearing suitable masks, and residual impacts are expected to be limited in scope and duration.

Waste management: Highly infectious medical waste is expected from the handling of COVID-19. The ESMF will include a plan for health care waste management plan for health facilities, based on the ESMF for INAYA AF as well as the Mauritania National Health Care Waste Management Plan (NHCWMP), for the management of all health care waste generated by the beneficiary health care facilities participating in the project. Waste from rehabilitation works will be covered by the site waste management plans, which will be developed by the contractors as part of their ESMPs.

ESS4 Community Health and Safety

Inappropriate handling of COVID-19 can expose the community to further spread of the disease. The ESMF will describe the measures in place to prevent or minimize the spread of COVID-19 for laboratories, quarantine and isolation centers, and screening posts. It will cover procedures for waste management of contaminated materials, protocols on the transport of samples, and workers cleaning before leaving the work place back into their communities, among others. The quarantine and isolation centers will also ensure that communities, COVID-19 patients and their families are treated with respect and dignity, in reference to infrastructure, accommodation and supplies, and communication. The project will put in measures to avoid any form of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Harassment (SEA/H) by following the WHO Code of Ethics and Professional conduct for all workers in the quarantine facilities as well as the provision of gender-sensitive infrastructure such as segregated toilets and adequate light in quarantine and isolation centers. Special attention will be given to vulnerable poor in remote areas, as well as refugees/IDPs (with the aim of avoiding conflict between them and host communities).

ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

Any COVID-19 specific infrastructure is likely to be temporary in nature (e.g. tents, conversion of non-medical facilities). Any construction is expected to be undertaken within existing facilities; therefore, ESS5 is not considered relevant at this point. In case there is a need for land acquisition leading to economic or physical displacement during project implementation, Resettlement Action Plans (RAPs) would be developed to the satisfaction of the Bank prior to commencement of any civil works/construction.

ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

Waste from laboratories and other project sites could affect natural resources, if handled inappropriately. However, all currently-located medical sites and community health centers have already been vetted prior to establishment as



to their limited impact on natural resources. All personnel involved in the project must following the requirements delineated in the ESMP to ensure safe handling of medical and hazardous waste. Thus this standard is not relevant at this time.

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

There are no known Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities in the project area of influence. If during implementation it is found that there are people in the project area who may meet the criteria of ESS 7, the project will undertake a screening and, based on its findings take appropriate measures, per the requirements of the ESF.

ESS8 Cultural Heritage

This standard is not relevant at this time as there expected to be limited civil works. If there is any new construction, this construction is likely to occur within the existing footprint of medical facilities and community health care centers. However, out of an abundance of caution, the ESMF will include measures for “Chance Finds” of archaeological or other cultural heritage.

ESS9 Financial Intermediaries

This standard is not relevant for the suggested project interventions.

B.3 Other Relevant Project Risks

Relevant project risks include potential vulnerable peoples, e.g. those would may be exposed in highly rural areas, where medical care is not present, as well as refugees within refugee camps on the border near Mali.

C. Legal Operational Policies that Apply

OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways No

OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas No

III. BORROWER’S ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL COMMITMENT PLAN (ESCP)

DELIVERABLES against MEASURES AND ACTIONs IDENTIFIED	TIMELINE
ESS 1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts	

Public Disclosure



<p>REGULAR REPORTING: Prepare and submit to the Association regular monitoring reports on the environmental, social, health and safety (ESHS) performance of the Project, including, but not limited to, stakeholder engagement activities and grievances log.</p>	<p>12/2024</p>
<p>ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: The Ministry of Health will maintain the Secretary General of the Ministry with qualified staff and resources to support management of environmental and social risks and impacts of the Project including environmental and social risk management specialists. The Department of Public Hygiene of the Ministry of Health has been responsible for the environmental and social safeguards implementation of the INAYA project (P156165) and its Additional Finance operation (P170585).</p>	<p>12/2024</p>
<p>ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ASSESSMENT/MANAGEMENT PLANS AND INSTRUMENTS/ CONTRACTORS</p> <p>a. Assess the environmental and social risks and impacts of proposed Project activities in accordance with ESS1, including to ensure that individuals or groups who, because of their particular circumstances, may be disadvantaged or vulnerable, have access to the development benefits resulting from the Project.</p>	<p>12/2024</p>
<p>ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ASSESSMENT/MANAGEMENT PLANS AND INSTRUMENTS/ CONTRACTORS</p> <p>b. Prepare, disclose, adopt, and implement any environmental and social management plans or other instruments required for the respective Project activities based on the assessment process, in accordance with the ESSs, the ESMF, the ESHGs, and other relevant Good International Industry Practice (GIIP) in a manner acceptable to the Association.</p>	<p>12/2024</p>
<p>ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ASSESSMENT/MANAGEMENT PLANS AND INSTRUMENTS/ CONTRACTORS</p> <p>c. Incorporate the relevant aspects of this ESCP, including, inter alia, any environmental and social management plans or other instruments, ESS2 requirements, and any other required ESHS measures, into the ESHS specifications of the procurement documents and contracts with contractors and supervising firms. Thereafter ensure that the contractors and supervising firms comply with the ESHS specifications of their re</p>	<p>12/2024</p>
<p>ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ASSESSMENT/MANAGEMENT PLANS AND INSTRUMENTS/ CONTRACTORS</p> <p>d. Update environmental and social management plans or other instruments based on updated guidance by WHO on COVID19.</p>	<p>12/2024</p>
<p>EXCLUSIONS: Exclude the following type of activities as ineligible for financing under the Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause long term, permanent and/or irreversible adverse impacts, • Have high probability of causing serious adverse effects to human health or the environment, • Have significant adverse social impacts and may give rise to significant social conflict, 	<p>12/2024</p>



- Affect lands or rights of vulnerable communities,
- Involve permanent resettlement or land acquisition or adverse impacts on cultural heritage.

ESS 10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN: Prepare, disclose, adopt, and implement a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) consistent with ESS10, in a manner acceptable to the Association.

06/2020

GRIEVANCE MECHANISM: Accessible grievance arrangements shall be made publicly available to receive and facilitate resolution of concerns and grievances in relation to the Project, consistent with ESS10, in a manner acceptable to the Association.

12/2024

ESS 2 Labor and Working Conditions

The Project shall be carried out in accordance with ESS2, including implementing adequate OSH measures, setting out GRM for Project workers, and incorporating labor requirements into the ESHS specifications of procurement documents and contracts.

12/2024

ESS 3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

Relevant aspects of this standard shall be considered, as needed, including, inter alia, measures to: manage health care wastes, and other types of hazardous and non-hazardous wastes.

12/2024

ESS 4 Community Health and Safety

Relevant measures may include: minimize the potential for community exposure to communicable diseases; ensure those disadvantaged or vulnerable have access to benefits; manage security personnel and labor influx, and prevent or respond to SEA/SV/SH.

12/2024

ESS 5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

All eventual construction will be undertaken within existing facilities and thus ESS5 is now not relevant. In case land acquisition is necessary, resettlement action plans would be developed prior to commencement of land acquisition.

12/2024

ESS 6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

ESS 7 Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities

ESS 8 Cultural Heritage

ESS 9 Financial Intermediaries

Public Disclosure

B.3. Reliance on Borrower’s policy, legal and institutional framework, relevant to the Project risks and impacts

Is this project being prepared for use of Borrower Framework?

No



Areas where “Use of Borrower Framework” is being considered:

not applicable

IV. CONTACT POINTS

World Bank

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Borrower/Client/Recipient

Implementing Agency(ies)

V. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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VI. APPROVAL

Task Team Leader(s):	Moussa Dieng, Djibrilla Karamoko
Practice Manager (ENR/Social)	Kevin A Tomlinson Cleared on 24-Mar-2020 at 15:25:15 EDT
Safeguards Advisor ESSA	Nina Chee (SAESSA) Concurred on 25-Mar-2020 at 11:25:31 EDT

Public Disclosure