

# INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET

## APPRAISAL STAGE

**Report No.:** ISDSA1042

**Date ISDS Prepared/Updated:** 14-Nov-2014

**Date ISDS Approved/Disclosed:** 20-Nov-2014

### I. BASIC INFORMATION

#### 1. Basic Project Data

<b>Country:</b>	Azerbaijan	<b>Project ID:</b>	P148539
<b>Project Name:</b>	Higher Education Project (P148539)		
<b>Task Team Leader:</b>	Sachiko Kataoka		
<b>Estimated Appraisal Date:</b>	03-Dec-2014	<b>Estimated Board Date:</b>	19-Mar-2015
<b>Managing Unit:</b>	GEDDR	<b>Lending Instrument:</b>	Investment Project Financing
<b>Sector(s):</b>	Tertiary education (100%)		
<b>Theme(s):</b>	Education for the knowledge economy (100%)		
<b>Is this project processed under OP 8.50 (Emergency Recovery) or OP 8.00 (Rapid Response to Crises and Emergencies)?</b>			No
<b>Financing (In USD Million)</b>			
Total Project Cost:	38.94	Total Bank Financing:	33.00
Financing Gap:	0.00		
<b>Financing Source</b>			<b>Amount</b>
Borrower			5.94
International Bank for Reconstruction and Development			33.00
Total			38.94
<b>Environmental Category:</b>	B - Partial Assessment		
<b>Is this a Repeater project?</b>	No		

#### 2. Project Development Objective(s)

The proposed Project Development Objective (PDO) is to strengthen the higher education system and increase the capacity of higher education institutions to provide quality and relevant education to their graduates.

#### 3. Project Description

The Project consists of three components: (i) strengthening the higher education system; (ii) building

the capacity of higher education institutions; and (iii) project coordination, monitoring and evaluation.

#### Component 1: Strengthening the Higher Education System (US\$ 5.5 million)

This component supports the system-level capacity building for the Ministry of Education (MOE) and other relevant agencies that supervise higher education.

##### Sub-component 1.1: Improving the Higher Education System Governance (US\$ 0.9 million)

This sub-component supports the MOE and other agencies in improving the higher education governance framework to create an enabling environment for HEIs through the following activities:

- ☐ Conducting a review of the laws and regulations related to the governance of the higher education system and drafting necessary amendments in relation to those laws and regulations;
- ☐ Strengthening of the capacity of MOE and other agencies that supervise higher education to reprioritize the areas and levels of autonomy given to HEIs and the rules for accountability, and the carrying out of a mid-term plan to strengthen institutional autonomy;
- ☐ Strengthening the MOE's capacity to monitor and evaluate the performance of HEIs; and
- ☐ Conducting studies as needed by the MOE or other relevant agencies.

##### Sub-component 1.2: Enhancing the External Quality Assurance Mechanism for the Higher Education System (US\$ 1.5 million)

This sub-component supports the MOE in developing a national QA system aligned with international quality standards on transparency, effectiveness, independence and progressive improvement through the following activities:

- ☐ Reviewing and revising the existing policy framework for licensing and accrediting HEIs and academic programs and the current structure within the MOE that is responsible for decision making and the technical functions of the QA system;
- ☐ Improving the QA Mechanism and the related standards and guidelines for the assessment of HEIs and academic programs;
- ☐ Developing a pilot process for evaluating HEIs and academic programs;
- ☐ Training MOE staff who fulfill the functions within the QA Mechanism functions, HEI staff, and external reviewers;
- ☐ Conducting pilot institutional and program accreditations; and
- ☐ Carrying out an evaluation, conducted by international evaluators from a recognized QA network, to review the Azeri QA system following the pilot referred above.

##### Sub-component 1.3: Reforming Higher Education Financing (US\$ 1.7 million)

This sub-component supports the MOE in developing and implementing a comprehensive short-term and medium-term higher education financing reform strategy to improve efficiency and equity of public funding. Activities under this component are the following:

- ☐ Assessment of the existing higher education financing system, addressing the following four elements:
  - o Instruments of public funding for HEIs, including private ones;
  - o Diversification of financial sources for HEIs and the rules and regulations related to all these sources;
  - o Financial autonomy and accountability of HEIs; and
  - o Student funding and support.
- ☐ Piloting at least one of the reforms recommended by the assessment referred above.

##### Sub-component 1.4: Public Awareness Campaign and Monitoring of the Effectiveness of Higher

#### Education Reforms (US\$ 1.4 million)

This sub-component supports the MOE to build its capacity in enhancing public awareness in higher education reforms through the following activities:

- ☐ Designing and implementing a framework and marketing strategy for public awareness and information dissemination concerning global and local trends in higher education reforms and the reform needs in Azerbaijan;
- ☐ Providing an overall reform framework to media representatives, and developing their awareness about local and global higher education reform trends;
- ☐ Providing training to MOE staff to carry out, supervise, and monitor the activities proposed under the public awareness campaign;
- ☐ Implementing and managing the qualitative assessments planned under each part of the Project; and
- ☐ Carrying out evaluations and surveys on the public's perceptions regarding the relevance of and effectiveness of the reforms.

#### Component 2: Building the Capacity of Higher Education Institutions (US\$ 30 million)

This component supports strengthening the management capacity of HEIs and enhancement of the quality and relevance of their programs through three distinct capacity building activities at the institutional level.

##### Sub-component 2.1: Supporting HEIs in Building Leadership and Management Capacity (US\$ 4.4 million)

This sub-component supports HEIs in building their leadership and management capacities by developing and providing a comprehensive training program for HEIs, tailored to institutional leaders at different levels through the following activities:

- ☐ Developing a comprehensive training program by:
  - o Carrying out a general needs assessment to identify capacity building needs of HEIs; and
  - o Developing training programs for HEI leaders;
- ☐ Providing in-country training for HEIs; and
- ☐ Providing short-term internships and training for HEI staff in overseas higher education institutions.

##### Sub-component 2.2: Piloting and scaling up of selected reform activities (US\$ 2.8 million)

This sub-component supports the MOE in piloting pre-selected reform activities in one to three state HEIs each and developing reform models for a later roll-out through the following activities:

- Developing reform models for pre-selected topics, including (i) institutional research (IR) and internal quality assurance (IQA), (ii) career services and graduate tracking, (iii) learning management system (LMS), (iv) student services, and (v) regional workforce alignment;
- Piloting each reform model in one to three selected state HEIs;
- Evaluating the pilot implementation referred above and carrying out any necessary adjustments to the models for roll out to other HEIs; and
- Implementing at least one model reform in at least 25 HEIs.

##### Sub-component 2.3: Development of Initiatives to Improve Quality and Relevance of Academic Programs and HEIs (US\$ 22.8 million)

This sub-component supports the MOE in developing a transparent and efficient mechanism to support HEIs in implementing proposal-based development initiatives to improve the quality and relevance of study programs. The activity is open to all HEIs (public and private). Activities under this sub component would include provision of training and technical assistance to HEIs in

developing their proposals, selecting and awarding the proposals, and implementing the selected HEI proposals.

#### Component 3: Project Coordination, Monitoring and Evaluation (US\$ 3.4 million)

The component would provide financing and support to the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) that facilitates and coordinates the project implementation within the Ministry of Education, including consultants and training for PCU staff, and the financing of incremental operating expenditures, including office rental, local travel, utilities, publications, translations, office supplies, furniture and equipment, internet service, bank commission charges, vehicle maintenance and repair, fuel, and financial audits.

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

The proposed Project will cover reforms of existing higher education institutions nationwide. No land acquisition or physical displacement of residents is expected.

The project will finance sub-projects for higher education institutions that may include small-scale physical investment such as minor rehabilitation and/or renovation of existing facilities. The location of the sub-project sites will be determined during the implementation, but such sites will be limited to the properties within the existing higher education institutions. The project will only finance physical investments that do not involve land acquisition or resettlement, and accordingly OP 4.12 would not be triggered.

#### **5. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists**

Gulana Enar Hajiyevea (GENDR)

Aly Zulficar Rahim (GSURR)

<b>6. Safeguard Policies</b>	<b>Triggered?</b>	<b>Explanation (Optional)</b>
Environmental Assessment OP/ BP 4.01	Yes	The project will finance proposal-based sub-projects to improve the quality and relevance of higher education institutions (HEIs). Such sub-projects may include small-scale physical investment requiring minor rehabilitation and/or renovation of existing infrastructure of HEIs. These interventions are likely to cause certain environmental impacts, insignificant and temporary in nature, such as: increased noise and dust, generation of construction wastes, odor from the use of paints and other materials, disturbance to the teachers and student of selected universities during the period of the renovation, etc. The precise location and scope of the investment will be determined during the project implementation on a competitive basis according to the criteria and procedures to be specified in an Operational Manual.
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	The project will only finance small-scale physical investments at existing sites requiring minor rehabilitation and/or renovation of existing facilities. The project will not finance works at any sites that would cause involuntary resettlement. The project sites (existing higher education institutions) will be selected during the implementation on a competitive basis.
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	

## II. Key Safeguard Policy Issues and Their Management

### A. Summary of Key Safeguard Issues

<b>1. Describe any safeguard issues and impacts associated with the proposed project. Identify and describe any potential large scale, significant and/or irreversible impacts:</b>
The environmental issues which might occur due to the implementation of the project are those associated with Component 2.3 which, while providing TA and capacity building to selected universities, may require physical improvement of some university facilities. The environmental risks in such case will include those typically caused by minor renovation activities, i.e. disturbance due to increased noise, dust and odor, generation of construction wastes, and labor safety issues. All those will be addressed through sub-project specific EMP Checklists to be prepared by the PCU once the sub-projects are identified. The procedures as well as the institutional responsibilities for the development of such EMP Checklists have been determined by the Project Environmental Management Framework prepared by MoE in October 2014.
<b>2. Describe any potential indirect and/or long term impacts due to anticipated future activities in the project area:</b>
The long term indirect impacts of the Project include the better studying environment for the teachers and students of the beneficiary universities.
<b>3. Describe any project alternatives (if relevant) considered to help avoid or minimize adverse impacts.</b>
N/A.
<b>4. Describe measures taken by the borrower to address safeguard policy issues. Provide an</b>

<b>assessment of borrower capacity to plan and implement the measures described.</b>
The PCU under the MOE has prepared an Environmental Management Framework which identified the most typical environmental impacts which might be caused by the minor renovation activities supported by the Project, determined the procedures to be followed if the need for such renovation is indicated for any of the sub-projects which will be competitively selected in the course of the project implementation. The EMF envisages that the PCU will develop EMP Checklists to address specific risks of each sub-project related to the minor renovation activities. The PCU under the MOE will be responsible for the environmental management of the Project. The PCU has been involved into the implementation of the previous education reform project and is well experienced with Bank's operation policies and safeguard requirements. It is expected that a dedicated environmental consultant will be contracted by the PCU to manage and handle sub-project related environmental issues as specified by the Project EMF.
<b>5. Identify the key stakeholders and describe the mechanisms for consultation and disclosure on safeguard policies, with an emphasis on potentially affected people.</b>
The Ministry of Education (Implementing Agency) has disclosed the EMF prior to Appraisal on its official website on November 12, 2014, with an invitation for comments and questions to be sent at least one week before the completion of Appraisal. In addition, at an introductory workshop for this sub-project activity, further (in person) consultations on the EMP Checklists will be held with the HEIs that have submitted an expression of interest to participate in the activity.

### ***B. Disclosure Requirements***

<b>Environmental Assessment/Audit/Management Plan/Other</b>	
Date of receipt by the Bank	12-Nov-2014
Date of submission to InfoShop	14-Nov-2014
For category A projects, date of distributing the Executive Summary of the EA to the Executive Directors	
"In country" Disclosure	
<i>Comments:</i>	
<b>If the project triggers the Pest Management and/or Physical Cultural Resources policies, the respective issues are to be addressed and disclosed as part of the Environmental Assessment/Audit/or EMP.</b>	
<b>If in-country disclosure of any of the above documents is not expected, please explain why:</b>	

### ***C. Compliance Monitoring Indicators at the Corporate Level***

<b>OP/BP/GP 4.01 - Environment Assessment</b>			
Does the project require a stand-alone EA (including EMP) report?	Yes [ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ]	No [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]	NA [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]
If yes, then did the Regional Environment Unit or Practice Manager (PM) review and approve the EA report?	Yes [ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ]	No [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]	NA [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]
Are the cost and the accountabilities for the EMP incorporated in the credit/loan?	Yes [ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ]	No [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]	NA [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]
<b>The World Bank Policy on Disclosure of Information</b>			

Have relevant safeguard policies documents been sent to the World Bank's Infoshop?	Yes [ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ]    No [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]    NA [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]
Have relevant documents been disclosed in-country in a public place in a form and language that are understandable and accessible to project-affected groups and local NGOs?	Yes [ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ]    No [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]    NA [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]
<b>All Safeguard Policies</b>	
Have satisfactory calendar, budget and clear institutional responsibilities been prepared for the implementation of measures related to safeguard policies?	Yes [ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ]    No [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]    NA [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]
Have costs related to safeguard policy measures been included in the project cost?	Yes [ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ]    No [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]    NA [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]
Does the Monitoring and Evaluation system of the project include the monitoring of safeguard impacts and measures related to safeguard policies?	Yes [ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ]    No [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]    NA [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]
Have satisfactory implementation arrangements been agreed with the borrower and the same been adequately reflected in the project legal documents?	Yes [ <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> ]    No [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]    NA [ <input type="checkbox"/> ]

### III. APPROVALS

Task Team Leader:	Name: Sachiko Kataoka	
<b><i>Approved By</i></b>		
Practice Manager/ Manager:	Name: Mario Cristian Aedo Inostroza (PMGR)	Date: 20-Nov-2014