



# Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary

## Concept Stage

### **(ESRS Concept Stage)**

Date Prepared/Updated: 02/18/2023 | Report No: ESRSC03286



## BASIC INFORMATION

### A. Basic Project Data

Country	Region	Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any)
Kosovo	EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA	P179554	
Project Name	Public Information and Awareness Services for Vulnerable Communities in Kosovo		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Urban, Resilience and Land	Investment Project Financing		12/16/2022
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)		
Advocacy Training & Resource Center	Advocacy Training & Resource Center		

### Proposed Development Objective

The development objective is to improve access to information and counseling services for women, youth, and vulnerable persons in Kosovo in order to increase access to land and property registration and strengthen tenure security.

Financing (in USD Million)	Amount
Total Project Cost	3.20

### 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]

This small grant will be implemented at the grassroots level by partnering with CSOs in Kosovo that advocate for the protection of the rights of ethnic minorities, women and youth. It aligns with the Kosovo Country Partnership Framework Focus Areas 1 (Enhancing conditions for accelerated private sector growth and employment) and 2 (Strengthening public service delivery and macro-fiscal management). The proposed components and activities of this grant are as follows:



Component A: Public Outreach and Awareness – (i) Public Awareness Campaigns targeting all of Kosovo’s ethnic minorities; (ii) Development of targeted messaging for the promotion of women’s land rights; and (iii) Outreach campaigns to primary and secondary schools for building youth understanding about the importance of registering land and property.

Component B: Targeted Analysis for Inclusion – (i) Analysis of gaps that have restricted access to land and property registration services for Kosovo’s ethnic minorities; and (ii) identification of key challenges that restrict women’s land rights, previous attempts to address the challenges, and recommendations for new approaches.

Component C: Capacity Building and Project Management – (i) Capacity building programs for key local government stakeholders and civil society actors for providing land and property registration services; and (ii) Project management support including Monitoring & Evaluation, Procurement, Financial Management, Safeguards, etc.

Component D: Bank-Executed Grant Implementation Support – (i) World Bank advisory support to the grant’s implementing partners to ensure alignment with World Bank policies, procedures and REGIP’s activities; and (ii) Support to dialogue and engagement between KCA, CSOs and other relevant government entities.

## **D. Environmental and Social Overview**

D.1. Detailed project location(s) and salient physical characteristics relevant to the E&S assessment [geographic, environmental, social]

The project will cover the entire territory of the Republic of Kosovo, with a focus on priority cadastral zones (roughly 15 percent of the country’s territories) with large population densities and where economic activity and output is most prominent as well as areas with significant ethnic minorities and other vulnerable communities, including the country’s Serb-majority Northern Municipalities, while also taking into consideration important demographic dimensions such as age and poverty. Target locations will be selected in discussion with partner CSOs, KCA and Municipal Cadastre Offices.

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The project will facilitate vulnerable persons to navigate the land registration processes, including those beneficiaries of REGIP and those who benefit from the regular services of KCA. It will provide access to information and raised public awareness about the importance of registering land and property among all citizens with emphasis on ethnic minorities (Serbs, Roma, Ashkali, Egyptians, Turks, Bosnians, Gorani), promote women’s land rights and build youth understanding about the importance of registering land and property. Since the project targets vulnerable communities in Kosovo, a sensitive and context-specific approach is needed that is tailored to the needs of different groups including for each minority community. The project will partner with CSOs who have experience promoting registration of land and property specific vulnerable groups (e.g., war widow communities), and CSOs that have a wide network and reach in different ethnic communities, including in the Northern Municipalities. CSOs that are based in the Northern Municipalities also cooperate with CSO networks throughout Kosovo, including umbrella



organizations like the project's implementing agency. Partner CSOs will be selected based on their experience in participatory, non-discriminatory approaches in working with vulnerable groups.

#### D. 2. Borrower's Institutional Capacity

The lead recipient and implementing agency of this grant is Advocacy Training & Resource Center (ATRC), which will partner with CSOs across Kosovo that advocate for the protection of the rights of ethnic minorities, women and youth. ATRC is an umbrella organization focused on increasing citizen and civil society participation in government decision-making. ATRC has worked with 500+ entities, including CSOs, in Kosovo. Key partnerships have already been made by ATRC with CSOs such as Active Women of Gjakova, which recently implemented a World Bank-funded public awareness campaign among Kosovo's Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities. Though the grant will be implemented by ATRC, the World Bank will play a coordinating role to ensure cooperation with key government stakeholders including KCA and Kosovo's Office for Minorities under the Prime Minister's Office (this will be supported via the Bank-Executed Grant Implementation Support under Component D). A partnership unit will be established by ATRC to channel funding to partner CSOs that will carry out the grant activities within their own targeted communities. ATRC has no previous experience implementing World Bank financed projects, but they have experience implementing similar awareness raising projects, including the US Embassy-funded project Young Ambassadors, and a Netherlands Embassy-funded project focused on the environment and advocacy. ATRC will appoint a focal person that will work under the guidance of the World Bank Environmental and Social specialists to oversee social and environmental (S&E) aspects and mitigate potential S&E risks in line with the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). With this support, the Recipient is considered to have sufficient capacity to manage the project's low S&E risks.

## II. SCREENING OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL (ES) RISKS AND IMPACTS

### A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Low

#### Environmental Risk Rating

Low

The activities in this project are not expected to have any environmental impacts. Therefore, the environmental risk is rated Low. The project will provide capacity building and is expected to improve the land and property registration services and will help women, youth and vulnerable communities, including ethnic minorities, with understanding their land and property rights through awareness and counseling services provided by CSOs. No direct and indirect adverse environmental impacts are foreseeable from project activities. The project will have no environmental footprint.

#### Social Risk Rating

Low

The social risk is classified as low. The project is expected to have positive social impacts through increasing awareness, engagement, and capacity of women, and youth and vulnerable communities, including ethnic minorities, to make use of property registration services. Vulnerable groups that do not have formal rights to the land/property on which they reside (e.g., Roma, war widows) have difficulty accessing land registration services, information about land/property formalization procedures and land dispute resolution mechanisms available. The project will identify and, to the extent possible, address barriers that unintentionally dis-incentivize certain groups from accessing the required information, services and mechanisms. These activities are anticipated to have a positive impact on tenure security and vulnerable individuals' ability to participate in the economy. The activities will not have a physical footprint and will not entail direct or induced risks to private property. Given the scale and nature of the activities, the



absence of identifiable adverse social impacts and partnership with CSOs capacity of working with vulnerable groups, the project's social risk is considered to be low.

## **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 proposed grant activities will not fund any construction or investments with a physical footprint. No adverse direct or indirect environmental or social impacts associated with project activities have been identified.

There are multiple social benefits to enhancing the awareness among vulnerable persons on how to navigate the land registration processes, including enhanced participation in legalization services and strengthened land tenure security which allows for participation in the broader economy (e.g. using land titles as collateral for bank loans for starting businesses, development of real estate markets, etc.). Enhancing the capacity of government authorities in Kosovo to determine mechanisms and gaps that restrict the ability of minority groups such as Roma communities from registering land and legalizing structures helps determine more effective mechanisms for equitable service delivery in the land sector. The grant activities will help identify challenges faced by Kosovo's ethnic minorities, particularly Serb and Bosnian communities found in Kosovo's Northern Municipalities, in registering land and property and benefitting for the services offered by the government agencies and institutions (e.g. language barriers, geographic isolation). The knowledge produced will allow KCA and local government stakeholders to better target vulnerable populations and ensure they fully benefit from public services as a means of helping to avoid future social tensions and grievances.

An Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) will be prepared, disclosed and consulted upon prior to Appraisal. Since the project activities are focused on outreach, capacity building and counseling services to targeted groups, a standalone Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) will not be prepared. Instead, broad elements of SEP will be included in the ESCP and further elaborated in the sub-projects operations manual. Conditional upon no significant changes to the activities and based on the low risk and the nature and scale of the activities, it is recommended that an Appraisal ESRS is not required.

##### **Areas where "Use of Borrower Framework" is being considered:**

Implementation of the project will not rely on the Recipient's E&S framework, in part or as a whole.

#### **ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure**

The project affected parties are individuals who will receive information and counseling services on land registration processes in project-targeted areas, including beneficiaries of REGIP and persons who benefit from the regular services of KCA. The project will also benefit KCA staff, key local government stakeholders and civil society actors who will have increased capacity to develop messaging more effectively and provide inclusive property registration services. Government officials and other key stakeholders will benefit from the lessons learned and knowledge produced by the project on minority inclusion initiatives in the land sector.



The preparatory analysis (i.e., component B), workshops and focus group meetings will be used to design demand-driven information campaigns, capacity building programs, and targeted counseling services for the proposed beneficiaries. ATRC and partner CSOs will deliver information/awareness on priority subjects based on information and awareness gaps on land registration and rights identified among targeted communities. The focus of the CSO sub-projects is outreach and stakeholder engagement activities with identified vulnerable groups. Detailed guidelines for these activities will be provided in the sub-projects operations manual drafted prior to grant implementation. A standalone SEP will not be prepared, but broad elements of SEP will be included in the ESCP.

ATRC has developed a grievance mechanism (GM) for similar activities implemented with other donors, which will be adapted for the purposes of this project. ATRC will ensure that the grievance arrangements are publicly available throughout the implementation of the project and are publicized as part of their regular public awareness activities. In addition, the awareness campaign will include information about KCA's institutional mechanisms for grievance management associated with registration services.

## **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**

The project's direct workers are ATRC's current staff and potentially a few consultants hired to oversee implementation and coordination of sub-project activities with other CSOs. Contracted workers are anticipated to be employees of CSOs who will conduct public information and awareness campaigns, capacity building programs for key local government stakeholders and civil society actors, and provide land registration counseling services to vulnerable individuals. Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) risks might include impacts on the health, safety, and well-being of direct and contracted workers from engagement in public events and meetings, including exposure to COVID-19.

The main identified legal and implementation gaps between Kosovo's national system and ESS2 include (i) the lack of requirement to establish a GM for project workers (establishment of a functional and accessible worker GM is not mandatory under national legislation); (ii) the reporting systems for occupational accidents and occupational diseases do not work in practice; and (iii) lack of specific OHS technical standards, codes of practice, or guidelines (OHS standards are only generally covered). Since the identified risks to labor and working conditions are minor, they will be managed through inclusion of ESS2 requirements in the ESCP by requesting that: (1) ATRC and partner CSOs have protocols for workplace-level COVID-19 risk management; and (2) ATRC establishes a workers' GM for the project implementing team and verifies that all other contracted consultants (CSO staff) have a workers' GM in place prior to establishing contractual relationship.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)/Sexual Harassment (SH) risks in the workplace are estimated to be low as the project implementation does not imply any civil works, will not require establishment and operation of work camps, and will not cause labor influx as well as because of decent national legislation on SEA/SH.. Despite the low anticipated SEA/SH risks, the project will proactively implement SEA/SH prevention and mitigation measures. Concretely, the ESCP will state that both ATRC staff and contracted workers will have SEA/SH elements included in



their Code of Conduct applicable to their respective workplaces, including for interacting with vulnerable groups during field activities.

#### **ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management**

This standard is not relevant for the suggested project interventions.

#### **ESS4 Community Health and Safety**

Provided that the only activities implemented at the community level are meetings, consultations, and training, and the project does not involve any physical works, the proposed activities are not expected to cause any impact on community health and safety. Community SEA/SH risks are low. ATRC shall implement relevant SEA/SH prevention and mitigation measures, including ensuring that the project's grievance mechanism is adequately equipped to receive, register, and facilitate the resolution of SEA/SH complaints.

#### **ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement**

This standard is not relevant for the suggested project activities, as the project does not involve land acquisition, nor will it cause restrictions on land use.

#### **ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources**

This standard is not relevant for the suggested project interventions.

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

There are no known Indigenous Peoples, as defined by ESS7, residing in Kosovo. Thus, this standard is not relevant.

#### **ESS8 Cultural Heritage**

This standard is not relevant for the suggested project interventions.

#### **ESS9 Financial Intermediaries**

This standard is not relevant for the suggested project interventions.

### **B.3 Other Relevant Project Risks**

All relevant risks that have been identified are summarized against each of the standards.

## **C. Legal Operational Policies that Apply**

### **OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways**

No



The small grant activities will not be implemented in international waterways.

**OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas**

No

The small grant activities will not be implemented in disputed areas.

### III. WORLD BANK ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL DUE DILIGENCE

**A. Is a common approach being considered?**

No

**Financing Partners**

N/A

**B. Proposed Measures, Actions and Timing (Borrower's commitments)**

**Actions to be completed prior to Bank Board Approval:**

Prepare and disclose an Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), including broad elements of the SEP.

**Possible issues to be addressed in the Borrower Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP):**

ATRC appoints a focal person to oversee social and environmental aspects of project implementation and mitigate potential social and environmental risks in line with the ESF.

ATRC shall develop and maintain a workers' grievance mechanism for the implementing team and assign focal person to adequately address these grievances.

ATRC shall verify that all contracted consultants (partner CSO staff) have workers' grievance mechanism in place prior to the CSOs' engagement and a Code of Conduct with SEA/SH provisions, including for interacting with vulnerable groups.

ATRC shall ensure that all project staff sign a Code of Conduct with SEA/SH provisions.

ATRC shall ensure that the project's grievance mechanism is adequately equipped to receive, register, and facilitate the resolution of SEA/SH complaints.

ATRC shall implement adequate occupational health and safety measures, including workplace protocols in line with ESS2 and WHO guidelines on COVID-19.

Accessible grievance arrangements shall be made publicly available to receive and facilitate the resolution of concerns and grievances in relation to the project, consistent with ESS10.

### IV. CONTACT POINTS

**World Bank**

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**Borrower/Client/Recipient**

Borrower: Advocacy Training & Resource Center





**Implementing Agency(ies)**

Implementing Agency: Advocacy Training & Resource Center

**V. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT**

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**VI. APPROVAL**

Task Team Leader(s): Paul Scott Prettitore

Practice Manager (ENR/Social) Gaurav Dilipkumar Joshi Recommended on 01-Feb-2023 at 09:15:46 EST