



Republic of Kosovo

Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation

**ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK
(ESMF)**

Project:

**Early Childhood Development for Kosovo's Human Capital Project
Project ID: P179656**

October, 2023

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List of Abbreviation and Acronyms

ACM	Asbestos-containing materials
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
CSO	Civil Society Organization
E&S	Environmental and Social
ECA	Europe and Central Asia
ECD	Early Childhood Development
ECE	Early Childhood Education
ECEC	Early Childhood Education and Care
EHS	Environmental, Health and Safety
ELP	Early Learning Partnership
EHSGs	Social Standards, WB Group Environmental Health and Safety Guidelines
ESA	Environmental and Social Assessment
ESF	Environmental and Social Framework
ESIA	Environmental & Social Impact Assessment
ESMF	Environmental and Social Management Framework
ESMP	Environmental and Social Management Plan
ESS	Environmental and Social Standard
EU	European Union
FY	Fiscal Year
IFI	International Financial Institution
IE	Impact Evaluation
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GoK	Government of Kosovo
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
GIIPs	Good International Industrial Practices
HCI	Human Capital Index
HIV	Human Immunodeficiency Viruses
HLO	High-Level Outcome
IDA	International Development Association / World Bank
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IPF	Investment Project Financing
IR	Involuntary Resettlement
KG	Kindergarten
LMP	Labor Management Procedures
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
m/f	Male / Female

MCH	Maternal and Child Health
MFLT	Ministry of Finance, Labor, and Transfers
MOH	Ministry of Health
MoIE	Ministry of Environment Spatial Planning and Environment
NDS	National Development Strategy
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
O&M	Operations & Maintenance
RPF	Resettlement Policy Framework
PAP	Project Affected Person
PCBs	Polychlorinated biphenyls (in power transformer oil)
PCP	Public Consultation Program
PCR	Physical Cultural Resources
PDO	Project Development Objective
PHC	Primary Health care
PIU	Project Implementation Unit
RAP	Resettlement Action Plan
RPF	Resettlement Policy Framework
SA	Social Assessment
SBCC	Social and Behavioral Change Communications
SEP	Stakeholder Engagement Plan
SOP	Series of Projects
TA	Technical Assistance
TLM	Teaching and Learning Material
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
USAID	United States Agency for International Development
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

1. Introduction. The Government of Kosovo (GoK) through the Ministry of Finance, Labor, and Transfers (MFLT) intends to receive funding from the World Bank (WB) for the implementation of the “Early Childhood Development (ECD) for Kosovo's Human Capital Project”. The overall project objective is to improve access to and quality of early childhood development services in Kosovo. Early Childhood Development (ECD) for Kosovo's Human Capital Project is structured to respond to the major issues of early childhood development services in Kosovo. The operation will help Kosovo to improve access, quality, and equity in ECD, as well as support healthcare interventions to address the health challenges of the youngest children in the country. The project will also look into promotional activities in ECD in order to raise the population’s awareness about the importance of ECD for child health and development, thus leading to better parenting, early identification, and eventually decreased child mortality rates. The Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI) is the lead implementing agency for the preparation of the project design and activities and will identify the environmental management requirements for the preparation phase.

2. Purpose of Environmental Management Framework. The main goal of the ESMF is to avoid, minimize or mitigate, potential negative environmental and related social impacts caused by implementation of the project. The Framework approach is chosen as the project is financing a broad range small/medium-scale activities, the rehabilitation, repurposing of existing spaces as well as the construction of new kindergartens, most of which will not be identified until implementation begins. The Framework ensures that the identified ECD subprojects are correctly assessed from environmental and social point of view to meet the WB’s Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and its applicable Standards, as well as Kosovo’s Environmental and Social Laws and Regulations for adequate mitigation of any residual and/or unavoidable impacts. The Framework serves as a guiding tool for Project Implementation Unit (PIU) under the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), the implementing agency. This ESMF should be read together with other plans prepared for the project, including the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF), Labor management Procedures (LMP) and the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP)

3. Project Description. The ECD project's development objective is to improve equitable access to and quality of early childhood development services in Kosovo. Key Results expected from project implementation consist of:

Indicator 1: Improved quality of ECE services as measured by TEACH ECE – disaggregated by type of institution and urban/rural

Indicator 2: Improved regulations on targeting and quality assurance of ECE services in Kosovo

Indicator 3: Percent of children 3-6 years old that have received the minimum number of check-ups defined in the service package in selected municipalities

Indicator 4: Increased access to childcare services: enrollment rate for 0-6 year old – disaggregated by gender, age, minority group

The proposed Project will be organized around four key components which relate to improving access, quality, equity and cross-sectoral coordination of ECD services.

Component 1: Strengthening the quality and equity of ECD services in Kosovo Fostering multi-sectorial integration in ECD service delivery

Subcomponent 1.1. ECD quality and equity reforms in Kosovo (IDA: US\$0.5 million).

Subcomponent 1.2. Capacity building of ECD professionals (IDA: US\$2.5 million).

Sub-component 1.3. Implementation of ECE module for the Education Management Information System (EMIS) in Kosovo and general overhaul of core EMIS system (IDA: US\$1.0 million).

Component 2: Fostering multi-sectorial integration in ECD service delivery.

Sub-component 2.1. Promoting healthy nutrition

Sub-component 2.2. Child monitoring and cross-sectoral integration of services

Component 3: Increasing access to ECD services;

Sub-component 3.1. Green and universal repurposing, building, and renovating ECEC facilities in Kosovo (IDA).

Sub-component 3.2. Equipping of ECEC centers with new furniture and learning materials

Sub-component 3.3. Support for community participation and demand-side interventions

Component 4: Project management and monitoring & evaluation

4. Environmental and Social Policies, Regulations and Laws. The Kosovo environmental framework is relevant to project overall activities, and especially the activities under component 3, which includes also financing of medium-scale interventions, the rehabilitation, and the repurposing of existing spaces as well as the construction of new kindergartens, most of which will not be identified until implementation begins. Meanwhile the social framework and policies presented under the section are relevant to the overall project components. The Law No.03/L-214 on Environmental Impact Assessment will be respected and followed up for subprojects that will be subject to National Environmental and Social Assessment and Permitting. With regard to WB Environmental and Social Standards, the Project environmental and social risk is proposed moderate and covers the following applicable ESF Standards under the project, namely ESS 1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts, ESS 2 Labor and Working Conditions, ESS 3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management, ESS 4 Community Health and Safety, ESS 5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement, and ESS 10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure; as well as the World Bank Group's Environmental Health and Safety Guidelines.

5. Location. The proposed project has a national coverage, and covers the administrative borders of the Republic of Kosovo. The locations for the construction of new kindergartens are yet not known, anyway it is anticipated that that the construction of new kindergartens are expected to occur mainly on publicly owned lands, which have been designated for this purpose and either owned by, or transferred to the respective beneficiary.

6. Potential environmental and social risk and impacts. Overall project ESF risk level is proposed moderate and overall expected implementation impacts are expected to be positive. The environmental and social risks associated with the implementation of the civil works under component 3, may be associated with moderate, temporary and local environmental and social impacts, which can be easily avoided or minimized with the application of the WB Environmental and Social Standards, WB Group Environmental Health and Safety Guidelines (EHSGs), and Good International Industrial Practices (GIIPs). The major social project risk is related to the possibility of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups being excluded from the project benefit.

7. Procedures and implementation arrangements. As project implementation requires multisectoral involvement, the government focal point for human capital development, the MESTI is a key player that can bring together all concerned ministries and agencies to deliver the results of the project. The MESTI will be responsible for overall implementation, coordination, results monitoring, and communicating with the WB for implementation of all project-related activities. A central Project Implementation Unit

(PIU) will be established under the MESTI. The PIU's vital roles are to provide technical and operational assistance to MESTI and targeted project districts in implementing the project activities, including procurement, FM, and environmental and social risk management responsibilities. The ESF capacity of the MESTI is evaluated to be weak since the previous WB project "Kosovo Education Improvement Project" was on safeguards and without the infrastructure component. The existing environmental and social ESF capacities at the Ministry would need to be strengthened for the Project implementation phase. To improve institutional capacities with regard to ESMF implementation the WB Environmental and Social Specialists will provide special training for the MESTI PIU staff focused on: (i) Procedural aspects of ESA (stages, key actors, main responsibilities etc.); (ii) Assessment of environmental and social impacts potentially related to the subproject supported within the project; (iii) Consulting and approval of the ESA and monitoring plans; and (iii) preparing ESMP Checklist; (iv) Conducting field supervision and preparing progress reports.

8. Stakeholder engagement, disclosure and consultations. This draft ESMF as well as Project SEP, LMP, RPF and the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), once cleared from the WB, will be posted on the MESTI official websites. The final version of the ESMF will be officially submitted to the World Bank for disclosure in English on the WB external webpage. The English, Albanian and Serbian versions will be also posted on the web page of the MESTI. The final version of this document will be used by respective government agencies and other Project stakeholders during the project implementation. Key feedback if any on the disclosed ESMF will be listed on the final version of the document. MESTI PIU will conduct national/local public consultations on this draft ESMF and invite all interested stakeholder organizations including local representatives of the other Government bodies, as per ECD project SEP guidance.

1. INTRODUCTION

The Government of Kosovo (GoK) through the Ministry of Finance, Labor, and Transfers (MFLT) intends to receive funding from the World Bank (WB) for the implementation of the “Early Childhood Development (ECD) for Kosovo's Human Capital Project”. The overall project objective is to improve access to and quality of early childhood development services in Kosovo. Early Childhood Development (ECD) for Kosovo's Human Capital Project is structured to respond to the major issues of early childhood development services in Kosovo. The operation will help Kosovo to improve access, quality, and equity in ECD, as well as support healthcare interventions to address the health challenges of the youngest children in the country. The project will also look into promotional activities in ECD in order to raise the population’s awareness about the importance of ECD for child health and development, thus leading to better parenting, early identification, and eventually decreased child mortality rates.

The investments under the ECD project are expected to yield both short- and long-term returns. Existing research on the success of early childhood programs mainly focuses on short-term academic gains when it is the long-term benefits that offer a more lasting measure of value. Children who received quality early childhood development from birth to age five had significantly better life outcomes than those who did not receive center-based care or those who received lower-quality care. Findings included stronger outcomes in education, health, sociability, and reduced crime. Economic productivity effects were also found, with improved adult labor outcomes for participants and their parents, resulting in a two-generation effect on the workforce.

1.1 Purpose of the ESMF

This Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) is developed to support the environment and social due diligence provisions for activities financed by the World Bank in the ECD project. The Framework approach is chosen as the project is financing a broad range of small and medium scale activities, most of which will not be identified until implementation begins. The Framework ensures that the identified subprojects are correctly screened and assessed from environmental and social point of view to meet the WB’s Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and its applicable Standards, as well as Kosovo’s Environmental and Social Laws and Regulations for adequate mitigation of any residual and/or unavoidable impacts. The Framework serves as a guidance tool for Project Implementation Unit (PIU) under the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology and Innovation (MESTI), the implementing agency, in identifying and assessing the potential environmental and social impacts of subprojects, in preparing environmental and social management plans that will summarize necessary mitigation measures to minimize or prevent them, and to provide guidance on environmental and social monitoring and reporting.

More specifically the ESMF aims to: (a) assess the potential environmental and social risks and impacts of the proposed Project and propose mitigation measures; (b) establish procedures for the environmental and social screening, review, approval, and implementation of activities; (c) specify appropriate roles and responsibilities, and outline the necessary reporting procedures, for managing and monitoring environmental and social issues related to the activities; (d) identify the training and capacity building needed to successfully implement the provisions of the ESMF; (e) address mechanisms for public consultation and disclosure of project documents as well as redress of possible grievances; and (f) establish the budget requirements for implementation of the ESMF.

This ESMF should be read together with other plans prepared for the project, including the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF), Labor management Procedures (LMP) and the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).

2. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

The Project Development Objective is to improve equitable access to and quality of early childhood development services in Kosovo.

Key results:

Indicator 1: Improved quality of ECE services as measured by TEACH ECE – disaggregated by type of institution and urban/rural

Indicator 2: Improved regulations on targeting and quality assurance of ECE services in Kosovo

Indicator 3: Percent of children 3-6 years old that have received the minimum number of check-ups defined in the service package in selected municipalities

Indicator 4: Increased access to childcare services: enrollment rate for 0-6 year old – disaggregated by gender, age, minority group

The proposed Project will be organized around four key components which relate to improving access, quality, equity and cross-sectoral coordination of ECD services.

Component 1: Strengthening the quality and equity of ECD services in Kosovo Fostering multi-sectorial integration in ECD service delivery (IDA: US\$4 million); seeks to improve the regulatory, operational, and implementation capacity of Kosovo to ensure the quality of ECD services across the education system and equity in access to ECD and childcare services in Kosovo. This component includes three sub-components, focusing on (i) regulatory updates related to ECD delivery and implementation of quality assurance, (ii) building teachers', caregivers', and ECD professionals' capacity, and (iii) digitalization of the administrative data to support transparent and data-driven decision making.

- ✓ *Subcomponent 1.1. ECD quality and equity reforms in Kosovo (IDA: US\$0.5 million).*
- ✓ *Subcomponent 1.2. Capacity building of ECD professionals (IDA: US\$2.5 million).*
- ✓ *Sub-component 1.3. Implementation of ECE module for the Education Management Information System (EMIS) in Kosovo and general overhaul of core EMIS system (IDA: US\$1.0 million).*

Component 2: Fostering multi-sectorial integration in ECD service delivery (IDA: US\$4 million); aims to support the Government in addressing child outcomes, particularly lowering infant mortality, stimulating development, and reducing stunting rates through prenatal to childcare range of services, by promoting healthy nutrition, enhancing child monitoring and cross-sectoral integration of services. Activities under this component include (i) scaling up nutrition interventions by encouraging the adoption of a new nutrition menu in preschool institutions and ii) designing of an integrated service package between early childhood education centers (ECE) and primary healthcare centers (PHC) for children aged 3-6.

- ✓ *Sub-component 2.1. Promoting healthy nutrition (IDA: US\$2.0 million)*
- ✓ *Sub-component 2.2. Child monitoring and cross-sectoral integration of services (IDA: US\$2.0 million).*

Component 3: Increasing access to ECD services (IDA: US\$10.5 million; ELP US\$2.0 million); aims to support the Government's priorities to increase access to preschool services for families and increase enrollment rates. The interventions of this component will include (i) constructing, refurbishing, and repurposing facilities for the provision of ECD services, (ii) innovative equipment of the kindergartens and provision of teaching and learning materials, (iii) supporting the alternative forms of ECD provision, and (iv) providing the instruments for community engagement and stimulate families to join ECD services.

- ✓ *Sub-component 3.1. Repurposing, building, and renovating the preschool and ECD facilities in Kosovo (IDA: US\$7.7 million; ELP US\$2.0 million).*
- ✓ *Sub-component 3.2. Equipment of ECD centers with new furniture and learning materials (IDA: US\$1.5 million).*
- ✓ *Sub-component 3.3. Support for community participation and demand-side interventions (IDA: US\$1.7 million).*

Component 4: Project management and monitoring & evaluation (IDA: US\$1.5 million); will support the day-to-day management of Project implementation, the monitoring and evaluation of its implementation, and technical assistance and operational support for MESTI. In addition, this component will support the implementation of the package of the evaluation and assessment instruments (TEACH ECE, ECD assessments), the design of the impact evaluation (IE) study, and its implementation throughout the Project duration. The IE will combine the TEACH ECE and identified assessment instrument in the Project preschools and control group of preschools to show the Project's impact and will also measure the impact of ECD expansion that fulfills childcare function on child development and labor market outcomes.

3. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL POLICIES, REGULATIONS AND LAWS

The following section describes Kosovo's institutional, legal, and policy framework related to environmental and social policies relevant to the ECD project components. The environmental framework is relevant to project overall activities, and especially the activities under component 3, which includes also financing of medium-scale interventions, the rehabilitation, and the repurposing of existing spaces as well as the construction of new kindergartens, most of which will not be identified until implementation begins. Meanwhile the social framework and policies presented under the section are relevant to the overall project components.

3.1 Kosovo Legal Framework

An overview of laws and regulations that have relevance or may be triggered by the ECD Project activities are as follows (see Table 1).

Table 5: Kosovo National environmental and social legal framework

Law / Sub laws	Key provisions and purpose	Relevance to the Project
Environmental Protection Law (03/L-025-2009)	This law is the highest level environmental legal document in Kosovo that regulates prevention and reduction of pollution, regulates environmental monitoring, and sets out the principles of rational use of natural resources. This law harmonizes economic development and social welfare with basic principles for environmental protection according to the concept of sustainable development. According to this law, planned projects, including changes in technology, reconstruction, and extension of facilities or interruption of operations, which may result in major environmental impact or which constitute risk to human health, require prior Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA).	Besides benefits of implementation of activities proposed under component 3 (Repurposing, building, and renovating the preschool and ECD facilities in Kosovo), may cause adverse environmental and social impacts that should be assessed prior their implementation in accordance with the <i>Law No. 03/L-214 on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)</i> .
Law No. 03/L-214 on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Instruction on information, public participation and interested parties in the environmental impact assessment procedures (No.09/11) 	<p>This law regulates the procedures for identification, and screening of projects subject to environmental impact assessment, and in addition, it describes aspects, content, scope of assessment, reporting and administration procedures of environmental impact assessments of proposed projects in order to provide all the relevant information regarding the environment, in order to enable and facilitate the decision making process.</p> <p>The procedures for the EIA approval are defined in Chapter III of the Law and includes the following phases: (1) screening; (2) scoping; (3) review of EIA Report and (4) Public Consultation. On the basis of environmental impact assessments, MOIE issues Environmental Consent required for every public or private project (listed in Annex I or Annex II of this Law), that is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue of, among other things, its nature, size or location.</p>	<p>Preparation of subprojects under component 3 and envisaged activities under each subproject should be screened case by case in accordance with the criteria set out in Annex III. as per the Law No. 03/L-214 on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), and analysed if listed under Annex 1 or Annex 2 of the Law for which EIA is mandatory.</p> <p>The PIU of the project, before implementation of the subproject will prepare documentation for initiation of EIA (Chapter III of the Law, Article 10 and 11) i.e. Environmental Screening Report (in accordance with the ANNEX 3 of the Law – Criteria for Screening) and submit it to the MOIE in order to notify them about implementation of the proposed subproject activities and to obtain recommendation about the further steps that should be taken for environmental assessments on the subproject site.</p> <p>Public consultation and public involvement will start after initiation of the EIA (submission of Application to start ESIA) as well as during the whole procedure for EIA.</p>
Law on Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (03/L-230)	The Law on Strategic Environmental Impact Assessment (SEIA) aims to align plans and programs developed for protection of the environment and health of people. This Law stipulates development of an integrated approach in preparation of endeavors for environment protection towards a sustainable development.	Law stipulates that SEIA shall be developed for plans or programs that have a possibility to have a significant environmental impact. SEIA provides a framework for further project developments which are subject to environmental impact assessment in concordance with the Law on EIA. SEIAs are primarily developed by municipal authorities, as a mean to provide a framework for potential environmental impacts that development projects may entail. This law provides almost no details about requirements on social impacts, as part of the requirements to develop an environmental impact assessment document. The Law, article 15.2, calls for the Ministry to develop further instructions about the compilation and assessment of environmental impact assessment reports. These administrative instructions have not yet been produced.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Instruction No. 10/2012 for the Release of Municipal Environmental Permit (MEP) 	This instruction regulates procedures and issuance, validity and other aspects of municipal level environmental assessment. MEP Report is requested on the basis of EIA Law Annex II screening, Annex III criteria and MOIE decision. It has a much narrower scope than the EIA, is limited to 10 pages and can be prepared by a natural person.	If MOIE decided that for the proposed subproject is not required to conduct an EIA, after submission of the Environmental Screening Report in that case an applicant should prepare EIA Report and submits it to the respective municipality as part of the Municipal Environmental Permit request.

Law / Sub laws	Key provisions and purpose	Relevance to the Project
<p>Law on Air Protection from Pollution (No. 2010/03-L-160) In line with the Law a set of administrative instruction has been issued as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative instruction (GRK) - No. 21/2013 for arsenic, cadmium, mercury, nickel and polycyclic aromatic hydrocarbons in air; Administrative instruction No. 15/2010 on criteria for defining of air quality monitoring points, number and frequency of measurements, classification of pollutants which are monitored, the methodology of work, form and timing of data reporting. Administrative instruction No. 02/2011 on air quality assessment; Administrative Instruction 2007, on the rules and standards of the discharges on air by the stationary sources of pollution etc. 	<p>The purpose of this Law is to regulate and guarantee the rights of citizens to live in a healthy and clean air environment, whilst protecting human health, fauna, flora and natural and cultural values of the environment.</p> <p>The basic environmental indicators of air quality and the air pollution sources as well as specific obligations of pollution sources operators are defined.</p> <p>In Administrative instruction No.02/2011 and Administrative instruction GRK No.21/2013 the values for the concentration of Sulphur dioxide (SO₂), nitrogen dioxide (NO₂), benzene, carbon monoxide, lead, PM₁₀, PM_{2.5} in the air, target values for the concentration of arsenic, cadmium, nickel and benzo(a)pyrene, alert thresholds of the SO₂, NO₂, ozone and PM₁₀ and critical levels of SO₂ and NO_x for protection of vegetation are defined.</p>	<p>The project construction activities under component 3, related to repurposing, extending and constructing new kindergartens –will be source of air pollution, especially during the construction phase, for that purpose throughout project/subproject lifecycles the law obligations should be respected, and appropriate mitigation measures should be developed, implemented and monitored.</p>
<p>Law No. 04/L-147 On the Waters of Kosovo, or the Water Law In line with the Law a set of administrative instruction has been issued as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative instruction (AI) No.03 /2018 “on Procedures for Water Permit”; AI No. 15/2017 “on Criteria for Determining the Sanitary Protection Zones for Water Resources”; AI No. 16 /2017 “on the Classification of Surface Water Bodies”; AI No. 17 /2017 “on the Classification of Ground Water Bodies”; AI No. 19/2015 “for Protection from Harmful Water Actions”; AI No. 30/2014 “on Limit Values of Effluents Discharged into Water Bodies and in Public Sewage Network” approved by the Government of Kosovo (GoK); AI No. 16/2012 “on the Quality of Water Intended for Human Consumption” etc. 	<p>The purpose of this Law is: to provide sustainable development and utilization of water resources that are necessary for public health, environmental protection and social- economic development of the Republic of Kosovo, to establish procedures and guiding principles for the optimal distribution of water resources, based on the use and purpose, to ensure protection of water resources from pollution, overuse and misuse and determine the institutional structures for managing the water resource.</p> <p>By this Law are regulated all issues related to: surface waters, lakes, storage, reservoirs, natural resources, underground waters, wet lands, lands near the shores of the rivers, issues related to their management, use and water distribution, protection and preservation of water, protection from harmful actions of water, including submergence, floods, droughts, erosion; water facilities and infrastructure, water financing and also conditions, methods and activities by which there can be used or released the waters.</p> <p>In the Water Law and regulation, the permits for water use and water management are defined.</p>	<p>Implementation of the subprojects may affect water resources, especially in the construction phase as a result of construction activities, use of water for technical purpose, generation of waste water (technical and sanitary), performance of activities in the ponds presented on site, possible impacts on ground water, etc. The new ECD budlings that will be constructed under the project, will be subject to obtain water supply and wastewater treatment infrastructure services.</p> <p>Before implementation of the subprojects activities obtaining permits defined in the Law and regulation should be provided and implement measures for water protection. During implementation of the activities the law obligation should be respected.</p>
<p>Law on Noise Protection No. 02/L-102</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Administrative instruction - No. 08/2009 on allowed values of noise emissions from pollution sources. 	<p>The purpose of the Law is to avoid, prevent or reduce the harmful effects (including annoyance due to exposure to noise) of noise on the environment. This law provides a basis for developing measures to reduce the noise emitted by road and rail traffic, aircrafts, outdoor and industrial equipment, mobile machinery and other major sources of environmental noise pollution and annoyance.</p>	<p>Construction activities will be source of noise, during the implementation phase as a result of use of heavy equipments, different works and transport activities. During implementation of the activities the law obligations should be respected.</p> <p>The limit noise norms should be respected also during operation phase, when kindergarten will be functional, and in order to achieve the results, if deemed needed, special materials should be used during construction of the ECD buildings in order to respect the stipulations under the Law.</p>

Law / Sub laws	Key provisions and purpose	Relevance to the Project
<p>Law on Waste No. 04/L-060 (2012)</p> <p>In line with the Law a set of administrative instruction has been issued as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative instruction MOIE No.21/2014 for waste management from the extractive industry and mining, • Administrative Instruction No. 22/2015 on the Management of Waste Containing Asbestos, • Administrative Instruction No. 05/2013 on the Management of Used and Waste Oils, • Administrative instruction for waste management by packing and wrappings (Act.No MMPH-27/2014) • Administrative Instruction No.51/2017 for a list of hazardous waste according to the origin, • Administrative instruction No.16/2013 on the limit values for concentrations of hazardous components in waste, • Administrative instruction of waste storage management (Act.No. QRK-08/2017-UA), • Administrative Instruction on waste management of electrical and electronic equipment and restrictions on use of hazardous in electrical and electronic equipment (Act No. MMPH- 25/2014) etc. 	<p>The aim of this Law is: avoiding and reducing waste generation; re-use of useful components from waste; sustainable development through the protection and preservation of natural resources; preventing negative impacts of waste on the environment and human health; final disposal of waste in environmentally acceptable ways.</p> <p>Law on waste regulates waste management, plans for environmental management, rights and obligations of licensed persons who deal with waste management, manner and conditions of waste collection, transport, treatment, processing, storage and final disposal, import, export and waste transit, monitoring, information system and financing. Hazardous waste is also managed according to the provisions of the Law on Waste: MOIE is mandated to manage hazardous waste, in cooperation with the respective Ministry.</p> <p>Local governments (municipalities) are responsible for selecting and licensing (through the application of procurement procedures) of persons for collection, gathering, storage and transportation of solid waste, municipal, voluminous waste, waste from construction and demolition of buildings within their territory.</p> <p>Administrative instruction MOIE No.21/2014 determine measures, procedures and guidelines to prevent or reduce negative effects on the environment and anything that endangers the human health that comes as a result of waste management and mineral extraction industry.</p>	<p>As a result of the implementation of the project componets (Mainly related to component 3) construction and demolition activities will be source of generation for different types of wastes (hazardous and non-hazardous) are expected mainly during implementation phase of the project.</p> <p>Throughout project/subproject lifecycles the law obligations should be respected, and appropriate mitigation measures should be developed, implemented and monitored.</p>
<p>Law on Chemicals No. 04/L-197</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • AI No. 17/2014 on Classification, Labelling and Packing of Hazardous Chemicals, • AI No. 23/2015 for Export, Import and Transit of Certain Hazardous Chemicals, • AI No. 18 /2017 on the Material Safety Data Sheet for Chemicals and Its Mandatory Content. 	<p>This Law generally defines requirements for integrated management, safe storing, permitting circulation of chemicals, use of Material Safety Data Sheet, labelling, packaging, storing, etc.</p>	<p>In case will be encountered during implementation of the activities, the law obligations should be respected.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Law on Nature Protection No. 2010/03-L-233 • Administrative instruction No. 12/2011 - for the sources of natural habitat types, natural habitat map, threatened and rare natural habitat types, as well as safeguard measures for conservation of natural habitat types; • Administrative instruction No.18/2012 for proclamation of wild species protected and strictly protected; • Administrative Instruction on the Content and Manner of Preserving Nature Protected Values No. 07/2012 (18.06.2012); • Administrative Instruction on Wildlife Crossings No.16/2012 (01.08.2012) etc. 	<p>This Law regulates establishment and management of protected areas. The Law relies on principles of collaboration, sustainability, integration, polluter-pays, education and schooling, responsibility, and effective management for nature conservation.</p>	<p>Even though at this preliminary project stage the subproject locations are not available yet, based on the nature of the ECD buildings and their locations it is not expected that project activities may trigger protected areas, or sensitive species of fauna or flora and habitats. Anyway, each subproject will be subject to E&S screening prior implementation, and in case potential impacts may be identified the law obligations should be taken into consideration.</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Administrative Instruction 16/2015 on Information, Public Participation and Interested Parties in the Proceedings of Environmental Impact Assessment 	<p>This administrative instruction determines procedures for information and public participation on environmental impact assessment. It further enables the public to participate in the decision-making process, by submitting opinions and concerns related to prepared EIA's.</p>	<p>This AI aspires to contribute to public awareness about environmental issues and protection of the right to live in an adequate environment that ensures health and wellbeing. However, it does not extend mandate meaningful and inclusive consultative process, which is in line with international standard requirements for public consultations in development or investment projects.</p>

Law / Sub laws	Key provisions and purpose	Relevance to the Project
Law on Labor (03/L-212)	This law regulates the rights and responsibilities of parties that have established formal employment arrangement. Law on labor regulates employment both in the private and public sector. Law bans all forms of discrimination, and any form of forced or compulsory work.	Law stipulates terms and criteria to establish employment relationship. Law also provides for the optimum requirements of the working arrangement, including working hours, and remuneration schedule and other employment benefits. Termination of contracts and grievance mechanisms are also regulated by this law. Law gives way for the social dialogue, which is further elaborated in the Collective Contract. Legal framework regarding working conditions is further regulated by a set of administrative instructions (AI), which prohibit or provide minimum requirements for working arrangements of minors (such as AI no. 05/2013 and AI no. 17/2008), regulation that defines working arrangement framework, including grievance mechanisms and disciplinary procedures (regulation no. 01/2018), maternity leave and remuneration during maternity leave (AI no. 01/2018, AI no. 07/2014, AI no. 05/2011), establishing minimum wage (AI no. 09/2017), and so on.
Collective contract	Collective Contract is a sub-legal act, that derives from the Law on Labor, and is compiled with the intention to provide more detailed guidelines and instructions about the rights and responsibilities of parties that have established employment contract.	Collective Contract provides additional details regarding employees' benefits, deriving from years of employment and retirement financial package.
Law on Safety and Health at Work (04/L-161)	This law stipulates ensuring conditions in the working environments with the intention to prevent work-related injuries, occupational safety and health and protection measures in the work environment. Work environment is considered as any environment where work is performed. Law mandates Kosovo Government to form a Counsel for safety at work and protection of workers' wellbeing and working environments	Law describes responsibilities of parties included in the working arrangement, as well as ensures additional measures of protection in working environments for youth, women and people with disabilities. Considering of health and safety issues, the Law sets measures for improving the level of safety and health of employees at work. This Law contains general principles for prevention of occupational hazards, elimination of hazardous and accidents factors, information, consultation, balanced participation in improving the level of safety and health at work, treatment of employees, their representatives and general guidelines for implementing such principles.
Law No. 2007/02-L-78 on Public Health	This Law aims to provide the legal basis for the protection and promotion of the health of the citizens of the Republic of Kosovo through the promotion of health, preventive activities, and the provision of comprehensive and quality health care services. The law provides rights and obligations in the field of health, principles of health care and the health care system, activity of health institutions and oversight of health services.	Project components to be in line Law No. 2007/02-L-78 on Public Health .
Law No. 05/I-088 on Road Traffic Safety	This law determines the main mutual basis of the relationships and behaviours of the participants and other subject in road traffic, the basic conditions that the roads should meet in terms of development of road traffic, system of traffic signs, and signs given by the authorised persons, duties in case of road traffic accidents, preparation of candidates for driver, passing of driver examination, and the conditions for the right to drive a vehicle; towing vehicle, means and equipment that vehicles must be equipped with, dimensions, total weight, vehicle axes weight, and conditions that should be met by the vehicle in traffic	Project components and especially component 3 which includes also construction activities, should be fully aligned with Road Traffic Safety law and specific requirements.
Consultation and Disclosure	The GoK follows series of clearance procedure before the disclosure of the EIAs and only important parts are disclosed.	The law is not explicitly talking about the social impact assessment. The entire document may or may not be disclosed and the ESIA may or may incorporate all level stakeholder concern in the design.
Land Acquisition and Resettlement / Law on Expropriation (03/L-139)	This Law regulates all expropriation activities in Kosovo. It foresees procedures, including legal remedies for the protection of individuals from unfair interferences with their property rights. Based on the Law on Expropriation, the Government shall have the authority to expropriate property for the construction, enlargement, establishment or placement of mines and other	Other relevant laws to the Land Acquisition and Resettlement issue are described in standalone document named Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF), which is planned to lead any land take activities.

Law / Sub laws	Key provisions and purpose	Relevance to the Project
	<p>works, safety areas and facilities for or relating to activities involving the exploitation of mineral resources. The law states that the expropriation authority may only be a government institution, either at the national or local level (i.e. municipality). The Law on Expropriation has been complemented with secondary legislation, most notably technical procedures in expropriation projects, such as the Administrative Instruction No. 02/2015 on the Approval of Technical Evaluation Methods and Criteria for Calculation of the Compensation Amount for the Immovable Property Expropriated, and Damages Related to Expropriation.</p>	

3.2 National Environmental and Social Assessment and Permitting

According to the Law No.03/L-214 on Environmental Impact Assessment, the EIA procedure includes the following phases:

1. Selection/Application
2. Scoping Notification
3. Preparation of Scoping Reports
4. Preparation and Delivering of the EIA
5. Issuing of the draft decision for EIA
6. Organization of the Public Debate and approval of the Public Consultation Plan
7. Implementation of the Public Debate
8. Review of the EIA to consider the remarks of the Public Debate and issuing of the Environmental Consent

The following paragraphs describe the processes and procedures to be adopted for the approval of EIA.

Preparation and delivering of the application: The Applicant shall prepare an Application to start the EIA together with follow-up information and documentation to be delivered to the MoIE (Article 11 of the Law).

The required information/documents to be included in such Application are:

1. name, address, legal status of the applicant and the name of the project;
2. documents determined by the MoIE, according to the type and nature of the projects or activities;
3. a completed questionnaire, determined by the same MoIE, covering a description of the proposed project, a description of the location, and a description of the potential impacts of the proposed project on the environment.

Check of the application: The MoIE shall check the information, documentation and questionnaire included in the application (Article 12) and determine, within 10 days from the date of its delivering, if it is completed as per legal requirements and on the base of the criteria defined in Annex III to the EIA Law, and if it needs an EIA ministerial approval (or if a simple Municipal Environmental Consent is sufficient). If the documentation accompanying the application is incomplete, the MOIE shall request from the applicant additional information and documentation and shall designate the date by which it must be delivered (no specific terms have been indicated by the Law). If the applicant does not submit the additional information and documentation by the designated date, the MOIE shall reject the application. If the applicant does not agree with the decision taken by the MOIE, he has the right to appeal within the term of 8 days, from the day he receives the MOIE's decision. The appeal shall be performed by the same MOIE.

Check of the kind of required environmental consent: the obligations for the MOIE authorization (environmental consent) are defined by the Article 7 of the Law No. 03/L-214 "*on Environmental Impact Assessment*". This article prescribes that all project listed in Annex I of the Law "*on Environmental Impact Assessment*" are obliged to undergo an EIA, while an environmental consent is required for every public or private project listed in Annex I or Annex II of the same Law, which is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, *inter alia*, of its nature, size or location. The MOIE shall also check if the EIA report is not required in compliance with the list specified in Annex 1 (Article 12). In the case the MOIE should confirm that the EIA is not required, it could transmit the corresponding application to the affected Municipality in order to initiate the procedure for issuing an Environmental Municipal Permit.

Issuing a scoping notification: If the Application is accepted, MOIE issues a Scoping Notification to the Applicant (Article 13) within 30 days of receipt of a request from the same Applicant for an Environmental Scoping Report [ESP] including the request for: (1) description of possible alternatives; (2) description of significant impacts; (3) reasons for identifying these impacts; (4) description of protection measures. The issue of a scoping notification shall not prevent the MOIE from requiring additional information at a later date.

Preparation and delivering of scoping report: The Applicant shall present this information to the MOIE in a brief Scoping Report (Article 14), not exceeding 3 pages in length, which shall be included in the EIA report being also considered as its executive summary.

Preparation and delivering of the EIA: In addition to the Scoping Report the Applicant shall present to MOIE the EIA with the contents specified in Article 15. The EIA Report shall be compiled by duly licensed legal and natural persons (Article 16) authorized in accordance with the Administrative Instruction No.07/11 “on licensing compilers of Environmental Impact Assessment”. The Applicant shall submit 4 written copies of an EIA Report and 1 electronic copy to the MOIE (Article 17) together with a proof that he has paid the required fee, determined by the Administrative Instruction No.11/11 “on the determination of the amount of the fee for services relating to the environmental impact assessment”.

Review of the EIA by experts: Within 5 days from receipt of the EIA Report, MOIE shall send 3 hard copies of the EIA Report and 1 electronic copy to the responsible consultative bodies for reviewing the EIA Report (Article 18) in accordance with: (1) adequacy of project description including alternatives; (2) adequacy of identification and evaluation of environmental impacts; (3) adequacy of mitigation measures; (4) adequacy of proposed monitoring schemes; (5) other criteria. For the review of EIA reports on particular projects the Kosovo Environment Protection Agency, will provide all necessary information which is in its possession and which is necessary for that review. In addition to the experts involved in the EIA review, the MoIE may, as necessary, contract external experts having proven expertise in EIA (Article 19) that shall present their opinions, in writing, to the MoIE by a date that shall be specified by the same Ministry.

Issuing the draft decision for EIA: The MoIE, after reviewing the EIA Report, taking in consideration results of consults by environmental authorities shall prepare and issue its draft Decision, which will be presented, in writing, to the applicant (Article 18).

Organization of the public debate: The main conclusions and recommendations included in the EIA Report and in the proposal decision for environmental consent shall be subject to public debate (Article 20) that shall be planned, organized and implemented by the Applicant to collect the corresponding opinions and remarks from the public. The Public Consultation Plan (PCP) prepared by the Applicant shall determine the location, date of the public debate, the mechanisms and times for informing the public, and the locations where the Non-Technical Summary of the EIA Report and the proposal decision will be displayed (Article 20).

Approval of the Public Consultation Program (PCP): MOIE shall approve such Public Consultation Plan and the public debate cannot be held until the Applicant has received approval, in writing, from the same MOIE (Article 20).

Implementation of the public debate: Applicant shall make the EIA report available to the public (Article 17) in compliance with the Administrative Instruction No.09/11 “*on information, public participation and interested parties in the environmental impact assessment procedures*”, informing the public, through public information media, including an announcement in at least one daily newspaper, of the date, place and time of the public debate and providing the foreseen documents (Article 20) and implement the public debate within 20 to 30 days after the Applicant, the environmental authorities and the public concerned, have been informed.

Review the EIA on the base of the remarks from public debate: Within 10 days from the date on which the public debate was concluded, the MOIE shall review the remarks and opinions which emerged in the public debate (Article 21). On the base of the received remarks and opinions, the MOIE may request the Applicant to change or complete designated elements of the EIA Report which was submitted. The applicant shall make the changes required and submit the EIA Report, changed and completed, by the date designated by the MOIE. If the Applicant does not meet the MOIE request, the same Ministry shall suspend the procedure of review.

Preparation of the proposal-decision for the environmental consent. The results of consultations and the information gathered pursuant to provisions of the EIA Law shall be taken into consideration in reaching the decision on the environmental consent (Article 22). The proposal-decision on Environmental Consent shall be prepared by the responsible body of the MOIE within 70 days from the receipt of the EIA Report. Within a term of 10 days from the presentation of the proposal-decision on Environmental Consent, the MOIE shall decide

whether to grant or refuse an Environmental Consent and convey this decision in writing to the applicant and to the Municipality/municipalities in whose area the project will be situated.

Information of the public about the environmental consent. After taking decision of grant or refuse an environmental consent has been taken, the MOIE shall inform the public of the decision by local advertisement (Article 22) and shall make available for public inspection a statement containing: (1) the content of the decision and any eventual foreseen conditions; (2) the main reasons and considerations on which the decision was based including, if relevant, information about the participation of the public; (3) a description, where necessary, of the main measures to avoid, reduce and, if possible, offset the major adverse effects; and (4) legal advises for regular means for appeals of the validity of the decision and the procedures.

Eventual appeal of the applicant against MoIE decision. The applicant shall be entitled to file an appeal with the competent Court against the complaint decision, in accordance with the Law, within 30 days of the date of publication of the Decision for Environmental Consent. The MOIE is obliged to make available the documentation concerning the EIA procedure to the applicant, if so requested in writing. The information so requested shall be made available within 8 days from the day of receipt of the request.

Eventual access to justice of public against MoIE decision. Members of the public concerned who have a sufficient interest shall have access to a review procedure before a competent Court to challenge the substantive or procedural legality of decisions, acts or omission of act subject to the public participation in accordance with provisions of the EIA Law. At this purpose, any non-governmental organization promoting environmental protection and meeting any legal requirements according to enforced law shall be considered to have a sufficient interest. Applications to challenge any decision, act or omission in the EIA procedure may be made after the Environmental Consent has been granted and within 30 days of the date of that grant. Such complains shall be made in the MOIE and to the Competent Court for challenging administrative decisions. Any such procedure should be equal, fair, in time and not so expensive as to block its exercise.

The criteria to examine the projects that need an environmental consent

The criteria to examine the projects that need an environmental consent are defined by the Annex III to the EIA Law:

- 1) **Characteristics of the projects:** the characteristics of the project must be considered having regards to:
 - a) The size of the project;
 - b) Environment impact when combined with other existing or expected future projects;
 - c) The use of natural resources;
 - d) The production of waste;
 - e) Pollution and nuisances;
 - f) Risk of accidents, regarding in particular to substances or technologies used.

- 2) **Location of projects:** the environmental sensitivity of geographical areas likely to be affected by projects must be considered, having regards in particular to:
 - a) The existing land use;
 - b) The relative abundance, quality and regenerative capacity of natural resources in the area;
 - c) The absorption capacity of the natural environment, paying particular attention to the following areas:
 - i) Wetlands;
 - ii) Mountain and forest areas;
 - iii) Nature reserves and parks;
 - iv) Special protection areas;

- v) Areas in which the environmental quality standards laid down in EU legislation have already been exceeded;
- vi) Densely populated areas;
- vii) Landscapes of historical, cultural or archaeological significance.

- 3) **Characteristics of the potential impacts:** the potential significant effects of projects must be considered in relation to criteria set out in 1 and 2 above, and having regard to:
- a) The extent of the impact (geographical area and size of the affected population);
 - b) The transboundary nature of the impact;
 - c) The magnitude and complexity of the impact;
 - d) The probability of the impact;
 - e) The duration, frequency and reversibility of the impact.

3.3 World Bank Standards and Key Gaps with the National Framework

The Environmental and Social Standards¹ set out the requirements for Clients/Borrowers relating to the identification and assessment of environmental and social risks and impacts associated with projects supported by the Bank through Investment Project Financing. The Bank believes that the application of these standards, by focusing on the identification and management of environmental and social risks, will support Borrowers in their goal to reduce poverty and increase prosperity in a sustainable manner for the benefit of the environment and their citizens.

The standards will:

- (a) support Borrowers/Clients/Implementing Agencies in achieving good international practice relating to environmental and social sustainability;
- (b) assist Borrowers/Clients/Implementing Agencies in fulfilling their national and international environmental and social obligations;
- (c) enhance nondiscrimination, transparency, participation, accountability and governance;
- (d) enhance the sustainable development outcomes of projects through ongoing stakeholder engagement

The Project environmental and social risk is proposed moderate. The environmental risks associated with the implementation of these civil works are expected to have moderate impacts which be easily avoided or minimized with the application of the WB Environmental and Social Standards, WB Group Environmental Health and Safety Guidelines (EHSGs), and Good International Industrial Practices (GIIPs). Since the details of the activities are not known at this stage the client has prepared this (ESMF), that covers applicable ESF Standards under the project, namely ESS 1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts, ESS 2 Labor and Working Conditions, ESS 3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management, ESS 4 Community Health and Safety, ESS 5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement, and ESS 10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure; as well as the World Bank Group's Environmental Health and Safety Guidelines. ESS8 is not relevant at this stage, however since the location of the activities are yet not known, the ESMF includes provisions regulating actions in case of accidental finds during civil works. The list of cultural and historical sites in the target districts is identified and included in the environmental baseline analysis. The project relevant ESS establish the standards that the Implementing Agency and the project will meet through the project life cycle, as follows:

¹ www.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/environmental-and-social-framework/brief/environmental-and-social-standards and <http://projects-beta.vsemirnyjbank.org/ru/projects-operations/environmental-and-social-framework/brief/environmental-and-social-standards>

3.4 Overview of differences between project relevant WB ESF and Kosovo legislation

Compliance analyses, i.e. the overview of differences between the WB ESF and Kosovo Legislation, gaps between the policy and proposed respond in the following table are presented.

Table 2: Compliance Analysis between project Relevant ESS and National framework

WB Environmental and social standards (ESS) Relevant to the project	National Environmental and Social framework	Gaps	Proposed respond E&S Risk management
<p>ESS 1: Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts</p> <p>ESS1 sets out the Client’s responsibilities for assessing, managing and monitoring environmental and social risks and impacts associated with each stage of a project supported by the Bank through Investment Project Financing, in order to achieve environmental and social outcomes consistent with the Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs).</p> <p>The environmental and social assessment will be based on current information, including a description and delineation of the project and any associated aspects, and environmental and social baseline data at an appropriate level of detail sufficient to inform characterization and identification of risks and impacts and mitigation measures. The assessment will evaluate the project’s potential environmental and social risks and impacts, with a particular attention to those that may fall disproportionately on disadvantaged and/or vulnerable social groups; examine project alternatives; identify ways of improving project selection, siting, planning, design and implementation in order to apply the mitigation hierarchy for adverse environmental and social impacts and seek opportunities to enhance the positive impacts of the project. The environmental and social assessment will include stakeholder engagement as an integral part of the assessment, in accordance with ESS10.</p>	<p>- Environmental Protection Law (03/L-025-2009), -Law No. 03/L-214 on Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), -Administrative Instruction on information, public participation and interested parties in the environmental impact assessment procedures (No.09/11)</p>	<p>WB requirements: Categorization of project, i.e. the E&S risks is based on the preliminary screening, intensity of the impacts and risks (probability and magnitude). On the base on the E&S risks intensity (low, moderate, substantial and high) it is make decision about the type of documents (instruments) that should be prepared: ESMP - Check list, ESMP, preliminary ESIA or ESIA.</p> <p>National legislation:</p> <p>In accordance with the national legislation an environmental consent shall be required for every public or private project listed in Annex I or Annex II of the Law on EIA, which is likely to have significant effects on the environment by virtue, <i>inter alia</i>, of its nature, size or location. On the basis of the same Law, all projects which are listed in Annex I shall be obliged to implement an EIA, asking the corresponding authorisation from the Ministry of Infrastructure and Environment (MOIE), while projects listed in Annex II shall be examined, case by case and in accordance with the criteria set out in Annex III, in order to determine whether they must require an EIA.</p> <p>The procedures for the EIA approval are defined in Chapter III of the Law and includes the following phases: (1) screening; (2) scoping; (3) review of EIA Report and (4) Public Consultation.</p> <p>On the basis of environmental impact assessments, MOIE issues Environmental Consent.</p> <p>If MOIE decided that for the proposed project it is not required to conduct an EIA, after submission of the Environmental Screening Report in that case an applicant should prepare EIA Report and submits it to a municipality as part of the Municipal Environmental Permit request.</p> <p>Beside this, there is a gap for social assessment required by World Bank, which is not included in the national procedure.</p> <p>National legislation does not include preparation of ESMF, ESMP, RPF, and SEP as it is proposed in WB ESF.</p> <p>Differences there are with regard to disclosure and public consultation.</p> <p>Involvement of the public in ESS10 is presented.</p>	<p>Because the proposed activities/investments will be financed by the WB, then the Borrowers should follow WB policy, i.e. ESF guidelines, but in the same time respecting the national legislation as well.</p> <p>According to ESS1 the Client will manage environmental and social risks and impacts of the project throughout the project life cycle in a systematic manner, proportionate to the nature and scale of the project and the potential risks and impacts.</p> <p>The environment and social risks are rated as moderate. Towards addressing them, the following instruments have been prepared: (i) Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF); (ii) Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP); (iii) Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF); and (iv) Labor Management Procedures (LMP). The ESMF covers applicable ESF Standards and the World Bank Group’s Environmental Health and Safety Guidelines. The ESMF has checklists for determining where and when site specific Environment and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs)/Management Plans (ESMPs) and Resettlement Action Plans (RAPs) will be necessary.</p>
<p>ESS 2: Labor and Working Conditions</p>	<p>National Legislation</p>	<p>Existence of Labor Management Procedures</p>	<p>Creation of LMP</p>

<p>ESS2 recognizes the importance of employment creation and income generation in the pursuit of poverty reduction and inclusive economic growth. Borrowers can promote sound worker-management relationships and enhance the development benefits of a project by treating workers in the project fairly and providing safe and healthy working conditions. ESS2 applies to project workers including fulltime, part-time, temporary, seasonal and migrant workers.</p>	<p>does not seek preparation of overall documents on workers rights and obligations apart from laws</p>		<p>MESTI has prepared the draft (LMP) which set out details for preparing the labor management plans and the principles of employment. The LMP also identifies main requirements for contracted workers to be employed in accordance with national Labour Code and the LMP. It will underline the risks associated with the project and determines the resources necessary to address project labor issues. The PIU will ensure that all contracts with workers, contractors and primary supply workers are consistent with the requirements of ESS2. The PIU will incorporate ESS2 requirements into tendering processes and establish policies for monitoring the performance of contractors in relation to ESS2. PIU will work closely with district project coordinators (contracted by PIU) to check contracts at the local level. Contracts will be reviewed by the World Bank, to ensure compliance with ESS2 requirements.</p> <p>The ESMF includes sections on Environment Health and Safety (EHS) including specific instruments that will need to be prepared either by the client or the contractor prior to commencement of works (ESH checklists, codes of conduct; safety training etc.). The expectation is that the majority of labor will be locally hired with the exception of a few skilled workers. Civil works contracts will incorporate social and environmental mitigation measures based on the WBG EHS Guidelines and the ESMF; other referenced plans e.g. Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), RPF etc. as well as specific language referencing the prioritization of the hiring of unskilled local labor. All civil works contracts will include industry standard Codes of Conduct that include measures to prevent Gender Based Violence/Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (GBV/SEA). A locally based Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) specifically for all categories workers will be provided. The PIU will be ensured that the grievance mechanism is easily accessible to such project workers.</p>
<p>ESS 3: Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management ESS3 recognizes that economic activity and urbanization often generate pollution to air, water, and land, and consume finite resources that may threaten people, ecosystem services and the environment at the local, regional, and global levels. The current and projected atmospheric concentration of greenhouse gases (GHG) threatens the welfare of current and future</p>	<p>-Environmental Protection Law (03/L-025-2009), -Law on Air Protection from Pollution (No. 2010/03-L-160), -Law No. 04/L-147 Water Law, -Law on Waste No. 04/L-060 (2012),</p>	<p>Gap exists for Resource efficiency in the policy. Kosovo does not have a dedicated national resource efficiency strategy or action plan². Some national policies and strategies that address material resource efficiency are: Law on mines and minerals and Mining strategy for the Republic of Kosovo, 2012-2025, Law on Waste, Waste Management Strategy for the Republic of Kosovo, 2013 –2022 and Law no. 2003/3 on Kosovo’s forests. Examples of good practice are not available. Integrated Environmental licenses and permits refer to the largest polluters, the MOIE supervise the efficient implementation of the legal measures</p>	<p>The Borrowers should follow WB requirements as well national legislation which is in compliance with EU legislation. Issues that still need to be covered with outstanding degrees to be covered with relevant EU legislation.</p> <p>The ESMF includes sections on resource efficiency and pollution prevention and management. Assessment of risks and impacts and proposed mitigation measures related to relevant requirements of ESS3, including raw materials, water use, air pollution, hazardous materials, and hazardous waste are included within scope of the ESMF, and ESMFs as relevant. The civil works under the subprojects will generate construction debris, including those containing asbestos plaster, asbestos</p>

² <https://www.eea.europa.eu/publications/more-from-less/kosovo-material-resource-efficiency/view>

<p>generations. At the same time, more efficient and effective resource use, pollution prevention and GHG emission avoidance, and mitigation technologies and practices have become more accessible and achievable. This ESS sets out the requirements to address resource efficiency and pollution1 prevention and management throughout the project life cycle consistent with GIIP.</p>	<p>-Law on Chemicals No. 04/L-197 -Law on Noise Protection No. 02/L-102 -Administrative instruction of GRK No. 11/2018 on limited values of emissions of polluted materials into soil, -Other Administrative instructions.</p>	<p>provided and their impact on the environment. For other issues, there are no gaps on the policy level.</p>	<p>slate, mineral wool and ruberoid, worn tires, filters and oils from construction equipment and transformer substations. Asbestos containing materials will be handled with specific caution, based on the national requirements, or if lacking in line with the international standards such as for example ASTM.</p>
<p>ESS 4: Community Health and Safety ESS4 recognizes that project activities, equipment, and infrastructure can increase community exposure to risks and impacts. In addition, communities that are already subjected to impacts from climate change may also experience an acceleration or intensification of impacts due to project activities.</p> <p>ESS4 addresses the health, safety, and security risks and impacts on project-affected communities and the corresponding responsibility of</p>	<p>National legislation does not foresee creation of Rapid Health Assessment</p>	<p>Preparation of Rapid risk hazard assessment when there is a potential problem related to community health and safety in order to preliminary assess potential threats</p>	<p>Follow WB ESS requirements.</p> <p>Borrowers to avoid or minimize such risks and impacts, with particular attention to people who, because of their particular circumstances, may be vulnerable.</p>
<p>ESS 5: Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement – Resettlement Instruments ESS5 recognizes that project-related land acquisition and restrictions on land use can have adverse impacts on communities and persons. Project-related land acquisition or restrictions on land use may cause physical displacement (relocation, loss of residential land or loss of shelter), economic displacement (loss of land, assets or access to assets, leading to loss of income sources or other means of livelihood), or both. The term “involuntary resettlement” refers to these impacts. Resettlement is considered involuntary when affected persons or communities do not have the right to refuse land acquisition or restrictions on land use that result in displacement.</p>	<p>The expropriation elaborate contains a detailed list of properties to be expropriated, their location, information about individuals who have formal legal rights on these properties. Specialized Appraisal Reports hold estimated value of affected properties (Land, Crops & Trees, fixed assets). No socio-economic study has been prepared.</p>	<p>Preparation of this RPF, individual RPs, census survey and socioeconomic study is envisaged. The study should include information on (i) current occupants in the affected area, (ii) characteristics of displaced households and their standards of living and livelihoods, (iii) magnitude of expected losses and extent of displacement, and (iv) information on vulnerable groups or persons.</p>	<p>All documents must be prepared in accordance with WB ESS5 requirements, in addition to national legal requirements. The implementation of a census is required to identify the persons who will be affected by the project (including those who are not registered through national procedures). The implementation of census survey/ household census is necessary also to identify characteristics of displaced households, including standard of living, level of vulnerability, establishing baseline conditions for monitoring and evaluation purposes, and to set a cut-off date.</p>

<p>ESS 5: Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)</p>	<p>There is no requirement to have grievance redress mechanism apart from the institutional ones</p>	<p>Appropriate, affordable and accessible procedures for third-party settlement of disputes arising from resettlement must be established; such grievance mechanisms should consider the availability of judicial recourse and community and traditional dispute settlement mechanisms.</p>	<p>The Borrower will establish a Project specific and impact commensurate Grievance mechanism as described in the RPF.</p>
<p>ESS 5: Eligibility for Compensation</p>	<p>The Expropriation Law recognizes the eligibility of persons who have formal legal rights on land and structures, as registered by the Kosovo Cadastral Agency for and those whose rights are recognizable under national laws (factual ownership).</p>	<p>WB ESS also recognizes those who have no recognizable legal right or claim to the land they are occupying on Cut-off-Date are also eligible for rehabilitation assistance and compensation for loss of non-land assets at replacement value.</p>	<p>Compensation and assistance to PAPs without legal right or claims will be made per principles and entitlements provided in the entitlement matrix of this RPF, if they are present in the project affected area at the time of the cut-off date. Asset inventory and valuations of their affected properties will be conducted and all measures will be recorded in the internal periodical (monthly or quarterly) project progress report.</p>
<p>ESS 5: Valuation methodology for compensation for property</p>	<p>Compensation for loss of properties and assets should be at least equal to the market price. Depreciation are deducted from compensation (or included by decreasing the market price value appraisal).</p>	<p>Compensation should be equal to full replacement cost without depreciation.</p>	<p>Compensation and assistance to PAPs will be at least equal to replacement value as provided in the entitlement matrix of this RPF.</p>
<p>ESS 8: Cultural Heritage</p>	<p>-National legislation does not include preparation of CHMP</p>	<p>In case ESS 8 will be triggered under the screening process for subprojects under component 3 – the Creation of dedicated Cultural Heritage Management Plan will be required</p>	<p>Follow WB requirements</p>
<p>ESS 10: Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure This ESS recognizes the importance of open and transparent engagement between the Borrower and project stakeholders as an essential element of good international practice. Effective stakeholder engagement can improve the environmental and social sustainability of projects, enhance project acceptance, and make a significant contribution to successful</p>	<p>-Environmental Protection Law (03/L-025-2009), -Law No. 03/L-214 on Environmental Impact Assessment, -Administrative Instruction on information, public participation and interested parties in the environmental impact</p>	<p>According Kosovo legislation, preparation of SEP is not required. Also, there is a gap for public consultation period.</p>	<p>Follow WB requirements</p> <p>The client will engage with stakeholders throughout the project life cycle, commencing such engagement as early as possible in the project development process and in a timeframe that enables meaningful consultations with stakeholders on project design. The nature, scope and frequency of stakeholder engagement will be proportionate to the nature and scale of the project and its potential risks and impacts.</p> <p>Project preparation has completed an extensive stakeholder mapping. Key dip</p>

<p>project design and implementation.</p> <p>Stakeholder engagement is an inclusive process conducted throughout the project life cycle. Where properly designed and implemented, it supports the development of strong, constructive and responsive relationships that are important for successful management of a project's environmental and social risks. Stakeholder engagement is most effective when initiated at an early stage of the project development process, and is an integral part of early project decisions and the assessment, management and monitoring of the project's environmental and social risks and impacts.</p>	<p>assessment procedures (No.09/11).</p>		<p>beneficiaries have been identified and consulted during preparation phase. Given the highly diverse stakeholder profile and that their expectations and orientation as well as capacity to interface with the project are different, a robust Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been developed under the ECD project ESF package.</p>
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4. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL BASELINE

4.1. Physical Environment

4.1.1. Geographical Location of Kosovo

The Republic of Kosovo is located in the central part of Balkan Peninsula. Kosovo's territory extends within the latitudes N 41° 50' 58'' and 43° 15' 42'' and within the longitudes E 20° 01' 30'' and 21° 48' 02''. Kosovo covers a surface area of approx. 10,889 km² and is characterized by an average altitude of approx. 800 m a.s.l., but showing vertical changes of relief and morphology. The lowest point of Kosovo is located at an elevation of 297 m a.s.l. (Drini i Bardhë at the border to Albania). The country rises up to the highest point in the West of the country – Gjeravica at 2,565 m a.s.l.

4.1.2 Climate

The climate of Kosovo is predominantly continental, resulting in warm summers and cold winters, with Mediterranean and alpine influences. However, due to unequal elevations in certain parts of the country, there are differences in temperature and rainfall distribution.

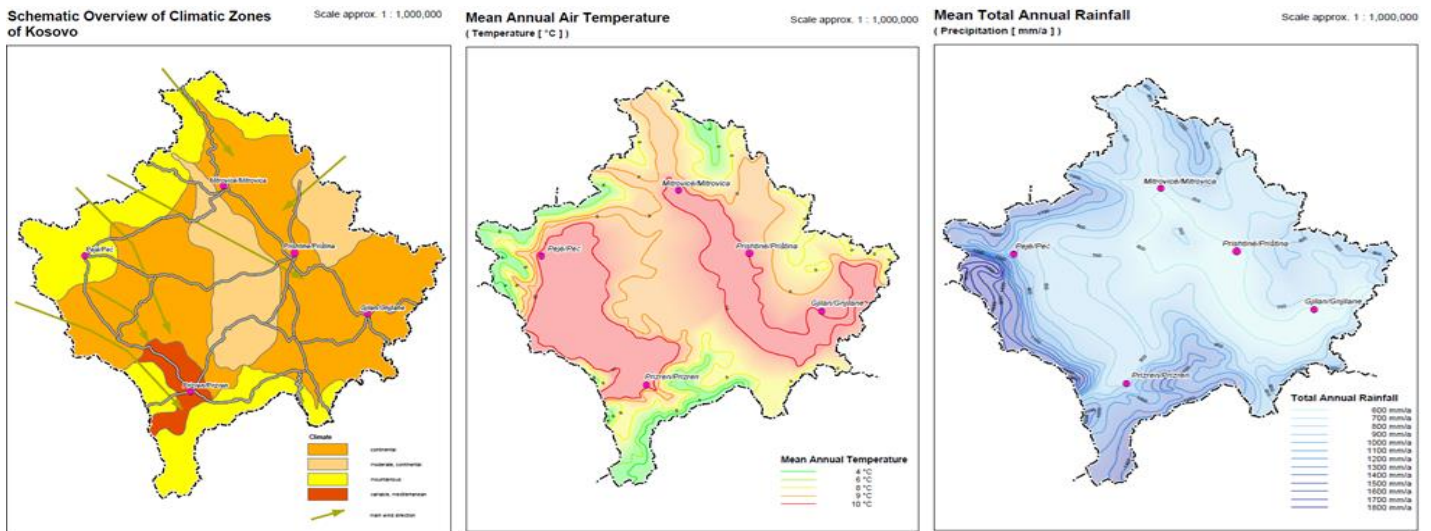


Figure 1: Kosovo's Climatic Zones, Mean Annual Temperature and Rainfall

December and January are regarded as the coldest months, July and August as the warmest months of the year. The maximum rainfall rate is reached between October and December. Between November and March, snowfall can be expected in Kosovo, even in the flat parts of the country.

4.1.3 Climate Change

Kosovo's pressing environmental and climate change challenges pose significant risks to the sustainability and inclusiveness of growth. The main impacts of climate change in Kosovo include an overall average increase in temperature, a decline in summer rain with more frequent droughts and forest fires³ projected, and an increase in winter rain resulting in more frequent spring flooding. Reflecting its commitment to addressing climate challenges, during the 2021-2025 period, the Government plans to draft the Law on Climate Change and prepare an inventory of greenhouse gas emissions, taking economic recovery as an opportunity to focus on a greener and more environmentally friendly economy.⁴ Ensuring disaster recovery solutions and maximizing digital development and delivery of e-governance services will be critical and supported through specific project activities.

In the “Study on climate change in the Western Balkans region”, Publisher: Regional Cooperation Council Secretariat, Sarajevo, Bosna and Hercegovina, may-2018 (web site: www.rcc.int), is evaluated the impact of global warming by future Climate Change throughout the Western Balkan Region. In the document are selected two meteorological parameters, as: temperature and precipitation. The analyzed period is 1961-2015, where the period 1961-1980 is define as the “past” climate baseline period, while the period 1996-2015 as the “present” climate period. The trend of increasing temperature became significant since the 1980s in the Western Balkan Region. Average monthly temperature of the air and precipitation sums for Kosovo for period 2020-2070 with climate change (scenario RCP8.5) are presented in in the following table.

Table 6: Average monthly temperature of the air and precipitation sums for Kosovo 2020-2070 with climate change

Month	I	II	III	IV	V	VI	VII	VIII	IX	X	XI	XII	year
Avg. Temperature (°C)	0.6	2.8	7	11	15.4	19.4	21.9	21.4	17.8	12.9	6.4	2.3	11.6
Monthly precipit. (mm)	42	34	39	44	62	53	37	34	36	40	53	49	524

³ Climate Change Risk Profile Fact Sheet, United States Agency for International Development.

⁴ The Republic of Kosovo. *Program of the Government of the Republic of Kosovo, 2021-2025.* May 2021.

The expected Climate changes, decreasing of precipitations and modifications in distribution, may cause increasing of water demands for 20%.

4.1.4 Hydrology

➤ Surface Water

There are many rivers in Kosovo, which flow toward the Adriatic Sea, the Black Sea and the Aegean Sea. The main rivers in Kosovo are: Drini i Bardhë (L = 110 km; in the southern part of Kosovo, mean flow MQ = 65 m³/s), which flows toward Albania into the Adriatic Sea; Lumi Ibër (L = 87 km; in the north-western part, mean flow MQ = 33 m³/s) and Morava e Binçës (L = 56 km; in the south-eastern part, mean flow MQ = 6 m³/s), which flow toward Serbia into the Morava and Danube and further into the Black Sea; and Lepenci river (L = 55 km; in the south-eastern part, mean flow MQ = 9 m³/s), which flows toward Macedonia into the Vardar river and further into the Aegean Sea.

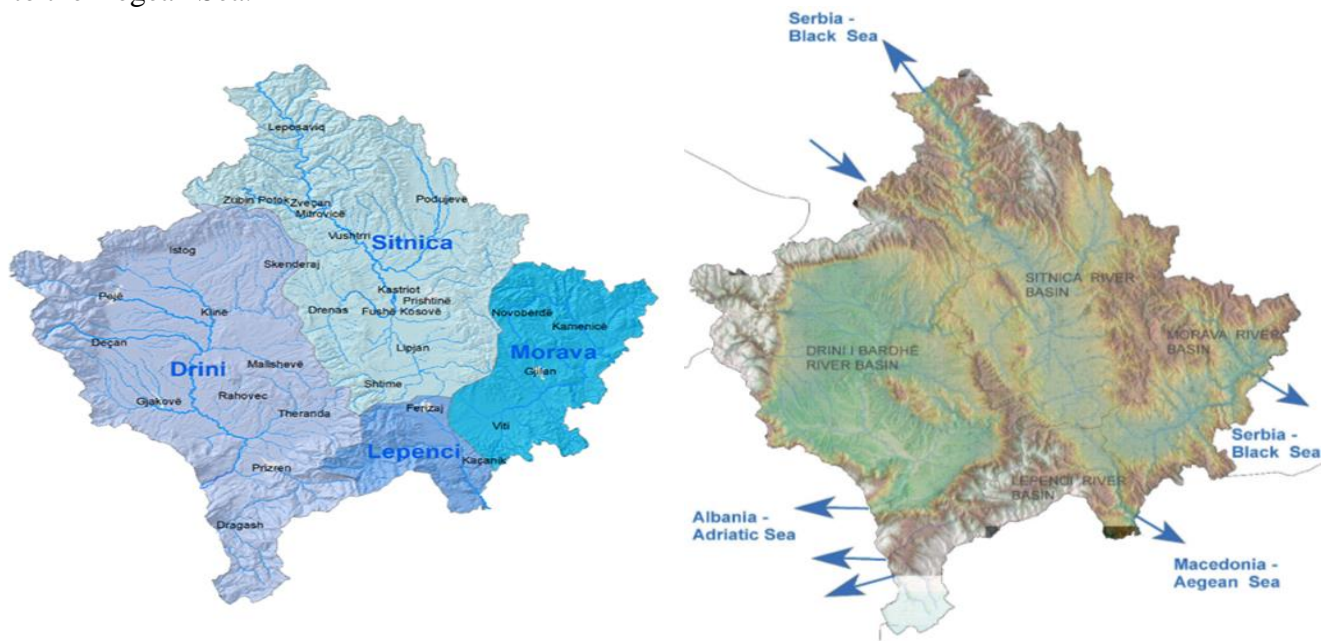


Figure 2: Kosovo hydrographic Map

➤ Surface Water Quality

All major river basins are recognized and reported as moderately or heavily polluted. Water use and pollution are expected to grow with economic development. The Drini i Bardhë is the healthiest river as it has fewest pressures and highest water flows, but this river also gets severely polluted in its lower reaches from industrial and urban wastewater, but also agricultural nitrates and phosphates. Iber is the most polluted basin due to its high economic and population pressures and its low flows, particularly in the Sitnica river. This places a high environmental and health burden on the population and causes large areas of degraded land to be out of productive use. Due to the drastic reduction of production from pre-1990 levels, pollution from the industry and mining has been reduced, but some of the environmental problems from the past are still present: lack of wastewater treatment and old technology and equipment, massive amounts of mining and metallurgy waste from the past, continue to be permanent sources of environmental pollution. Current industry and power plants are still polluting.

➤ Floods

Kosovo is vulnerable to flooding and they happen often. Floods in Kosovo in November 2007 affected more than 3500 households, also causing considerable material damages. Almost all municipalities of Kosovo, more or less, are affected by flood risk, which are manifested in the form of:

- Floods after storms in mountain areas,
- Floods after heavy rains in lowland areas,
- Floods after the snowmelt followed or not by cold weather

Floods by river basins are: Drini i Bardhë: 50 %, Ibri: 24 %, Lepenci: 20 %, Morava e Binçës: 6 %. Floods in Kosovo are usually as a result of heavy rains where mayor river flows overflow and flood in urban and rural areas causing considerable damages to infrastructure, private property, agriculture, etc. As a result of rainfall and floods in urban areas because of the old network, insufficient capacity and lack of facilities for wastewater treatment, increase the damage effects even more.

➤ Ground water

The most important ground water resources are considered to be of intergranular porosity and can be found at the outcrop of the coarsely grained Holocene and Pleistocene unconsolidated sediments in the central and western part of Kosovo in the catchments of the main rivers. Another important ground water resource is represented by the karstified Jurassic and Triassic limestones which can be found in the western part of Kosovo.

In addition, several mineral and thermal water springs with discharges of more than 100 l/s (especially Banjë, Kllokot, and Uglar) can be found in Kosovo representing an important water and geothermal reservoir.

4.1.5 Soil

Kosovo has a variety of soils that vary according to their composition, pedologic, physical, and chemical characteristics. The pedologic map of Kosovo represents a real mosaic. Most of the territory of Kosovo (56%) is covered by low quality soil, (29%) moderate quality soil, whereas the smallest part (15%) of good quality soil. It is accepted that Kosovo lands are suitable for agricultural production. The types of soil mainly found in Kosovo are humus, silicate humus, grey acidic, red soil, alluvial, diluvia, and blocky soil.

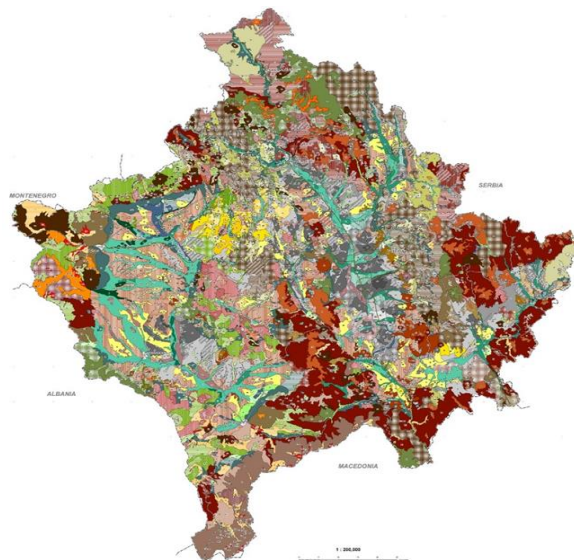


Figure 3: Kosovo Soil Map

Soil pollution in Kosovo is considered to be the presence of hazardous waste, which is usually not a product of normal pedogenic processes, and which causes soil functions to collapse. Land degradation in Kosovo occurs especially along the main roads and is one of the most widespread and threatening forms of damage to land and the environment. Various reports indicate land occupation by construction, land degradation for economic activities and benefits, and unfavorable land-use decision-making, indicating a negative trend of land conservation for future generations.

Land degradation is the result of several specific factors such as: Natural Factors (Large Precipitation and Floods, Erosion and Sliding of Earth and Drought) and Human Factor (Continuous building pressures from chaotic urbanism, soil compression, pollution from Economic and industrial activity (chemical pollution, corrosion interventions, road openings and river exploitation, etc.).

4.1.6 Geology

Kosovo is characterized by a variety of geological formations ranging from old crystalline Proterozoic to youngest Quaternary age, comprising sedimentary and magmatic rocks together with rather less frequent metamorphic rocks.

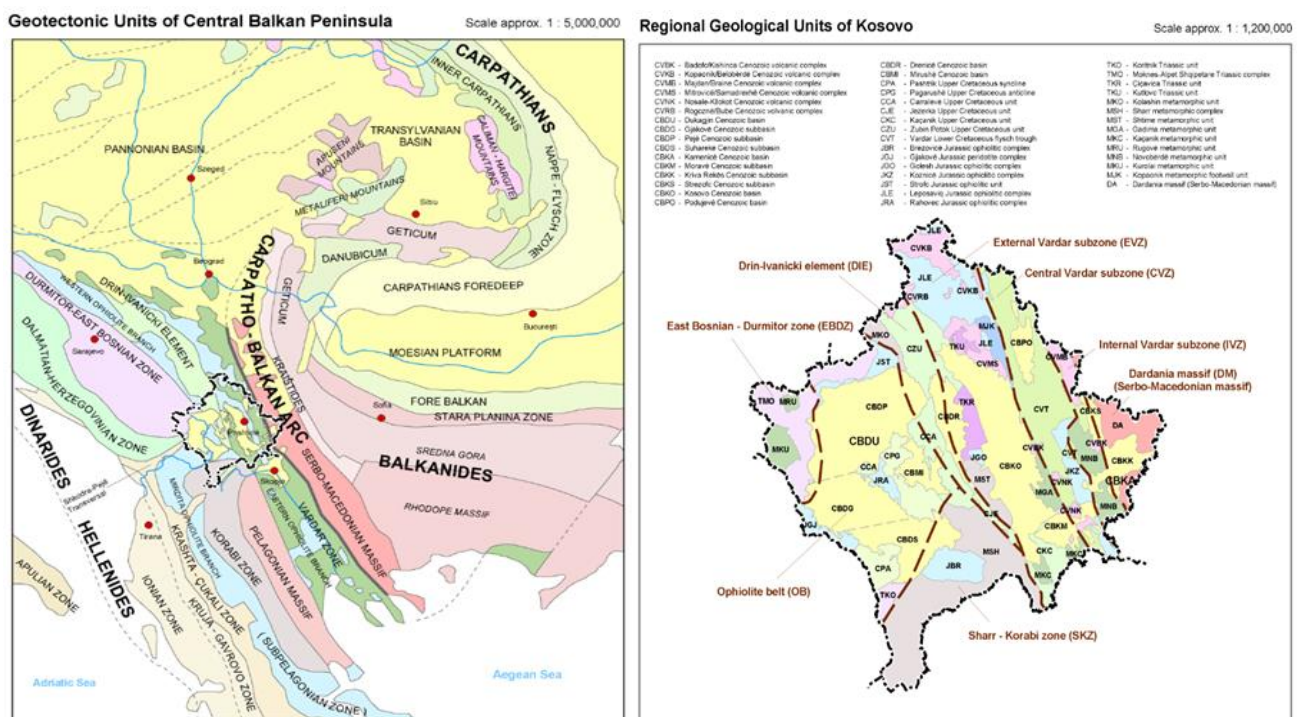


Figure 4: Geotectonic Units of Central Balkan Peninsula and Kosovo

4.1.7 Ambient Air Quality in Kosovo

Many cities in Kosovo suffer from poor air quality, with ambient concentrations of particulate matter with a diameter of 2.5 micrometers or less (PM2.5) significantly exceeding the national and European Union (EU) standards and global air quality guidelines for PM2.5 established by the World Health Organization (WHO). The air pollution in the capital city of Prishtina rivals that of big cities like Beijing, Mumbai, and New Delhi. Especially in winter, urban areas face severe smog episodes, caused by the increased demand for heat from the residential and commercial sector, which is mainly provided by burning solid fuels. Such levels of air pollution are unsafe for Kosovo’s population of 1.9 million and cause significant deleterious health impacts.

Ambient air quality is assessed not only by the concentration of a pollutant but also by the number of times that the limit value for that pollutant is exceeded. Ambient air quality standards in Kosovo are provided in Table along with EU limit values and WHO guideline values. Kosovo’s air quality standards are aligned with EU air quality

standards. Limit Values for annual average ambient concentrations of PM_{2.5} and particulate matter with a diameter of 10 micrometers or less (PM₁₀) are exceeded at most of Kosovo's air quality monitoring stations.

Table 4: Air Quality Standards

<i>Pollutants</i>	<i>Averaging Period</i>	<i>Kosovo ambient air quality standard</i>	<i>EU ambient air quality standard</i>	<i>WHO air quality guideline value</i>
<i>PM₁₀</i>	<i>Annual average</i> <i>24 hours</i> <i>24 hours (information threshold)</i> <i>24 hours (alert threshold)</i>	<i>40 µg/m³</i> <i>50 µg/m³</i> <i>100 µg/m³</i> <i>100 µg/m³</i>	<i>40 µg/m³</i> <i>50 µg/m³</i> <i>n.a.</i> <i>n.a.</i>	<i>20 µg/m³</i> <i>50 µg/m³</i> <i>n.a.</i> <i>n.a.</i>
<i>PM_{2.5}</i>	<i>Annual average</i> <i>24 hours</i>	<i>25 µg/m³</i> <i>n.a.</i>	<i>25 µg/m³</i> <i>n.a.</i>	<i>10 µg/m³</i> <i>25 µg/m³</i>
<i>O₃</i>	<i>Maximum daily 8 hours average</i> <i>1 hour (information threshold)</i> <i>1 hour (alert threshold)</i>	<i>120 µg/m³ (long-term objective)</i> <i>180 µg/m³</i> <i>240 µg/m³</i>	<i>120 µg/m³</i> <i>n.a.</i> <i>n.a.</i>	<i>100 µg/m³</i> <i>n.a.</i> <i>n.a.</i>
<i>NO₂</i>	<i>Annual average</i> <i>1 hour</i> <i>Alert threshold</i>	<i>40 µg/m³</i> <i>200 µg/m³</i> <i>400 µg/m³</i>	<i>40 µg/m³</i> <i>200 µg/m³</i> <i>n.a.</i>	<i>40 µg/m³</i> <i>200 µg/m³</i> <i>n.a.</i>
<i>SO₂</i>	<i>24 hours</i> <i>1 hour</i> <i>Alert threshold</i> <i>10 minutes</i>	<i>125 µg/m³</i> <i>350 µg/m³</i> <i>500 µg/m³</i> <i>n.a.</i>	<i>125 µg/m³</i> <i>350 µg/m³</i> <i>n.a.</i> <i>n.a.</i>	<i>20 µg/m³</i> <i>500 µg/m³</i> <i>n.a.</i> <i>500 µg/m³</i>
<i>CO</i>	<i>Maximum daily 8 hours average</i> <i>Maximum daily 1 hour average</i>	<i>10 mg/m³</i> <i>n.a.</i>	<i>10 mg/m³</i> <i>n.a.</i>	<i>10 mg/m³</i> <i>30 mg/m³</i>
<i>Lead</i>	<i>Annual average</i>	<i>0.5 µg/m³</i>	<i>0.5 µg/m³</i>	<i>0.5 µg/m³</i>
<i>Benzene</i>	<i>Annual average</i>	<i>5 µg/m³</i>	<i>5 µg/m³</i>	<i>n.a.</i>

Am Air Pollution, notably PM_{2.5} is a problem in cities and urban centers in Kosovo. Results from Prishtina show that most exceedances of ambient air quality standards occur during the winter season.

The lack of long-term air quality monitoring data precludes detailed assessment of air quality status and trends, which are essential for informing the identification and selection and assessing the effectiveness, of interventions and measures to reduce air pollution. In addition, the existence of several outliers in PM monitoring data may suggest problems related to data quality control and assurance. Nonetheless, the average PM_{2.5}/PM₁₀ ratio, greater than 0.5 at three stations in the vicinity of Prishtina, suggests that PM air pollution from combustion sources is dominant. Furthermore, the results suggest that combustion of solid fuels is a more dominant source of PM during the colder months.

Although there are shortcomings related to completeness of monitoring data and long-term data are not available for detailed assessment, the existing data and the analyses show that PM pollution is a significant problem in Kosovo and needs to be addressed. High levels of air pollution in Prishtina city may also be detrimental to child development as many studies confirm the negative impact of air pollution on child outcomes.

4.1.8 Biodiversity and nature protection

Kosovo, although it is a small area (10,889 km²), is quite rich in plant diversity. According to various authors' remarks, it is believed that in Kosovo are present nearly 2,800 to 3,000 species of vascular flora. Uncontrolled deforestation, habitat degradation, global climate change are factors that directly affect different plant and animal species to face the risk of extinction. Important habitats are being damaged and degraded and ecosystems are being destabilized as a result of human intervention in particular in ecosystems near settlements. In recent years, as a result of unattractive forests and forest fires, different species are at risk of losing their habitat and the emergence of invasive species that often change the ecosystem's floral structure.

Although Kosovo's diversity has been exploited for centuries, it is worrying that recent exploitation is not very rational and without planning, which in the future may result in unpredictable consequences. Major damage is being caused to the medicinal, aromatic and industrial plants from their improper collection.

In terms of fauna, Kosovo is characterized by a wide variety of species, although researches in this regard have not been completed. The overall condition of fauna is good as a result of the expansion of the protected areas. Damage to fauna in Kosovo is caused by illegal hunting that occurs from time to time, especially during the weekends in the protected areas.

Of the most vulnerable species from illegal hunting are deer and wild goats, while situation is better for brown bear and wolf. Endangered are also the types of predatory birds. It is estimated that in Kosovo live about 250 species of vertebrates, 200 species of butterflies and over 500 taxa of macro zoobenthos of water. The exact number of fauna species should be determined based on the inventory that is planned to be implemented in the future as during the drafting of the Red Book for fauna and other projects.

The number of protected nature areas in Kosovo (2016) is 173 and includes an area of 126,070.29 ha, or approx. 11.55% of Kosovo's total area.

Within these areas there are 19 Strict Nature Reserves ("Koretnik", "Lubeteni", "Armen Reservoir", "Maja e Rops", "Rusenica", "Kamilja", "Pisha e Madhe", Bistra etc. (NP "Sharri", PK "Bjeshkët e Nemuna"), 1 Nature Park (Pashtriku and Lake Vermicë) 146 Monuments of Nature ("Drini i Bardhë with Radavc cave", "Cave of Gadime", "Mirusha Waterfalls", "Rugova Gorge", "Drini i Bardhë Canyon at the Ura e Fshejtë", "Trungu i Rrapit në Marash", Shpella e Panorcit, etc.), 5 Landscapes ("Gërmia", "Shkugeza", etc.), and 1 Special Protected Zone of Birds ("Ligatina e Hencit, Radeva"). The largest areas of protected areas are National Parks: "Bjeshkët e Nemuna" and "Sharri", Nature Park "Pashtrik Mountain and Lake Vermicë" Protected Landscapes "Germia" and "Waterfalls of Mirusha" etc.

4.1.9 Cultural heritage

Kosovo has an expansive cultural heritage, including monuments, clothing items, museums, and traditional food. Many monuments of Kosovo date from the neolithic period. Throughout history many monuments were changed, destroyed and new elements were added to them. There are different types of monuments that date from the [Illyrian](#) period continuing with the [Roman Empire](#), [Byzantine Empire](#), [Late Antiquity](#) and [Middle Ages](#), [Ottoman Empire](#) period, etc. Most of the historical monuments are stationed in the district of the cities of [Pristina](#), [Prizren](#) and Peja. Monuments in Kosovo mostly consist of ancient cities, castles (Kulla), monasteries, mosques and churches.

Some of the most famous monuments in Kosovo are:

- [Visoki Dečani Monastery](#) (1327–1335) A major Serbian Orthodox Christian monastery. It is the largest medieval church containing the most extensive fresco decoration.
- [The ancient city of Ulpiana](#) (I – VII) was an ancient Roman city. Site for archaeological excavations in which several objects were found. These objects include a woman's head, a man's head, head of eros and a tragic mask.

- [Patriarchate of Peć \(1235\)](#) A Serbian Orthodox monastery. The complex of churches is the spiritual seat and mausoleum of Serbian archbishops and patriarchs.
- [Sultan Mehmet Fatih Mosque in Pristina \(1461\)](#). Located right in the heart of the old town center. It is Pristina's largest and most prominent mosque. Its cupola was once the biggest in the region. The square in front of Mbretit Mosque has always been a popular meeting point.
- [The house of League of Prizren \(1878\)](#): One of Kosovo's most important historical site. It is a museum complex of four buildings.

Castles are also very common in Kosovo. The castle of Prizren, the city and castle of Artanë which was a huge trade city in the 13th century and earlier, the castle of Kekola an ancient Dardan castle which dates from the Bronze era (1300-1100 b.c), etc. Unfortunately because of the many wars that Kosovo went through in different years and times, many monuments were destroyed.

4.1.10 Drinking Water Supply

The Republic of Kosovo in general has considerable problems with drinking water supply. For a secure water supply, there is a need for establishment of more artificial lakes in peripheral parts of fields, at the hilly-mountainous areas, but for their establishment, there is a requirement of large material means. The largest flow is secured by alpine type rivers, which have powerful karstic sources and springs in high mountains, in which there are larger amounts of precipitation, while a smaller flow is secured by the left branches of Drini (apart from Prizren river) and rivers of the Kosova Plain and Anamorava, in basins of which there is 50-100% less precipitation, and another geological content.

All municipal centres, with the exception of Malisheva, have installed water supply systems. Only 44% of the urban population and 8% of the rural population are connected to the public water supply network. Around 64% of the rural population use water from shallow and unprotected wells. Only inhabitants that living in cities, and in many cases not all of them, are supplied with water from the central water supply system network. In some cities, entire neighbourhoods have been left unconnected in the central water supply system network (Besiana, Gjilan, Ferizaj etc). Due to the shortage of water, there are regular reductions in most cities (Prishtina, Ferizaj 16-18 hours/daily, Besiana, in some neighbourhoods, up to 18 hours/daily, Vushtrri up to 20 hours/daily, Mitrovica etc.), or it could be that parts of the city located in high altitudes are left without water for days on end. The technical and administrative losses and shortcomings in the water supply system are great (average loss being approximately 50%).

4.1.11 Waste Management

The current solid waste management system in Kosovo is environmentally unsustainable. Waste collection, transport and disposal is not provided to all, and therefore uncollected waste is discarded or burned and causes a negative impact on human health, water, air, soil and biodiversity. Similarly, hazardous waste (in municipal waste stream) is not separately collected and treated and ends up being landfilled with municipal waste and presents a threat to the environment.

Kosovo's waste management issues continue to build as more and more of its citizens migrate to urban areas. Growing waste generation and lack of proper infrastructure creates opportunities for U.S. companies to provide a variety of waste management and recycling services, including basic waste collection, machinery, and equipment for waste management.

Local governments are responsible for waste management programs, and the Law on Waste regulates waste collection, transportation, treatment, storage, disposal, import, export, plans for environmental management, and the rights and obligations of licensed entities in the sector. The Ministry of Economy manages the publicly owned Kosovo Landfill Management Company (KLMC), which is responsible for supervising and managing disposal sites.

In May 2021, the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning, and Infrastructure (MMPHI) adopted the new Kosovo Integrated Waste Management Strategy for 2021 – 2030. The strategy addresses current shortfalls and constraints in the waste management sector with the aim to protect public health and reduce environmental impact, while at the same time increasing business and employment opportunities transitioning forward towards a circular economy.

4.2 Socio-Economic Characteristics

4.2.1 Population

The proposed project has a national coverage, and covers the administrative borders of the Republic of Kosovo. Republic of Kosovo is placed on Balkan Peninsula and has an area of 10.887 km². The country borders with Serbia on the north and east, with North Macedonia on the southeast, with Albania on southwest and Montenegro on the west. Kosovo is divided into seven districts, according to the Law of Kosovo and the Brussels Agreement of 2013, which stipulated the formation of new municipalities with Serb majority populations. The districts are further subdivided into 38 municipalities. The largest and most populous district of Kosovo is the District of Pristina with the capital in Pristina, having a surface area of 2.342 km² and a population of 497.431. The sites for the construction of new kindergartens are expected to occur mainly on publicly owned lands, which have been designated for this purpose and either owned by, or transferred to the respective beneficiary.



Figure 5: Country map - Administrative structure - Population density of Kosovo (Source: Kosovo Country data, links and map by administrative structure (geo-ref.net))

Table 7: Administrative division of Kosovo and respective population (Division by Districts, 2021)

District	ISO 3166-2	Capital	Area km ²	Population	Density Persons/km ²
Đakovica	-	Đakovica	1.248	200.244	160,5
Gnjilane	-	Gnjilane	1.207	161.144	133,5
Mitrovica	RS-28	Mitrovica	2.053	224.121	109,2
Peć	RS-26	Peć	1.366	180.271	132,0
Priština	-	Priština	2.342	497.431	212,4
Prizren	RS-27	Prizren	1.760	349.858	198,8
Uroševac	-	Uroševac	1.020	185.119	181,5
Total			10.996	1.798.188	163,5

Table 8: Administrative division of Kosovo and respective population (Division by Municipalities, 2021)

Municipality	ISO 3166-2	District	Capital	Area km ²	Population	Density Persons/km ²
Đakovica	KV-05	Đakovica	Đakovica	587	94.334	160,7
Dečani	KV-01	Đakovica	Dečani	297	42.480	143,0
Đeneral Janković	KV-32	Uroševac	Đeneral Janković	83	10.090	121,6
Dragaš	KV-02	Prizren	Dragaš	430	33.948	78,9
Glogovac	KV-07	Priština	Glogovac	276	61.145	221,5
Gnjilane	KV-06	Gnjilane	Gnjilane	392	77.145	196,8
Gračanica	KV-31	Priština	Gračanica	131	12.229	93,4
Istok	KV-08	Peć	Istok	454	41.181	90,7
Junik	KV-33	Đakovica	Junik	86	6.383	74,2
Kačanik	KV-09	Uroševac	Kačanik	211	34.672	164,3
Kamenica	KV-10	Gnjilane	Kamenica	424	27.948	65,9
Klina	KV-11	Peć	Klina	309	40.489	131,0
Klokot	KV-34	Gnjilane	Klokot	23	2.719	118,2
Kosovo Polje	KV-04	Priština	Kosovo Polje	83	39.948	481,3
Leposavić	KV-12	Mitrovica	Leposavić	539	13.202	24,5
Lipljan	KV-13	Priština	Lipljan	338	57.928	171,4
MalBevo	KV-14	Prizren	MalBevo	306	57.261	187,1
Mamuša	KV-35	Prizren	Mamuša	23	5.874	255,4
Mitrovica	KV-38	Mitrovica	Mitrovica	332	69.331	208,8
Mitrovica City	KV-15	Mitrovica	Mitrovica City	5	11.994	2.398,8
Novo Brdo	KV-16	Priština	Novo Brdo	204	7.158	35,1
Obilić	KV-17	Priština	Obilić	105	18.218	173,5
Orahovac	KV-22	Đakovica	Orahovac	278	57.047	205,2
Parteš	KV-36	Gnjilane	Parteš	29	1.699	58,6
Peć	KV-18	Peć	Peć	603	98.601	163,5
Podujevo	KV-19	Priština	Podujevo	633	82.023	129,6
Priština	KV-20	Priština	Priština	572	218.782	382,5
Prizren	KV-21	Prizren	Prizren	640	194.581	304,0
Ranilug	KV-37	Gnjilane	Ranilug	69	3.737	54,2
Srbica	KV-25	Mitrovica	Srbica	374	52.714	140,9
Štimlje	KV-24	Uroševac	Štimlje	134	27.450	204,9
Štrpce	KV-23	Uroševac	Štrpce	247	6.621	26,8
Suva Reka	KV-26	Prizren	Suva Reka	361	58.194	161,2
Uroševac	KV-03	Uroševac	Uroševac	345	106.286	308,1
Vitina	KV-27	Gnjilane	Vitina	270	47.896	177,4
Vučitrn	KV-28	Mitrovica	Vučitrn	345	62.926	182,4
Zubin Potok	KV-29	Mitrovica	Zubin Potok	335	6.664	19,9
Zvečan	KV-30	Mitrovica	Zvečan	123	7.290	59,3
Total				10.996	1.798.188	163,5

4.2.2 Economy

While Kosovo has made steady economic progress, the COVID-19 pandemic interrupted the upward economic trend and the elected Government of 2021 set out a reform agenda aimed at igniting economic growth and ensuring a sustainable and inclusive recovery from the pandemic. In the decade leading up to the pandemic (2010-

2019), Kosovo's economy grew by an average of 4.6 percent a year which translated into an almost 50 percent increase in per capita income and a 35 percent reduction in the poverty rate, even as several structural weaknesses continued to impede higher growth and faster poverty reduction. Following the onset of the pandemic, in 2020, GDP (Gross Domestic Product) contracted in real terms by 5.3 percent - the country's first recession since independence - driven by the collapse in diaspora-related exports of travel services and investment despite a sizeable fiscal response package, a surge in remittance inflows and higher base metal prices.

Like many others around the world, Kosovo's health system was unprepared to handle the virus and was overwhelmed at the onset of the pandemic. This situation is expected to further undermine the human capital accumulation in Kosovo, which already showed a large deficit before the pandemic. After having increased from 28.9 percent in 2019 to 32.4 percent in 2020, the poverty rate is estimated to have fallen back to 25.0 percent in 2022 and 23.3 in 2023. While recovery is underway, downside risks remain high and underscore the urgency of structural reforms. Exports of merchandise, albeit from a low base, have increased at record rates since 2020, fueled by the global pickup in demand and nearshoring opportunities. However, pandemic-associated risks to the outlook remain, and the outbreak of war between Russia and Ukraine will weigh on Kosovo's growth outlook and push inflation sharply higher. Continued upwards pressure on import prices, particularly for energy and food, will almost certainly lead to further increases in inflation, affecting consumption (especially of the poor), fiscal balances, and Kosovo's competitiveness.

4.2.3 Migration and Employment by Gender

From 1940 to 1990 Kosovo has undergone four migration waves. Migration has continued in recent years in Kosovo to a larger extent. Media in Kosovo have recently reported an increase in the number of visa applications to European embassies — for instance, 56,000 visa applications were received in the Embassy of Germany only in December 2021.⁵ an unfavorable economic situation, search for better future for their family, and unemployment remain the most cited reasons for migration from the Kosovars surveyed in 2021 by UNDP Public Pulse project.

In 2017, the same percentage of men and women claimed to have plans to migrate and live abroad, 30% respectively. The gap got quite smaller in 2020-2021 (3-4%), as compared to 2018-2019 (8-13%). As an example, around 22% of women and 25.5% of men claimed to have such plans in December 2020, as compared to 23% of women versus 36% of men in May 2018.

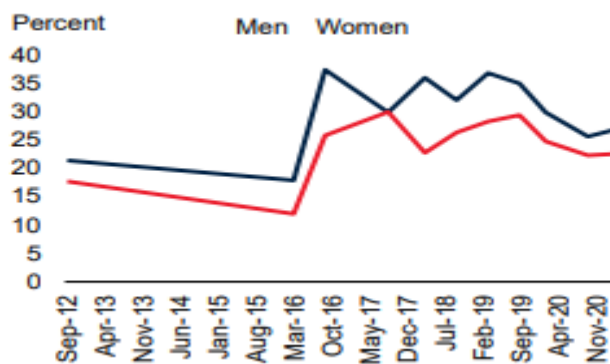


Figure 1: Planning to migrate and live abroad -Gender disaggregation (Source: UNDP Public Pulse Dataset)

Throughout different migration waves, various circumstances may have pushed the people of Kosovo to seek emigration as a way of securing their future. Expectations about Kosovo's politics, economy, jobs, family income, and the future are some of the factors that have influenced past migration, and they seem to be the main reason that influence present migration as well.

⁵ <http://www.balkanweb.com/qytetaret-po-ikin-nga-kosova-mijera-aplikime-per-viza-ne-shtetet-e-be-se/>

Exceptionally low employment for women paired with poor access to child- and eldercare poses one of the fundamental obstacles to improving women's participation in the workforce. Across the EU, the existence of ECE services is considered a key indicator of women's labor force participation. In Kosovo, while the overall employment rate in 2019 was 30 percent for all registered 15–64-year-olds, employment for women was just 14 percent. Barriers to working-age women's participation in the labor market include family responsibilities, limited access to quality and affordable child and eldercare, conservative social norms, high costs of maternity leave for employers, and women's limited access to assets and productive inputs. This trend generates a vicious circle of low female labor market participation and, in turn, drives less demand for early childhood education and care services. Women playing a prominent caretaker role also increases their economic vulnerability and raises other gender-based inequalities. This is particularly relevant for working mothers without easy access to childcare.

4.2.4 Food Security

The legal framework for food safety in Kosovo is the Law on Food 03/L-016. Infringement on the provisions of the Law on Food and other legal food safety acts can lead to measures under criminal law and consumer damage claims under civil law, in which case the final decision rests with the courts.

In Kosovo, Food risk assessment is still being developed. There is no institutional separation between risk assessment and risk management, and risk assessments are not published on the Internet. The budgeting process in early childhood development is kept separate in each of the sectors (education, health, and social protection) with no cross-sectorial coordination.

The Ministry of Health (MoH) is responsible for matters of public health and healthcare. This includes drafting legislation for foodborne and waterborne diseases. The MoH actively participates in the harmonization between Kosovo's national legislation and EU legislation.

MoH is authorized by the National Institute for Public Health (NIPH) to perform laboratory analysis of samples collected during official controls conducted by the FVA. NIPH laboratories are accredited according to ISO17025:2006 and cover the areas of microbiology, biology and biochemistry, in particular the analysis of food products, beverages and water.

4.2.5 Maternal and Child Health Care

Most of pregnant women in Kosovo and their children have their first contact with the health system through prenatal and postnatal services both in primary healthcare centers and through home visiting services. However, there are persisting gaps in access, quality, affordability, and coverage with such services in particular among vulnerable population groups. There are still six municipalities in Kosovo that haven't launched the home visiting program. Due to unequal access to the quality early childhood services and insufficient capacity of healthcare professionals Kosovo ranks among the countries with high infant and child mortality rates.

The quality of health services is influenced by low breastfeeding, vaccination rates, and preterm deliveries, which also worsen inequities in early childhood health outcomes and MCH indicators. MCH indicators remain amongst the poorest in the region and Europe. By 2019, 16 children under five years of age died per 1,000 live births.⁶ This number is almost twice higher for children from Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian households, with 27 children dying per 1,000 live births. As of 2019, only 29 percent of children under six months of age were exclusively breastfed, which marks a decrease from 40 percent in 2014. While moderate and severe stunting for children under 5 is low in the general population, it poses a serious risk to vulnerable communities. Stunting is concentrated in the poorest quintiles in both ethnic majority and minority groups and reaches 15 percent in Roma, Ashkali, and

⁶ MICS, 2019-2020.

Egyptian households. Moreover, while nearly three-quarters of children in Kosovo 24-35 months old are fully immunized, just 38 percent of Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian children are.⁷

The constraints to attainment of SDGs in maternal and child health stem from systemic health sector issues such as quality health care services delivery, financing, and human resources, as well as population's limited knowledge on the importance of maternal and child health (MCH). Outside the health sector, poverty, rural residence, and access to clean water, are important determinants of outcomes.

Inefficient health services delivery. Delivery of MCH services is fragmented. Continuity of care is hampered by loose linkages and communication between primary health care (PHC) and hospital care, non-functional referral pathways, absence of patient follow-up practices. Apart from fragmentation the service delivery system is duplicative. For instance, antenatal care, immunization, and child care are provided at primary health care (PHC) centers which are composed of polyclinics, rural health centers, and health houses.

Poor referral systems for MCH care. Most patients directly go to secondary and tertiary level hospitals, bypassing most rural hospitals during delivery and child illness. Most patients lack confidence on the quality of PHC health services because of outdated facilities, lack of equipment, and untrained health care staff. Bypassing leads to disrupted patient care and a more expensive health service delivery. Although regulations on referral system exist, implementation is not enforced. The current line-item budgeting does not incentivize health providers to coordinate care.

4.2.6 Early Childhood Education

Inadequate distribution of preschool institutions in the country contributes to Kosovo's status of having the lowest enrolment in early childhood education in the Western Balkans and access to quality ECE is even more limited for vulnerable groups and children from rural areas. Only 33.9% of children aged 3-6 have access to early childhood care and education programs.⁸ Enrollment rates in ECE for children ages 0-5 are very low (6.7%). At the pre-primary level the situation is significantly better where the gross enrolment rate of children is 88%.⁹ In general, only 19.5% of children are included in preschool education, which is well below the OECD average¹⁰ (over 87% for children 3-5 and 36% for children 0-2)¹¹.

Kosovo has a small number of public preschool institutions (only 49 public preschool institutions nationwide), and only 23 out of 38 municipalities in Kosovo have at least one public preschool institution for children up to 5 years old, which contributes to inequity of access to early learning for all children. The most vulnerable groups are also the most deprived of these educational opportunities, with just 1 in 10 children from Roma, Ashkali, and Egyptian communities and among those from rural areas attending an early education program. Children under 5 years old in rural areas are involved in ECE three times less than their peers in urban areas because these services in rural areas are almost non-existent. In urban areas, 25.5% of children aged 3-5 attend preschool, whereas in rural areas, only 7.9% have the opportunity to receive preschool services.¹² Priority enrollment to public preschool is given to children whose parents are both employed, which disadvantages low-income unemployed parents, who lack the support to integrate into the workforce.

⁷ Ibid.

⁸ UNICEF Kosovo Program <https://www.unicef.org/kosovoprogramme/>

⁹ MESTI, 2022

¹⁰ Education Statistics in Kosovo 2020-2021 https://ask.rks-gov.net/media/6293/education-statistics-in-kosovo_2020-21.pdf

¹¹ https://www.oecd.org/els/soc/PF3_2_Enrolment_childcare_preschool.pdf

¹² A Situation Analysis of ECD Services in Kosovo, World Bank, 2021.

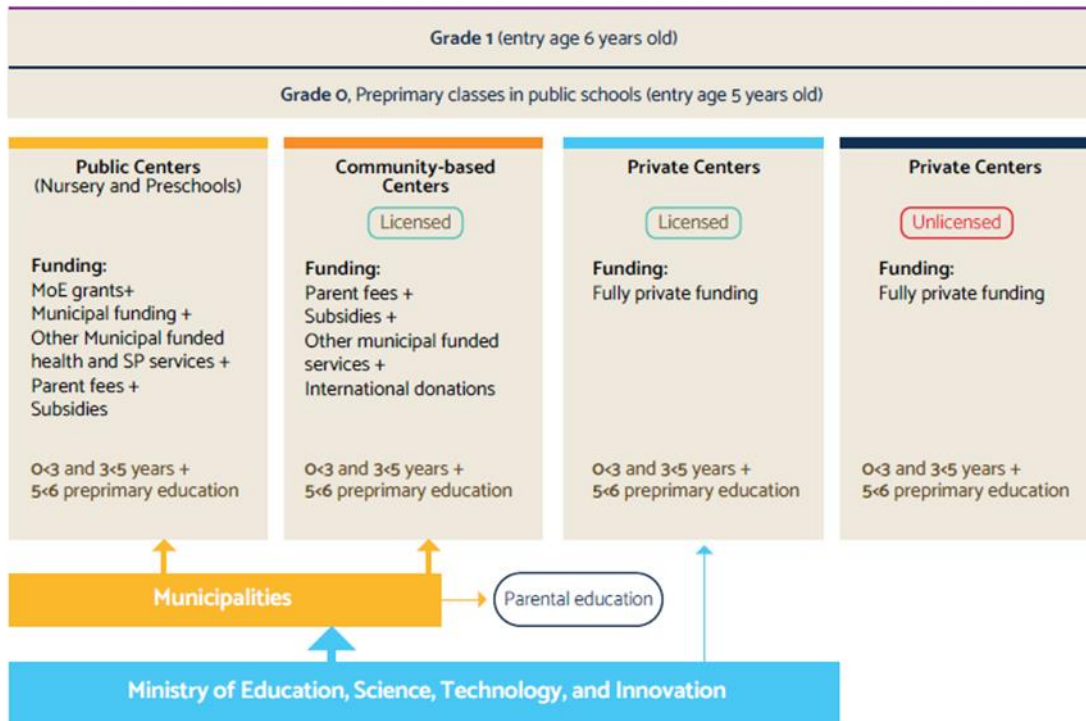


Figure 2: Early Childhood Education and Care Services in Kosovo (Source: World Bank. A Situational Analysis of Early Childhood Development (ECD) Services in Kosovo. 2021.)

A large number of unlicensed private ECD providers in Kosovo have the potential to play an important role in service provision. Unlicensed private centers (see Figure 10) are thought to be double the number of licensed private providers, but the lack of data leaves only estimates of coverage and no information on their quality. Earlier Bank estimates showed that such unlicensed centers served up to 8,000 children, which was 30% higher than the licensed, private provision in Kosovo. While little is known about these services - their quality, safety measures, and minimum standards – it would be important for the Government to ensure such providers are in line with the national policies and minimum standards. Legalizing such private centers and assuring the quality of their services may solve the issue if the Government could define a set of incentives for the providers.

5. POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIAL RISKS AND IMPACTS

5.1 Positive Impacts

Overall project implementation environmental and social impact are expected to be positive.

Investments foreseen under respective components of the ECD project, is expected to yield both short and long-term returns. Existing research on the success of early childhood programs mainly focuses on short-term academic gains when it is the long-term benefits that offer a more lasting measure of value. Children who received quality early childhood development from birth to age five had significantly better life outcomes than those who did not receive center-based care or those who received lower-quality care. Findings included stronger outcomes in education, health, sociability, and reduced crime. Economic productivity effects were also found, with improved adult labor outcomes for participants and their parents, resulting in a two-generation effect on the workforce. These findings suggest that comprehensive interventions in early childhood generate positive effects for both children and parents in the short and long-term.¹³

The project will engage a multi-sectoral approach to achieving enhancements in children's physical, cognitive, and non-cognitive development. The project consists of two-pronged approaches, improving the existing services and platforms where available, while expanding access and improve equity and quality of ECD services, and simultaneously strengthening the institutional capacity and systems necessary to institutionalize the service delivery platforms. Over time, these newly developed platforms will stimulate demand and behavior change among families and communities. The multi-sectoral program approach allows for adaptive learning of different service delivery approaches and their applicability to the country context.

Childcare interventions will increase the productivity of women in Kosovo and will allow young children to benefit from professional early learning and stimulation services. Given the extremely low coverage with ECD services in Kosovo, the potential for women's employment with ECD expansion is sizeable.

Under Component 1: the project supports Strengthening the quality and equity of ECD services in Kosovo. The implementation of this component will improve regulatory, operational, and implementation capacity of Kosovo to ensure the quality of ECD services across the education system. Many teachers and caregivers will benefit from project capacity building activities, by improving their performance at work and reinforce their professional background. As a result of improved services, the overall community that access to ECD services will benefit.

Under Component 2: (Fostering multi-sectoral integration in ECD service delivery) aims to support the Government in addressing child outcomes, particularly lowering infant mortality, stimulating development, and reducing stunting rates through prenatal to childcare range of services, by promoting healthy nutrition, enhancing child monitoring and cross-sectoral integration of services. Activities under this component include (i) scaling up nutrition interventions by encouraging the adoption of a new nutrition menu in preschool institutions and ii) designing of an integrated service package between early childhood education centers (ECE) and primary healthcare centers (PHC) for children aged 3-6. The project under this component will Improve the availability of health and nutrition services for children. As a result of improved services, the overall community that access to ECD/PHC services will benefit.

Under Component 3: Increasing access to ECD services. The implementation of this component and respective subcomponents activities, will increase access to preschool services for families and stimulate increased enrollment rates. The interventions under this component will include also constructions of new kindergartens, refurbishing and repurposing the existing facilities, which will optimize and maximize the conditions for the

¹³ García, Jorge Luis, James J. Heckman, Duncan Ermini Leaf, and María José Prados. "The Life-cycle Benefits of an Influential Early Childhood Program." (2016): n. pag. Web.

provision of ECD services resulting on expanded access to affordable childcare services. The implementation of this component is expected to generate also positive impacts by creating new jobs opportunities.

Municipalities without existing ECD services and those, with long waiting lists or low levels of enrollment, and high demographic projections will benefit as the project interventions will be directed at municipalities with the greatest needs.

The project will rely on the ongoing mapping conducted by UNICEF with MESTI, which analyzes the existing demand for ECD and available capacities of the whole education system (primary and secondary schools included) combined with a projection tool based on population movement and demographic changes. This mechanism will help the Government ensure most vulnerable populations to benefit from the project by getting access to the created services and equitable enrollment.

Inclusive and innovative learning environments will employ climate-smart, clean energy, and energy-efficient solutions. These interventions will inform the existing climate vulnerabilities of Kosovo, such as higher temperatures, fewer precipitations, and extreme weather events, such as floods and droughts. Also, shading from overheating and using heat-resistant materials will be part of the climate-smart design.

Also, as part of this project component, increased access to information will be provided by supporting the targeted information campaign in social media and in local news to raise awareness on the importance of ECD, especially among vulnerable populations and Roma, Ashkali, Egyptian populations.

And finally, the project will enable the MESTI to have better familiarity with World Bank system and ESF. This will help in increasing the capacities and accessing knowledge and exposure to best international.

5.2 Adverse Risks and Impacts

The environmental risk is proposed moderate. The anticipated risks are expected to be moderate since the project is financing medium-scale activities, the rehabilitation, and the repurposing of existing spaces as well as the construction of new kindergartens and ECD facilities, most of which will not be identified until implementation begins. The environmental risks associated with the implementation of these civil works are expected to have moderate impacts which be easily avoided or minimized with the application of the WB Environmental and Social Standards, WB Group Environmental Health and Safety Guidelines (EHSGs), and Good International Industrial Practices (GIIPs). Since the details of the activities are not known at this stage the client is preparing the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), that covers applicable ESF Standards, namely ESS 1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts, ESS 2 Labor and Working Conditions, ESS 3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management, ESS 4 Community Health and Safety, ESS 5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement, and ESS 10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure; as well as the World Bank Group's Environmental Health and Safety Guidelines. ESS8 is not relevant at this stage, however since the location of the activities are yet not known, the ESMF includes provisions regulating actions in case of accidental finds during civil works. The list of cultural and historical sites in the target districts is identified and included in the environmental baseline analysis.

The social risk of the project is proposed moderate. Considering the fact that the project will finance civil works related to the rehabilitation and repurposing of existing spaces as well as the construction of new kindergartens, and the locations of the new constructions are yet not known, ESS5 is relevant, and the client has prepared the ECD Project Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) to guide the project in dealing with land acquisition, restrictions to access, or any economic and/or physical displacement. Civil works activities are expected to have labor risks mostly concerning OHS issues. The labor issues are expected to be mitigated through the ESMF and through the Labor Management Procedures (LMP) with a dedicated Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) for project workers. The major social project risk is related to the possibility of vulnerable and disadvantaged groups being excluded from the project benefit. This risk will be addressed through adequate mitigation measures, consequently integrating the representatives of these groups into project designs and through the stakeholder engagement processes. In order to ensure that the project is inclusive, the project will prepare a robust stakeholder engagement plan (SEP) in proportion to the nature and scale of the project and its associated risks and impacts.

➤ Adverse Environmental Impacts and Risks

As a result of project implementation, the following key adverse environmental impacts may occur:

Water pollution. With the leakage of fuels and lubricants (fuel and lubricants) from construction machinery and stored waste, petroleum products and chemicals can pollute the soil, penetrate into groundwater or drain into surface water bodies. Maintenance and cleaning of construction machinery and mechanisms near natural streams can lead to water pollution. If temporary settlements of builders are formed on a construction site, pollution of the environment can be caused by sanitary facilities in settlements.

Noise, vibration and temporary air pollution. Dust will be generated as a result of construction work, transportation of construction materials / waste and traffic of freight vehicles. Strong increase of noise level is expected during construction, material transportation, construction equipment operation, in particular, during excavation, pneumatic drilling, and operation of construction cranes. Noise and vibration will cause concern to local residents if the work is carried out in the vicinity of residential areas.

Waste generation, Formation of recovered material and construction debris. The following types of waste may be generated under the constructions activities of Component 3: (i) construction debris, transportation, handling, compressor works, jackhammers and other construction equipment, soil surpluses and stones, cut trees, bushes, household waste, obsolete equipment and materials, and; (ii) hazardous waste - construction debris containing asbestos plaster, asbestos slate, mineral wool and ruberoid, worn tires, filters and oils from construction equipment.

Dangerous production factors as a result of civil works. Direct impact on safety and health of people in civil works can be caused by various factors, for example, high-altitude work, the work of cranes and bulldozers, welding, and sanitary conditions, electric shock, etc. The potential impact on the safety and health of workers is also associated with occupational injuries during construction (falling structures, etc.) or contaminated drinking water or food.

Electric shock injuries. Electric current injury may result from contact with electric chain with voltage and/or current sources able to induce electric flow through a part of the body that came into a contact with electric current. During the construction works and operation of equipment, activities will be carried out ensuring a secure manufacturing job. When operating the electric installations, personal protective equipment will be used. In the course of works, the sites will be fenced and taped off. The access to the site of work for unauthorized persons will be prohibited. Only workers who completed trainings on working with electric equipment and safety techniques when operating electric installations will be allowed to the site of work.

Road traffic limitations. Project construction activities may result on increased road traffic. Any effort will be made to minimize the time spent on construction vehicles and trucks on the roads, in order to prevent any incidents or damage to property. Drivers will be warned that they should move with caution. Speed restriction in work areas and road traffic with heavy machinery will also be regulated. The proper organization of traffic will also prevent a negative impact on traffic, as far as possible.

Historical and cultural heritage sites. Provisions regulating actions in case of accidental finds are included in this ESMF. The list of cultural and historical sites in the target districts is identified in the environmental baseline analysis. The small civil works will be within the existing facilities and will have no impact on those heritage sites.

In consideration of the potential for unexpected discoveries during the course of new construction activities, a provision for "chance finds" is hereby established. Chance finds refer to any unforeseen archaeological, historical,

or environmental artifacts, features, or evidence that may be encountered during excavation, demolition, or other construction-related activities.

In the event of a chance find, the following procedures shall be followed:

1. **Immediate Halt:** Upon the discovery of any potential chance find, all construction activities in the vicinity shall cease immediately.
2. **Isolation and Protection:** The area surrounding the find shall be clearly marked and secured to prevent any further disturbance.
3. **Notification:** The relevant authorities, including but not limited to local heritage or environmental agencies, shall be notified promptly.
4. **Expert Assessment:** Qualified experts in archaeology, history, or relevant fields shall be engaged to assess the find and determine its significance.
5. **Mitigation Measures:** Based on the assessment, appropriate mitigation measures shall be proposed and implemented to preserve, document, or relocate the find as necessary.
6. **Compliance:** All actions taken in response to a chance find shall be carried out in full compliance with local, state, and federal regulations governing such discoveries.

➤ **Adverse Social Impacts and Risks**

The overall project's activities are unlikely to result in social adverse impacts. The Project will contribute to Greater public service efficiency and quality and specifically to Increased access to public services by minority and marginalized groups and more formal private sector. Yet, the project does finance small scale infrastructure works for the construction and rehabilitation of ECD facilities. These interventions are expected to take place on the property of existing facilities; therefore, social issues (and impacts thereof) are not expected to be significant, and will be mainly present just during the construction phase. The physical works envisaged under Component 3 are of small to medium scale and the associated social impacts are expected to be temporary, predictable, and easily mitigable.

The project specific risks are to be viewed in the light of contextual issues. The project areas are characterized by: (i) geographical- district risks; (ii) economic risks – high rate of unemployment in particular among youth and significant dependency of household income on remittances which is vulnerable to external economic conditions and fluctuations; (iii) social exclusion – certain sections could get excluded either due to inherent structural deficiencies and/ or due to elite capture; and (iv) institutional risks – inadequate capacity of the implementing agency in ESS application.

As a result of project implementation, the following key adverse social impacts may occur:

Access restrictions. There will be some construction induced social impacts during the implementation phase. The construction activities under some local infrastructure subprojects may cause access restrictions to homes, land plots or other private or public property. Construction and /or rehabilitation of public buildings such as schools might also trigger some inconvenience to the public. The site specific ESMPs prepared under the project will include, as necessary, a mitigation measures to reduce potential adverse impacts and risks.

Land acquisitions. The project by design will avoid activities that may involve physical/ economic displacement and/ or loss of structures. Being small scale activities and that they are community driven, flexibility in terms of design and location shall be available and hence no resettlement is envisaged. However, there could be some isolated instances wherein lands need to be acquired involuntarily. Towards addressing such a situation, the MESTI/PIU has prepared a Resettlement Policy Framework, and will seek approval from the Bank. RPF describes the next steps on preparing and implementing resettlement action plans (RAP). The framework clarifies

resettlement principles, organizational arrangements, and design criteria to be applied to subprojects or project components to be prepared during project implementation. Once the subproject or individual project components are defined and the necessary information becomes available, such a framework will be expanded into a specific resettlement action. Project activities that will cause physical and/or economic displacement will not commence until site specific Resettlement Action Plans (RAP) or abbreviated RAPs (ARAPs) have been finalized and approved by the Bank.

Neighboring Community Benefit-Sharing Expectations. The project will cover 7 districts; however, the project will not be able to make investments in all municipalities/communes within each district. High expectations of benefit-sharing from local neighboring communities and/or communes residing within the same district could be another social risk. Such expectations could lead to social tensions and resentment when benefit sharing does not materialize. This risk will be mitigated through communications and awareness-raising activities that clearly communicate project eligibility criteria to stakeholders within Project districts, and the operation of a project grievance redress mechanism (GRM) should residents raise concerns after awareness-raising activities take place. In addition, ECD plan development at the district level will include a wide range of stakeholder representatives to air the community priorities, it will be a consultative, participatory process that allows community representatives to express preferences and influence decision-making.

Social exclusion. Certain individuals or groups will have no or limited access to ECD services that will be improved in the target districts. For example, parents of children 0-6 ages might have limited access to ECD activities due to distant location of the KGs and ELC centers to be refurbished and/established in the district centers.

Inadequate capacity in ESS application at the national and local levels (participatory planning, project management and oversight). Given that the Implementing agency and line ministries have inadequate capacity in ESS application, as well as the local government actors and local civil works providers may not have experience in ESS implementation, training workshops will be provided on the project-related safeguards procedures (mitigating environmental risks, environmental and social screening and Environmental and Social Management Plans).

Unacceptable increase in PHC staff and ECD teacher workloads. The program will promote new content on parenting awareness and skills, with a focus on ECD and early child stimulation; screening and pathways for referrals to secondary care; and promotion of family planning and ECD attitude. The project will support pregnant women to use PHC services. Promoting greater use of ECD and PHC services may put pressure on current staff, and facility capacity at PHC and ECD facilities in target districts. To mitigate this risk, a training program will be provided.

Limited access of targeted children to ECD benefits. To avoid this risk appropriate Social Behavior Change Campaigns will be developed and implemented in the target districts to enhance family and community support for early childhood stimulation and development, improve parental practices, and empower health workers and educators to support parents and provide quality ECD services at the local level. At the same time increased demand for ECD services in target sites in years 0-6 may cause overcrowded classrooms, and some children will not be able to enroll. The MESTI local departments will ensure adequate ECD options are planned for the next years to meet anticipated increased demand.

Labor risks, associated GBV, and child labor are considered low given the small size of subproject investments and the Kosovo's adherence to the national labor code which also prohibits child and forced labor. In order to mitigate the risk, under the ESF package of the project a LMP has been drafted.

Labor risks associated with contracted workers at subproject level. Subprojects will be implemented by local contractors and the majority of contracted workers will be hired locally. All contractors will be required to have

a written contract with their workers materially consistent with objective of ESS2, in particular with regard to child and forced labor. In order to mitigate the risk, under the ESF package of the project a LMP has been drafted.

Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) risks are low to moderate and will depend on the type of subprojectworks to be implemented. The risks are considered low to moderate because the local contract workers are likely to be unskilled. All contractors will be required to develop and implement written labor management procedures, including procedures to establish and maintain a safe working environment as per requirements of ESS2. During subproject preparation, these impacts should be carefully analyzed and identified while preparing ESIA's and ESMPs and adequate mitigation measures should be proposed. Additionally, the selection, design, contracting and monitoring and evaluation of sub-projects will be consistent with the guidelines set out in the annexes.

Grievance Redress Mechanism. Given the multi-sectoral nature of the interventions and that a number of agencies and sub-agencies of the government will be involved in performing various functions, social assessment recognizes the need for a project specific platform for the stakeholders to present their grievances. Hence, the project has developed an appropriate GRM for this purpose (described in the next section).

To address identified impacts, the implementing agency and its branches, the subprojects beneficiaries and contractors have to undertake a series of mitigation measures, which are presented below and which should be clearly defined in the site specific ESMP to be prepared. Detailed summary of potential environmental and social impacts and mitigation measures is presented in the Annex 1 of ESMF.

6. PROCEDURES AND IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

6.1 Project Implementation Arrangements and ESMF Process Flow

Effective ECD service provision requires a multisectoral vision that is owned by all key stakeholders. An integrated ECD project is complex by nature as it addresses multiple needs and services, requiring coordination in planning, implementing and monitoring by diverse agencies and service providers.

The MESTI will hold responsibility as Project Implementing Agency. As project implementation requires multisectoral involvement, the MESTI is a key player that can bring together all concerned ministries and agencies to deliver the results of the project. The Ministry will be responsible for overall implementation, coordination, results monitoring, and communicating with the WB for implementation of all project-related activities. The MESTI will host the project PIU.

A Project Implementation Unit (PIU) will be established under the MESTI. The PIU's vital roles are to provide technical and operational assistance to MESTI and targeted project districts/municipalities/communes in implementing the project activities, including procurement, FM, and environmental and social risk management responsibilities. The Project Coordinator, will be hired by the MESTI to lead the PIU based on terms of reference acceptable to the World Bank. The Project Coordinator will be working closely with management and all relevant departments of the line ministries to: (i) ensure alignment of planning, budgeting, implementation and monitoring; (ii) prepare technical proposals and provide technical oversight to the project activities for institutionalization and sustainability; (iii) implement selected project activities and monitor others activities. In addition, the PIU will also include other consultants and experts on different technical areas as required for project implementation, including procurement, FM, environmental and social due diligence and M&E.

The PIU will play major roles in implementing the project activities, in coordination with MoH and Municipalities under the leadership of the MESTI. Close collaboration between the line ministries will be required to ensure harmonized implementation, efficiency of use of resources, avoidance of overlap, and to create a new integrated approach to providing services for the benefit of children.

Municipal level. Most of the project activities will be implemented at the *municipal* level. Therefore, the communities are expected to play a critical role in identifying their needs, setting priorities and contributing to developing the project activities.

With regards to ESMF implementation, PIU in each target district will provide support with information and capacity building (including the environmental criteria to be used, procedures to conduct the ESIA etc.) in: (i) environmental and social screening and evaluation of subproject eligibility from the safeguards point of view; (ii) communication and coordination with ESA competent authorities (Environmental agencies); (iii) ensuring proper implementation of the ESMP and ESMP Checklist requirements as well as E&S due diligence tasks during the subprojects' realization; (iv) addressing complaints and feedback from project stakeholders and the public, including grievances regarding environmental/social impacts of subprojects; (v) supervising environmental protection and mitigation measures stipulated in the ESMPs; (vi) monitoring of environmental impacts as part of overall monitoring of the subproject implementation; and (vii) reporting on environmental and social impacts originated during implementation of sub-projects and analyzing the efficiency of mitigation measures applied to minimize negative consequences.

To implement the ESMF the project team will follow the below described procedures for sub-projects mostly related with the activities foreseen under Component 3.

Table 7: Project Cycle and Implementation Procedures

	Activity	Primary	Secondary
1.	Screening of ECD subproject sites for environmental and social risks	MESTI/PIU	Municipalities
2.	E&S screening reports review and approval	WB	-
3.	Establishing GRM at the district and project levels	MESTI/PIU	Municipalities
4.	Drafting, public consultations, and finalizing of ESF instruments (site specific ESIA, ESMPs, RAPs (if needed))	MESTI/PIU/Municipality	Ministry of environment and relevant line agencies NGOs/CSO/Community
5.	Review and approval of site-specific ESS instruments	WB/Ministry of Environment	
6.	Implementation of ESF instruments (site specific ESIA, ESMPs, RAPs (if needed))	Contracted construction companies MESTI/PIU Ministry of environment and relevant line agencies Municipalities Kosovo Cadastral office (in case expropriation take place)	NGOs/CSO/Community
7.	Monitoring and supervision of ESS instruments Implementation (site specific ESIA, ESMPs, RAPs (if needed))	Contracted supervision companies MESTI/PIU Ministry of environment and relevant line agencies Municipalities Kosovo Cadastral office (in case expropriation take place)	NGOs/CSO/Community

6.2 ESMF Process Flow at the Subproject Level

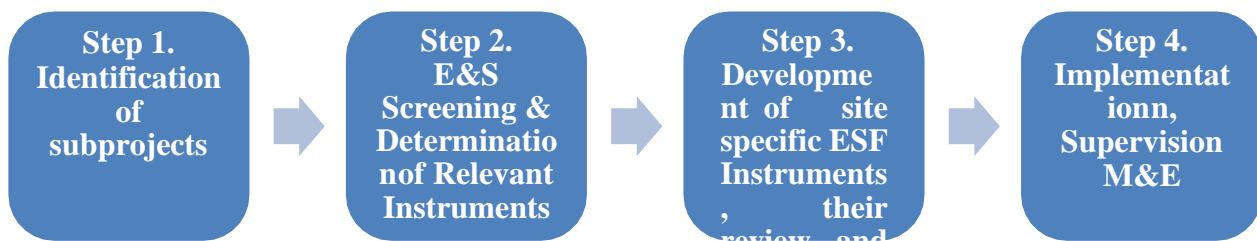


Figure 3: The ESMF Process Cycle at the Subproject Level

6.2.1 Identification of Sub-projects

The project will rely on the ongoing mapping conducted by UNICEF with MESTI, which analyzes the existing demand for ECD and available capacities of the whole education system (primary and secondary schools included) combined with a projection tool based on population movement and demographic changes. These mentioned tools will be part of the targeting mechanism for the project. This mechanism will help the Government ensure most vulnerable populations get access to the created services and that the enrollment is equitable.

6.2.2 Screening of Subprojects for Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

All the project activities will be subject to an environmental screening in order to prevent execution of projects with significant negative environmental and social impacts. An environmental and social impact is an estimate or judgment of the significance and value of environmental effects on physical, biological, social or economic environment. Low, medium and high representing impact or level of importance associated with a factor. The impact level depends on duration, reversibility, magnitude, benefit, significance, etc

6.2.2.1 List of Non-Eligible Activities for ECD Project Subprojects

The initial screening for the eligibility of the subproject will be based on the list of excluded activities. Therefore, subproject proposals that include these activities will not be considered for financing.

Non-eligible activities for Component 3 subprojects are listed in Table 8 below.

Table 8: List of Non-Eligible Activities for ECDP Subprojects

Require physical relocation or displacement
Will cause negative impact on income/livelihood resources
Involve any kind of forceful evictions of people
Negatively impact assets of individual(s) or household(s)
Do not meet the required technical and quality specifications
Have negative environmental or social impacts that are irreversible, create cumulative impacts and/or cannot be adequately mitigated;
Exclude the poor/marginalized population or otherwise vulnerable groups;
Do not provide equal pay for equal work for women and men;
Are financed, or scheduled to be financed, by the government or other development partners;
Include the payment of compensation for land or asset loss from the proceeds of the World Bank financing or other government sources;
Finance the construction of any new dams or the rehabilitation of existing dams including structural and or operational changes;
Finance private goods, government offices or religious buildings;
Involve activities that use forced /child labor
Entail the purchase or use of drugs, military equipment or other potentially dangerous materials and equipment, including chain saws, pesticides; insecticides; herbicides; asbestos (including asbestos-containing materials); or other investments detrimental livelihoods including cultural resources;
Involve development of new settlements or expansion of existing settlements in critical habitats, protected areas or areas proposed for certain levels of national protection (e.g., reserved forests, cultural heritage...).

6.2.2.2 Subproject Screening Procedures

Once it is confirmed that the subproject is not part of the list of prohibited activities, MESTI/PIU, working with municipal level and communities and through desktop research and site visits, will carry out a screening of the likely environmental and social impacts, that will be based on the requirements of national legislation and WB ESSs, completing the screening form presented in the Annex 3 and Annex 4. Subproject activities will be also checked against WB criteria.

This process will make possible to identify the type and scale of potential environment and social impacts and determine to which risk category the subproject should be attributed. Generally, the significance of impacts and risks, contribute to resulting ESA categorization will depend on the type and scale of the subproject, its location, sensitivity of environmental issues, and the nature and magnitude of potential risks and impacts.

Type and scale of projects. Subprojects that are considered to have “significant” risks and impacts and would be classified as “High Risk Subprojects” would entail the following impacts (a) significantly impact on human populations, including settlements and local communities (b) alteration of environmentally important areas, including wetlands, native forests, grasslands, and other “critical” natural habitats and ecosystem services; (c) direct pollutant discharges that are large enough to cause degradation of air, water or soil, endangered species and “critical” habitats; (d) large scale physical disturbances of the site and/or surroundings; (e) extraction, consumption or conversion of substantial amounts of forest and other important natural habitats, including above and below ground and water-based ecosystems; (f) measurable modification of hydrologic cycle; (g) hazardous materials in more than incidental quantities; and (h) involuntary displacement of people and other significant social disturbances. For the ECD project, High Risk Subprojects with such impacts will be rejected for subproject support.

Location. There are a number of locations which should be considered while deciding to qualify the project as category “High Risk”: (a) in or near sensitive and valuable ecosystems and “critical” habitats, wetlands, wild lands, vulnerable soils, and particular habitats of endangered rare and endemic species; (b) in or near areas with archaeological and/or historical sites or existing cultural and social institutions; (c) in densely populated areas, where resettlement may be required or potential pollution impact and other disturbances may significantly affect communities; (d) in regions subject to heavy development activities or where there are conflicts regarding the allocation of natural resources; along watercourses, in aquifer recharge areas or in reservoir catchments used for potable water supply; and on lands or waters containing valuable resources (such as fisheries, minerals, medicinal plants, prime agricultural soils). Subprojects located in the proximity of such areas will be classified as High Risk projects and will not be considered for support by the ECD Project.

Sensitivity. Sensitive issues may include (but are not limited to): conversion of wetlands, potential adverse effects on endangered species and habitats as well as protected areas or sites, involuntary resettlement, impacts on international waterways and other transboundary issues, and toxic waste disposal.

Magnitude. There are a number of ways in which magnitude can be measured, such as the absolute amount of a resource or ecosystem affected, the amount affected relative to the existing stock of the resource or ecosystem, the intensity of the impact and its timing and duration. In addition, the probability of occurrence for a specific impact and the cumulative impact of the proposed action and other planned or ongoing actions may need to be considered. Taking into account the scale of the proposed subprojects, it is expected that the magnitude of their environmental impacts will be low. Therefore, they will be classified as Substantial Risk Category projects that could be considered for ECD project support. Annex 8 provides guidance on the various types of activities that could be proposed for ECD subprojects, as well as the different environmental categories and suggested EA instruments for each of them.

Results of the screening will be reflected in the screening form presented in the Annex 5 and would include the following:

High Risk projects and those included in National category I will be excluded from financing; Substantial Risk subprojects (subject to the WB No Objection)– will need either a simple ESIA and/or a simple ESMP.

No further EA actions would be required for Moderate Risk and Low Risk subprojects, however the ESMP Checklists and Generic ESMPs should be developed and implemented.

6.2.4 Development of ESF Instruments

For Substantial Risk subprojects a site specific Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) (see ESIA Report Outline presented in the Annex 6), will be required to identify, to evaluate and to prevent potential environmental and social risks and impacts. The mitigation measures for the identified impacts and risks will be incorporated into the project design of the ESMP (see Annex 7 with the format of the ESMP) or ESMP checklist (see Annex 8 with the ESMP Checklist for small scale construction and rehabilitation activities). The ESIA and ESMPs for Substantial risk subprojects will be prepared by the TA to be recruited by the MESTI PIU.

For Substantial Risk subprojects it is necessary to disclose the EA document and conduct public consultations with the project affected people and interested parties. For all projects that would require an ESIA and ESMP should be organized face to face consultations. For that purpose, it is necessary to disclose in advance the EA document (about two weeks) in on the MESTI/Municipality website as well as providing hard copies to local public administrations and key interested parties (environmental authorities). During the consultations, the subproject applicants will register all comments and suggestions on improving the ESIA documents and will prepare relevant reports to be included in the final version of the EA documents.

6.2.4 ESIA/ESMP Review Process

A site-specific evaluation will be conducted in accordance with the WB’s Environmental and Social Framework (ESF), and site-specific ESMPs will be prepared as a result of such evaluation. These will be the responsibility of MESTI PIU. The ESMP checklist must form an annex of bidding documents for construction works. Labor management procedures will also be a part of bidding documents for construction works. Implementation of ESMP on the ground will be the part of the construction contractor’s task, however in case of any non-compliance. Distribution of the responsibilities of all parties involved in the project is given in Table 19.

The preparation and implementation of ESMPs is expected to cost only a small fraction of design and construction cost, as most mitigation measures will be very generic, off-the-shelf, and implementable without specialized skills, experience or equipment. Moreover, it is assumed that the majority of cost is covered in the bid proposals. PIU will submit site specific ESMPs to WB for prior review. When the WB is confident that PIU has demonstrated that the process is accurate, WB will transfer this prior review to post review.

Table 9: Roles and Responsibilities

Responsible Party	Responsibilities
World Bank	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Review, approve and disclose ESMF, SEP and RAP on WB’s official website. • Review the site-specific ESMPs and RAPs and provide no objections to MESTI PIU. • Review labor management procedures • Conduct implementation support and supervision missions in order to ensure that the Project is in compliance with WB Safeguards Policies.

MESTI PIU	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare and implement the ESMF and RPF and submit for Bank approval • Disclose the ESMF and RPF on MESTI website • Prepare ESMPs and RAPs according to ESMF and RPF • Submit ESMPs and RAPs to the WB for prior review. • Perform the quality control and review of ESMPs and RAPs. • Disclose ESMPs and RAPs on the official website of MESTI and incorporate ESMPs and RAPs into bidding documents. • • Perform inspections of the implementation of ESMP by the construction contractor, make recommendations and decide whether additional measures are needed or not. • Supervise implementation of RAPs and provide regular reporting on implementation to WB; • In case of non-compliance, ensure that the contractor eliminates the noncompliance and inform the WB about the noncompliance. <p>Set up a multi-level GRM, monitor and address grievances related to the project under specified timelines;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prepare, update and implement a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) that considers vulnerable groups in addition to paying attention to the gender aspect of the Project, • Summarize the environmental and social issues related to project implementation to WB in regular progress reports. • Be open to comments from affected groups and local environmental authorities regarding environmental aspects of project implementation. Meet with these groups during site visits, as necessary. • Coordinate and liaise with WB supervision missions regarding environmental and social safeguard aspects of project implementation. • Conduct regular monitoring activities for the implementation of site specific ESMPs and RAPs • Prepare/design training and tools for MESTI PIU’s staff and community representatives
Contractor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Manage the grievance mechanism at the site level, communicate grievances to PIU/respective municipality regularly through ESMP monitoring reports; • Implement ESMPs on site, if required can propose revising the ESMP together with MESTI PIU; • Implement LMP; • Monitor site activities on a regular basis (daily, weekly monthly etc.); • Compensate or fix all damages occurred during construction (i.e. damages to crops, infrastructure) as set out by the ESMP or RAP/RPF.
Municipalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hold consultation meetings, and prepare and distribute leaflets or other informative documents to inform communities, supported by a community mobilization NGO, about the construction schedule and potential impacts, if any, as well as rights and entitlements of PAPs; • Manage the grievance mechanism at the local level, communicate grievances to PIU regularly through ESMP monitoring reports; • Provide guidance to the construction contractor and engineering supervision firm; • Monitor implementation of ESMPs on site, if required can revise the ESMP together with PIU; • Monitor implementation of labor management procedures at the contractors; • Implement RAPs on sites and provide regular reporting on implementation to PIU; • Ensure that ESMP is implemented correctly and in a timely manner by the contractor and prepare the ESMP progress reports for the review of PIU; • Ensure timely and successful implementation of RAPs • Perform environmental and social monitoring as defined in ESMF and RPF and sub-project specific ESMPs and RAPs.

	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Collect information on environmental and social issues for progress reports submitted to the WB and make sure that these are allcompliant with the Bank’s requirements.
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6.3 ESA Monitoring and Reporting

Component 4, will support Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) activities to track, document, and communicate the progress and results of the project. An M&E specialist within MESTI PIU, in collaboration with E&S specialists under the PIU, will be responsible for overall compilation of progress and results.

6.3.1 Monitoring Plans

Environmental and social monitoring system starts from the preparation phase of the subproject through the operation phase in order to prevent negative impacts of the project and observe the effectiveness of mitigation measures. This system helps the WB and the Client to evaluate the success of mitigation as part of project supervision and allows taking an action when needed. The monitoring system provides technical assistance and supervision when needed, early detection of conditions related to mitigation measures, follows up on mitigation results, and provides information of the project progress.

Environmental and social monitoring to be implemented by the PIU has to provide information about key environmental and social aspects of the subprojects, particularly the project environmental and social impacts and the effectiveness of taken mitigation measures. Such information enables to evaluate the success of mitigation as part of project supervision, and allows corrective action(s) to be implemented, when needed. In this regard the Monitoring Plan identifies monitoring objectives and specifies the type of monitoring, and their link to impacts and mitigation measures.

A Monitoring Plan Format is presented in the Part C of the ESMP Checklist enclosed in this document in Annex 7.

6.3.2 Monitoring and Reporting Responsibilities

The MESTI PIU will monitor all sub-projects to ensure conformity to ESF standards and requirements during construction, operation and maintenance. They will ensure full compliance with the contract conditions and the ESMP. Final payment to the contractor should be contingent on the final inspection, with particular attention to the requirement to restore the site to its original condition upon completion of rehabilitation activities.

The PIU’s E&S consultants will visit to sub-project sites as and when necessary. If it is found that there is an ESMF and/or ESF/ESS noncompliance, further disbursements will be stopped until compliance is ensured.

The PIU will be responsible for ESMP reporting and will:

- Record and maintain the results of project supervision and monitoring throughout the life of the project. It will present summary progress reports on ESMF/ESMP implementation and the safeguards aspects of subprojects on a semi-annual basis to the World Bank, and as part of this reporting, provide updates on any ECDP related as grievances/feedback that was received, that has been addressed and that may be pending.
- Prepare quarterly or biannual reports on the progress of implementation of measures proposed by the ESMP for selected sub-projects;
- Prepare semi-annual reports on the environmental impacts originated during implementation of sub-projects and analyze the efficiency of mitigation measures applied to minimize negative consequences;

- Prepare outlines and requirements for Contractors' reports on environmental protection and mitigation measures, and review Contractor's monitoring plan and reports;
- Present the impact of mitigation and environmental and social protection measures for general public via specific publications or/and by annual public seminars.

6.3.3 Community Monitoring

Component 1 will finance capacity building of ECD and PHS staff, and the implementation of such capacity building activities will be supervised and monitored by MESTI PIU and respective municipalities/line agencies. Monitoring, supervising and as necessary updating basic package delivery plans whether at the district or local requires data on the effectiveness and participation in specific services under the project subcomponents packages. Districts/Municipalities and line agencies from respective Ministries would therefore require familiarity of education and health data indicators.

6.4 Institutional Capacity for ESMF Implementation

Institutional capacity for implementation is assessed as substantial. The involvement of two ministries (MESTI and MOH) in the implementation arrangements may result in delays. A project coordination unit with clearly defined roles and responsibilities would need to be established to carry on project activities.

The ESF capacity of the MESTI is weak since the previous WB project "Kosovo Education Improvement Project" was on safeguards and without the infrastructure component. The existing environmental and social ESF capacities at the Ministry will be strengthened by the creation of the PIU for the Project implementation phase.

6.4.1 MESTI - PIU

During project implementation, the MESTI PIU supported by the Municipalities will be responsible for:

- (a) environmental screening and evaluation of subproject eligibility from the environmental point of view;
- (b) communication and coordination with EA competent authorities (Committee on Environmental Protection);
- (c) ensuring proper implementation of the ESMP and ESMP Checklist requirements during the subprojects' realization;
- (d) addressing complaints and feedback from Project stakeholders and the public, including grievances regarding environmental/social impacts of subprojects;
- (e) supervision (independently or jointly with the State Ecological Inspectorate) of environmental protection and mitigation measures stipulated in the ESMPs;
- (f) monitoring of environmental impacts as part of overall monitoring of the subproject implementation; and
- (g) reporting on environmental impacts originated during implementation of sub-projects and analyze the efficiency of mitigation measures applied to minimize negative consequences.

This will be done by engineers/technical specialists employed under the PIU. The PIU will conduct regular supervision of safeguards screening, documentation, and mitigation measures for infrastructure project activities, and include the summaries of these supervision activities in its regular reports. It will be described in the Project Operational Manual.

For Components 2 and 3 investments, PIU will oversee sub-project implementation, conduct community mobilization and local capacity building, and contract TAs for the implementation of ECD activities in target areas. PIU will be responsible for M&E and communications. PIU responsibilities will include overall compliance with the provisions of the operations manual, including social and environmental safeguards compliance, the

procurement of goods/works/services, oversight and capacity building for management of subprojects, consultancy services for technical assistance and institutional support, communications and outreach, capacity development of all project stakeholders, monitoring and evaluation, and consolidated reporting. PIU will carry out day to day project management in coordination with oblasts and districts.

6.5 Training and Technical Assistance

As this is the first project with MESTI PIU prepared under the Bank's new Environment and Social Framework (ESF), the client's capacity to deliver an ESF based project is limited; therefore, capacity building will be included in the ESMF as well in other environmental and social instruments to be prepared during preparation and implementation.

To improve institutional capacities with regard to ESMF implementation the WB Environmental and Social Specialists will provide special training for the MESTI PIU staff focused on: (i) Procedural aspects of ESA (stages, key actors, main responsibilities etc.); (ii) Assessment of environmental and social impacts potentially related to the subproject supported within the project; (iii) Consulting and approval of the ESA and monitoring plans; and (iii) preparing ESMP Checklist; (iv) Conducting field supervision and preparing progress reports.

Moreover, a training program will be organized through the MESTI /PIU to develop and expand professional skills and capacity in environmental and social management issues. This training will reinforce the capacity within the PIU by providing specialized instruction to conduct environmental assessments and manage and monitor related E&S issues. The program will also support outreach and consultations with local authorities and beneficiaries of sub-projects in the target areas to encourage local ownership and continued maintenance of newly established and rehabilitated community facilities.

6.6 ESMF Implementation Budget

During construction and operation, PIU is also responsible for providing funding for installation and other activities to minimize any hazardous environmental impacts to be included in the subproject costs. The amount of required funding will depend on the technique/technologies used for implementing mitigation measures and their scale, number, variety and other factors. In order to ensure successful ESMF implementation, funding is also required to finance capacity building activities. Since it is difficult to prepare budget estimates for capacity building at this stage, this information will be included in the procurement plan.

7. STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT, DISCLOSURE AND CONSULTATIONS

7.1 ESMF Disclosure

A separate Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) has been prepared for the Project, based on the World Bank's Environmental and Social Standard 10 on Stakeholder Engagement. The SEP can be found here: <https://masht.rks-gov.net/en/category/division-of-early-and-preschool-education/>

This draft ESMF as well as SEP and the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), once cleared from the WB, will be posted on the MESTI official websites. The final version of the ESMF will be officially submitted to the World Bank for disclosure in English on the WB external webpage. The English, Albanian and Serbian versions will be also posted on the web page of the MESTI. The final version of this document will be used by respective government agencies and other Project stakeholders during the project implementation. Key feedback if any on the disclosed ESMF will be listed on the final version of the document.

7.2 Public Consultations

MESTI PIU will conduct national/local public consultations on this draft ESMF and invite all interested stakeholder organizations including local representatives of the other Government bodies, as per ECD project SEP guidance.

Consultation on sub-project environmental and social assessments. The disclosure of environmental documents for Substantial Risk projects is mandatory, and these are to be made accessible to project-affected groups and local NGOs/CSOs. There will be at least one round of consultations after preparation of the ESIA/ESMP.

Consultation on simple subprojects. In the case of new small construction, insignificant reconstruction, ECD/PHC material supply and equipment etc., which will not have a significant impact on the environment, public consultations can be conducted virtually or in key sites in local public administration offices. For construction/reconstruction activities a notice plate will be installed at the project sites.

7.3 Grievance Redress Mechanism

There are two options available for Project stakeholders and citizens to submit complaints regarding the ECD Project, i.e. the Project Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) and the World Bank Grievance Redress Service (GRS). Separate grievance mechanism for project workers is established Under ECD project LMP.

7.3.1 Objectives of the project-based GRM

The GRM in ECD project is incorporated into a broader beneficiary feedback mechanism to be established by MESTI PIU at the central and local levels of the institution. The project-based GRM is intended to serve as a mechanism to:

- Allow for the identification and impartial, timely and effective resolution of issues affecting the project;
- Strengthen accountability to beneficiaries, including project affected people, and provide channels for project stakeholders and citizens at all levels to provide feedback and raise concerns.

Having an effective GRM in place will also serve the objectives of: reducing conflicts and risks such as external interference, corruption, social exclusion or mismanagement; improving the quality of project activities and results; and serving as important feedback and learning mechanism for project management regarding the strengths and weaknesses of project procedures and implementation processes.

7.3.2 World Bank Grievance Redress System

Communities and individuals who believe that they are adversely affected by a World Bank (WB) supported project may submit complaints to existing project-level grievance redress mechanisms or the WB's Grievance Redress Service (GRS). The GRS ensures that complaints received are promptly reviewed in order to address project-related concerns. Project affected communities and individuals may submit their complaint to the WB's independent Inspection Panel which determines whether harm occurred, or could occur, as a result of WB non-compliance with its policies and procedures. Complaints may be submitted at any time after concerns have been brought directly to the World Bank's attention, and Bank Management has been given an opportunity to respond. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank's corporate Grievance Redress Service (GRS), please visit <http://www.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/products-and-services/grievance-redress-service>. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank Inspection Panel, please visit www.inspectionpanel.org.

ANNEX 1.POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISKS AND IMPACTS AND PROPOSED MITIGATION MEASURES UNDER THE SMALL TO MEDIUM SCALE INFRASTRUCTURE SUBPROJECTS

<i>No.</i>	<i>Project activity</i>	<i>Type of risks and impacts</i>	<i>Scale of risk or impact (local/ regional; temporary/ permanent)</i>	<i>Mitigation measures</i>
1	Component 3. Repurposing and renovating the preschool and ECD facilities in Kosovo	Inappropriate handling of asbestos materials Construction-related impacts (dust, noise, safety of workers and neighborhood residents, loss of access to public facilities)	Local and Temporary	<p>The process of upgrading (repurposing and renovating) presents a unique opportunity to incorporate resource-efficient design and construction practices. This includes the implementation of environmentally friendly strategies such as rainwater harvesting, which helps conserve water resources and reduce the strain on local water supplies. Additionally, the adoption of energy-efficient lighting and pumping systems not only reduces energy consumption but also contributes to lower operational costs and a reduced carbon footprint. These provisions under this ESMP will be included in the project design.</p> <p>ACM will not be used as a new material in rehabilitation works or new buildings.</p> <p>Existing asbestos-cement roofing sheets and materials will be removed and disposed based on the national standards and WB requirements.</p> <p>ESMP will include the ACM handling measures, including management efforts, worker safety training and sealing, including burial into the ground as final disposal.</p> <p>During the construction stage EHS issues will be managed based on the mitigation measures set up in the ESMP Checklist (like operations during normal working hours only; access roads will be watered during dry periods, during planning phase, ensure that local people are aware of restrictions during construction and alternative arrangements for access are provided; ensure construction workers are given safety instruction; ensure safety officers on site; ensure effective signage for the public and ensure that all exposed construction areas are barricaded from public access)</p>
2	Component 3 Construction of new kindergartens/ECD facilities	Construction-related impacts (dust, noise, safety of workers and neighborhood residents, loss of access to public facilities) Resettlement impacts, including loss of lands, assets, crops, trees, access to public facilities	Temporary Permanent	Site specific Resettlement Action Plan should be developed, consulted, approved and disclosed. No civil works can start at the site unless all the compensations are paid to the Project Affected People (PAP)

		Environmental impacts: air quality, water quality, noise, waste management, EHS	Temporary	<p>Environmental Mitigation Plan should be developed, which will include relevant mitigation measures for each type of environmental risk (see Part C of ESMP Checklist)</p> <p>The construction of new kindergartens/ECD facilities presents a unique opportunity to incorporate resource-efficient design and construction practices. This includes the implementation of environmentally friendly strategies such as rainwater harvesting, which helps conserve water resources and reduce the strain on local water supplies. Additionally, the adoption of energy-efficient lighting and pumping systems not only reduces energy consumption but also contributes to lower operational costs and a reduced carbon footprint. These provisions under this ESMP will be included in the project design.</p>
3	<p>Component 3</p> <p>Sub Component 3.2</p> <p>Equipment of ECD centers with new furniture and learning materials</p> <p>Under this sub-component, the project will aim to provide a universal package of innovative equipment (both indoor and outdoor)</p>	<p>Potential impacts on waste generation due to removal of old existing furniture subject to replacement with new furniture</p>	Local and Temporary	<p>Waste management issues will be managed based on the mitigation measures set up in the ESMP Checklist (ensure that waste generated is properly screened and disposed at certified landfill/dumpsites adequate to the waste category/type)</p>
4	<p>Access to water supply for drinking in renovated ECD facilities (replacement of water pipes)</p>	<p>Emissions during dismantling and installing water pipelines (welding equipment, motor vehicles); surface soil damage; possible cutting down of trees; labor safety; loss of access to public facilities</p> <p>Changes in hydrology / drainage in pipeline networks</p>	Local and temporary	<p>Strict control over the accumulated wastes management and use of motor vehicles and construction equipment will be implemented in accordance with established standards; the optimal route for water supply networks will be selected; involvement of highly qualified specialists to be preliminary instructed on safety requirements; alternative roads and pathways will be created to provide access to public facilities; Any temporary land need, should be addressed through the RPF provisions. No sub-project which requires involuntary land acquisition will be funded.</p> <p>Design provisions for alternative drainage flows should be prepared.</p>

5	Construction of new ECD facilities will require Access to water supply and sewerage services/network	Dumping of excavated sediments; Damage to adjacent vegetation; Water pollution due to untreated waste water discharges , Surface and ground water pollution Air emissions of dust and cement Noise Solid wastes Accidental spillages Occupational hazards	Local and temporary	Minimize damage to vegetative cover; Collection of sediments, silts Proper disposal of sediments; Wastewater, including those from aggregate processing and concrete batching, must not enter streams without settling ponds Dust from the handling or transporting of aggregates, cement, etc., should be minimized by sprinkling or other methods. Prevent air pollution by dust, emissions from transport vehicles; Appropriate waste management during construction works; Prevention of spillage of contaminants, debris, or other pollutants, into streams or underground water resources. Such pollutants include untreated sewage and sanitary waste and petroleum products; Limitation of works time Apply good practices for occupational health and safety, including regular training, orientation and instructions.
6	The project rehabilitation activities may include Energy conservation investment (insulated doors, windows in schools, kindergartens)	Waste accumulated during dismantling of equipment and construction units; air pollution during demolition and removal of equipment and construction units, noise and dust as a result of working equipment; labor safety	Local and temporary	Additionally, the energy-conservation such as insulated doors, windows in schools, kindergartens not only reduce energy consumption but also contributes to lower operational costs and a reduced carbon footprint. These provisions under this ESMP will be included in the project design. During the construction stage construction waste management will be arranged based on the national standards, with special attention to asbestos containing insulated materials and roofing handling. ESMP Checklist will include the ACM handling measures, including management efforts, worker training and sealing, including burial into the ground as final disposal. Workers will be instructed about occupational safety requirements and provided with uniforms, respirators, glasses, gloves, etc.
7	Any socio-economic infrastructure subprojects	Social tensions and conflicts at the community level	Local and temporary	This risk will be mitigated through communications and awareness-raising activities that clearly communicate project eligibility criteria to stakeholders within Project districts, and the operation of a project grievance redress mechanism (GRM) should residents raise concerns after awareness-raising activities take place.
8	Subprojects implemented by sub-contractors	Non-compliance with labour laws and unfair wages; Gender discrimination Unfair wages	Local	The Client is to ensure contractors and subcontractors comply with labour laws and standards and implement fair work practices

9	Infrastructure rehabilitation/construction subprojects	social intensity between workers and local residents	local temporary	Attraction of manpower from other regions can lead to occurrence of some social problems and possible intensity between workers and local residents. The opportunity of hiring of local workers can reduce also to a minimum necessity of maintenance of workers habitation and other necessary conditions connected to it and convenience.
10	Component 1.2 Capacity building of ECD professionals Training and capacity building of early childhood teachers, childcare workers	<i>Unacceptable increase in ECD staff workloads.</i> The program will promote new content on parenting awareness and skills, with a focus on ECD and early child stimulation; screening and pathways for referrals to secondary care; and promotion of family planning and ECD attitude. Promoting greater use of ECD services may put pressure on current staff, and facility capacity at ECD facilities in in target districts.	Moderate	To mitigate this risk, a detailed training program has to be developed and consulted with affected parties in order to mitigate and eliminate the risk.
11	Sub Component 1.2 Capacity building of ECD professionals Capacity building the training of PHC staff to support the provision of prenatal, postnatal, and child health services	<i>Unacceptable increase in PHC staff workloads.</i> The program will promote new content on parenting awareness and skills, with a focus on early child stimulation; screening and pathways for referrals to secondary care; and promotion of family planning and ECD attitude. The project will support pregnant women to use PHC services. Promoting greater use of PHC services may put pressure on current staff, and facility capacity at PHC facilities in in target districts.	Moderate	To mitigate this risk, a detailed training program has to be developed and consulted with affected parties in order to mitigate and eliminate the risk.
12	Sub Component 3.2 This component will finance the provision of equipment and supplies of innovative equipment of the kindergartens and provision of teaching and learning materials	Potential impacts on waste generation due to removal of old existing equipment subject to replacement with new equipment	Local and Temporary	Waste management issues will be managed based on the mitigation measures set up in the ESMP Checklist (ensure that waste generated is properly screened and disposed at certified landfill/dumpsites adequate to the waste category/type)

ANNEX 2. SCREENING OF CATEGORIES OF PROPOSED TYPES OF SUBPROJECTS

<i>Community Social Infrastructure subprojects</i>				
No	Project activity	Risk category	Remarks	Proposed EA instrument
1	Component 3. Repurposing and renovating the preschool and ECD facilities in Kosovo	Moderate		ESMP Checklist and generic ESMPs The contract provisions should specify labor safety rules and LMP
2	Component 3 Construction of new kindergartens/ECD facilities	Substantial		ESIA/ESMP and/or ESMP Checklist and generic ESMPs The contract provisions should specify labor safety rules and LMP RAP (if needed) to be prepared under the provision of project RPF
3	Component 3 Subcomponent 3.2 Equipment of ECD centers with new furniture and learning materials Under this sub-component, the project will aim to provide a universal package of innovative equipment (both indoor and outdoor)	Low		ESMP Checklist LMP provisions to be applied
4	Access to water supply for drinking in renovated ECD facilities (replacement of water pipes;)	Low		ESMP Checklist and generic ESMPs The contract provisions should specify labor safety rules and LMP
	Construction of new ECD facilities will require Access to water supply and sewerage services/network	Moderate		ESIA/ESMP and/or ESMP Checklist and generic ESMPs The contract provisions should specify labor safety rules and LMP RAP (if needed) to be prepared under the provision of project RPF
5	The project rehabilitation activities may include Energy conservation investment (insulated doors, windows in schools, kindergartens)	Moderate	In the case of hazardous materials will be founded (asbestos containing material) or lead containing paints to be replaced.	ESIA/ESMP and/or ESMP Checklist and generic ESMPs The contractors should ensure labor safety issues and provide before starting the civil works special EHS training
6	<i>Component 3.2. Equipment of ECD centers with new furniture and learning materials</i> This component will finance the provision of equipment and supplies of innovative equipment of the kindergartens and provision of teaching and learning materials.	Low		ESMP Checklist LMP provisions to be applied

1. ANNEX 3. ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING CHECKLIST (to be completed by PIU)

1. **Sub-Project Name and Code:**

2. **Brief Description of Sub-project** to include: nature of the project, project cost, physical size, site area, location, property ownership, existence of on-going operations, plans for expansion or new construction (the description can be copied from the subproject proposal and attached).

3. Will the project have impacts on the environmental and social parameters listed below in during the construction or operational phases? Indicate, with a check, during which phase impacts will occur and whether mitigation measures are required.

ENVIRONMENTAL SCREENING			
Will the site activity include/involve any of the following?	Activity/Issue	Status	Mitigation Actions
	Building rehabilitation	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	See Section Checklist A of Part C of the ESMP
	New construction	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	See Section Checklist B of Part C of the ESMP
	Historic building(s) and districts	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	See Section Checklist D of Part C of the ESMP
	Acquisition of land ³⁹	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	See Section Checklist E of Part C of the ESMP
	Hazardous or toxic materials	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	See Section Checklist E of Part C of the ESMP
	Impacts on forests and/or protected areas	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	See Section Checklist F of Part C of the ESMP
	Handling / management of waste	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	See Section Checklist G of Part C of the ESMP
	Traffic and Pedestrian Safety	<input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input type="checkbox"/> No	See Section Checklist H of Part C of the ESMP

ACTIVITY	PARAMETER	Construction Phase	Operation Phase	Mitigation Measure are required or not [yes-no]
A. General Conditions	Notification and Worker Safety			
	Air Quality			

³⁹ Land acquisitions includes displacement of people, change of livelihood encroachment on private property this is to land that is purchased/transferred and affects people who are living and/or squatters and/or operate a business (kiosks) on land that is being acquired.

B. General Rehabilitation and /or Construction Activities	Noise			
	Water Quality			
	Waste management			
C. Individual wastewater treatment system	Water Quality			
D. Historic building(s)	Cultural Heritage			
E. Acquisition of land	Land Acquisition Plan/Framework			
F. Toxic Materials	Asbestos management			
	Toxic / hazardous waste management			
G. Affects forests and/or protected areas	Protection			
H. Disposal of waste	Infrastructure for waste management			

Part 2 (to be completed by the MESTI PIU based on the findings of the environmental screening and scoping process)

Project Environmental Risk Category (Substantial or Moderate) _____

ESIA and/or ESMP and ESMP Checklist is required (yes or no) _____

What are the specific issues to be addressed in the ESIA/ESMP?

Environmental Screener:

Date:

ANNEX 4. SOCIAL SCREENING CHECKLIST

	Activities	Yes	No	Notes
1	Purchase of land, buildings (residential and business)			If "Yes", and answers other questions "No", provide relevant documents, available for the final sales transaction
2	Acquisitions or expansion of the business, which will be implemented by the demolition/relocation homeowners, renters, formal and informal user assets			If yes, exclude from financing
3	Acquisition of assets, which will cause the loss of access of people or a particular community/group, especially ethnic minorities to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> · Natural resources · The traditional habitat · The traditional activities · Communal utilities 			If yes, exclude from financing
4	Acquisitions/or expansion of a business that can promote/increase the risk of: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Violation of the labor code and laws including the use of child labor 2. Harassment of ethnic minority groups in the areas of project (related to their identity, dignity and livelihoods of the system of subsistence, cultural identity) 3. Human trafficking and forced labor 			If yes, exclude from financing
5	Will there be land acquisition using eminent domain law?			If yes, exclude from financing
6	Will there be permanent or temporary loss of shelter and residential land due to land acquisition?			If yes, exclude from financing
7	Will there be permanent or temporary loss of private land and other productive assets due to land acquisition?			If yes, exclude from financing
8	Will there be losses of crops, trees, and fixed assets due to land acquisition?			If yes, exclude from financing
9	Will there be permanent or temporary loss of businesses or enterprises due to land acquisition?			If yes, exclude from financing
10	Will there be permanent or temporary loss of income sources and means of livelihoods due to land acquisition?			If yes, exclude from financing
11	If land or private property is purchased through negotiated settlement or willing buyer-willing seller, will it result in the permanent or temporary removal or displacement of renters, or leaseholders?			If yes, exclude from financing
12	If land or private property is purchased through negotiated settlement or willing buyer-willing seller, will it result in the permanent or temporary removal or displacement of informal land-users (people without legal rights on the land) or squatters?			If yes, exclude from financing

13	Will the project involve any permanent or temporary restrictions in land use or access to legally designated parks or protected areas and cause people or any community to lose access to natural resources, traditional habitats, communal land, or communal facilities?			If yes, exclude from financing
14	Will the project use government land or any public land or property, which will require the permanent or temporary removal of informal occupants or users (residential or economic)?			If yes, exclude from financing
15	Are there any cultural or archeological sites nearby that could be impacted by project activities?			If yes, exclude from financing

ANNEX 5. RESULTS OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SCREENING

<input type="checkbox"/> Risk Category "High". Significant impact, exclude from financing <input type="checkbox"/> Risk Category "Substantial". Limited or temporary impact <input type="checkbox"/> Category "Moderate" or "Low". No impact	Prepared by:
	Name and Signature:
	Designation:
	Date:
	Approved by:
	Name and Signature:
	Designation:
	Date:

Any subproject applications that include activities that coincide with those included in the lists of excluded subprojects for financing and that which may have significant environmental risks will be disqualified. If the answer to one of the following questions is YES, the subproject applications shall be excluded.

ANNEX 6. ENVIRONMENTAL & SOCIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT REPORT

An Environmental and Social Impact Assessment for Substantial Risk projects focuses on the significant environmental issues raised by a Sub-project. Its primary purpose is to identify environmental impacts and those measures that, if incorporated into the design and implementation of a project can assure that the negative environmental effects will be minimized. The scope and level of detail required in the analysis depend on the magnitude and severity of potential impacts.

The environmental and social impact assessment report should include the following elements:

Executive Summary. This summarizes the significant findings and recommended actions.

Policy, legal and administrative framework. This section summarizes the legal and regulatory framework that applies to environmental management in the jurisdiction where the study is done. *Project Description.* Describes the nature and scope of the project and the geographic, ecological, temporal and socioeconomic context in which the project will be carried out. The description should identify social groups that will be affected, include a map of the project site, identify impacts on land or assets, and identify any off-site or support facilities that will be required for the project.

Baseline data. Describe relevant physical, biological and social condition including any significant changes anticipated before the project begins. Data should be relevant to project design, location, operation or mitigation measures.

Environmental and Social Impacts. Describe the likely or expected positive and negative impacts in quantitative terms to the extent possible. Identify mitigation measures and estimate residual impacts after mitigation. Describe the limits of available data and uncertainties related to the estimation of impacts and the results of proposed mitigation.

Analysis of Alternatives. Systematically compare feasible alternatives to the proposed project location, design and operation including the "without project" alternative in terms of their relative impacts, costs and suitability to local conditions. For each of the alternatives quantify and compare the environmental impacts and costs relative to the proposed plan.

Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). If significant impacts requiring mitigation are identified, the ESMP defines the mitigation that will be done, identifies key monitoring indicators and any needs for institutional strengthening for effective mitigation and monitoring to be carried out.

Annexes

ANNEX 7. ENVIRONMENTAL & SOCIAL MANAGEMENT PLAN

General Remarks. Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) for the substantial Category projects should outline the mitigation, monitoring and administrative measures to be taken during project implementation to avoid or eliminate negative environmental impacts. For projects of intermediate environmental risk (Substantial risk projects), ESMP may also be an effective way of summarizing the activities needed to achieve effective mitigation of negative environmental impacts (description of Environmental and Social Management Plan is provided in Attachment 1 below).

The Management Plan format provided in **Attachment 2 below**. It represents a model for development of an ESMP. The model divides the project cycle into three phases: construction, operation and decommissioning. For each phase, the preparation team identifies any significant environmental impacts that are anticipated based on the analysis done in the context of preparing an environmental assessment. For each impact, mitigation measures are to be identified and listed. Estimates are made of the cost of mitigation actions broken down by estimates for installation (investment cost) and operation (recurrent cost). The ESMP format also provides for the identification of institutional responsibilities for "installation" and operation of mitigation devices and methods.

To keep track of the requirements, responsibilities and costs for monitoring the implementation of environmental mitigation identified in the analysis included in an environmental assessment for High Risk and Substantial Risk projects, a monitoring plan may be useful. A **Monitoring Plan format** is provided in **Attachment 3 below**. Like the ESMP the project cycle is broken down into three phases (construction, operation and decommissioning). The format also includes a row for baseline information that is critical to achieving reliable and credible monitoring. The key elements of the matrix are:

- What is being monitored?
- Where is monitoring done?
- How is the parameter to be monitored to ensure meaningful comparisons?
- When or how frequently is monitoring necessary or most effective?
- Why is the parameter being monitored (what does it tell us about environmental impact)?

In addition to these questions, it is useful to identify the costs associated with monitoring (both investment and recurrent) and the institutional responsibilities.

When a monitoring plan is developed and put in place in the context of project implementation, the PIU will request reports at appropriate intervals and include the findings in its periodic reporting to the World Bank and make the findings available to Bank staff during supervision missions.

Attachment 1

Description of the of the Environmental and Social Management Plan

The Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) identifies feasible and cost-effective measures that may reduce potentially significant adverse environmental impacts to acceptable levels. The plan includes compensatory measures if mitigation measures are not feasible, cost-effective, or sufficient. Specifically, the ESMP (a) identifies and summarizes all anticipated significant adverse environmental impacts (including those involving indigenous people or involuntary resettlement); (b) describes--with technical details--each mitigation measure, including the type of impact to which it relates and the conditions under which it is required (e.g., continuously or in the event of contingencies), together with designs, equipment descriptions, and operating procedures, as appropriate; (c) estimates any potential environmental impacts of these measures; and (d) provides linkage with any other mitigation plans (e.g., for involuntary resettlement, indigenous peoples, or cultural property) required for the project.

Monitoring

Environmental monitoring during project implementation provides information about key environmental aspects of the project, particularly the environmental impacts of the project and the effectiveness of mitigation measures. Such information enables the borrower and the Bank to evaluate the success of mitigation as part of project supervision, and allows corrective action to be taken when needed. Therefore, the ESMP identifies monitoring objectives and specifies the type of monitoring, with linkages to the impacts assessed in the ESA report and the mitigation measures described in the ESMP. Specifically, the monitoring section of the ESMP provides (a) a specific description, and technical details, of monitoring measures, including the parameters to be measured, methods to be used, sampling locations, frequency of measurements, detection limits (where appropriate), and definition of thresholds that will signal the need for corrective actions; and (b) monitoring and reporting procedures to (i) ensure early detection of conditions that necessitate particular mitigation measures, and (ii) furnish information on the progress and results of mitigation.

Capacity Development and Training

To support timely and effective implementation of environmental project components and mitigation measures, the ESMP draws on the EA's assessment of the existence, role, and capability of environmental units on site or at the agency and ministry level. If necessary, the ESMP recommends the establishment or expansion of such units, and the training of staff, to allow implementation of EA recommendations. Specifically, the ESMP provides a specific description of institutional arrangements--who is responsible for carrying out the mitigatory and monitoring measures (e.g., for operation, supervision, enforcement, monitoring of implementation, remedial action, financing, reporting, and staff training). To strengthen environmental management capability in the agencies responsible for implementation, most EMPs cover one or more of the following additional topics: (a) technical assistance programs, (b) procurement of equipment and supplies, and (c) organizational changes.

Implementation Schedule and Cost Estimates

For all three aspects (mitigation, monitoring, and capacity development), the EMP provides (a) an implementation schedule for measures that must be carried out as part of the project, showing phasing and coordination with overall project implementation plans; and (b) the capital and recurrent cost estimates and sources of funds for implementing the ESMP. These figures are also integrated into the total project cost tables.

Integration of ESMP with Project

ANNEX 8. ENVIRONMENTAL & SOCIAL MANAGEMENT CHECKLIST FOR SMALL CONSTRUCTION AND REHABILITATION ACTIVITIES

General Guidelines for use of ESMP checklist

For low-risk topologies, such as school and hospital rehabilitation activities, the ECA ESF team developed an alternative to the current ESMP format to provide an opportunity for a more streamlined approach to preparing ESMPs for minor rehabilitation or small-scale works in building construction, in the health, education and public services sectors. The checklist-type format has been developed to provide “example good practices” and designed to be user friendly and compatible with safeguard requirements.

The ESMP checklist-type format attempts to cover typical core mitigation approaches to civil works contracts with small, localized impacts. It is accepted that this format provides the key elements of an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) or Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) to meet World Bank Environmental and Social Assessment requirements under ESS1. The intention of this checklist is that it would be applicable as guidelines for the small works contractors and constitute an integral part of bidding documents for contractors carrying out small civil works under Bank-financed projects.

The checklist has four sections:

Part 1 includes a descriptive part that characterizes the project and specifies in terms the institutional and legislative aspects, the technical project content, the potential need for capacity building program and description of the public consultation process. This section could be up to two pages long. Attachments for additional information can be supplemented when needed.

Part 2 includes an environmental and social screening checklist, where activities and potential environmental issues can be checked in a simple Yes/No format. If any given activity/issue is triggered by checking “yes”, a reference is made to the appropriate section in the following table, which contains clearly formulated management and mitigation measures.

Part 3 represents the monitoring plan for activities during project construction and implementation. It retains the same format required for ESMPs proposed under normal Bank requirements for Substantial risk projects. It is the intent of this checklist that Part 2 and Part 3 be included into the bidding documents for contractors, priced during the bidding process and diligent implementation supervised during works execution.

Contents of the ESMP Checklist

- A. General Project and Site Information
- B. Safeguards Information
- C. Mitigation Measures
- D. Monitoring Plan

PART A: GENERAL PROJECT AND SITE INFORMATION

SITE DESCRIPTION	
Name of site	
Describe site location	Attachment 1: Site Map []Y [] N
Who owns the land?	
Description of geographic, physical, biological, geological, hydrographic and socio-economic context	
Locations and distance for material sourcing, especially aggregates, water, stones?	
LEGISLATION	
Identify national & local legislation & permits that apply to project activity	
PUBLIC CONSULTATION	
Identify when / where the public consultation process took place	
INSTITUTIONAL CAPACITY BUILDING	
Will there be any capacity building?	[] N or []Y if Yes, Attachment 2 includes the capacity building program

PART B: SAFEGUARDS INFORMATION

ENVIRONMENTAL /SOCIAL SCREENING			
	Activity/Issue	Status	Triggered Actions
Will the site activity include/involve any of the following?	Building rehabilitation	[] Yes [] No	See Section A below
	New construction	[] Yes [] No	See Section A below
	Individual wastewater treatment system	[] Yes [] No	See Section B below
	Historic building(s) and districts	[] Yes [] No	See Section C below
	Acquisition of land	[] Yes [] No	See Section D below
	Hazardous or toxic materials	[] Yes [] No	See Section E below
	Impacts on forests and/or protected areas	[] Yes [] No	See Section F below
	Handling / management of waste	[] Yes [] No	See Section G below
	Traffic and Pedestrian Safety	[] Yes [] No	See Section H below

PART C: MITIGATION MEASURES

ACTIVITY	PARAMETER	MITIGATION MEASURES CHECKLIST
General Conditions	Notification and Worker Safety	<p>The local construction and environment inspectorates and communities have been notified of upcoming activities</p> <p>The public has been notified of the works through appropriate notification in the media and/or at publicly accessible sites(including the site of the works)</p> <p>All legally required permits have been acquired for construction and/or rehabilitation</p> <p>The Contractor formally agrees that all work will be carried out in a safe and disciplined manner designed to minimize impactson neighboring residents and environment.</p> <p>Workers' PPE will comply with international good practice (always hardhats, as needed masks and safety glasses, harnessesand safety boots)</p> <p>Appropriate signposting of the sites will inform workers of key rules and regulations to follow.</p>
A. General Rehabilitation and /or Construction Activities	Air Quality	<p>During interior demolition debris-chutes shall be used above the first floor</p> <p>Demolition debris shall be kept in controlled area and sprayed with water mist to reduce debris dust</p> <p>During pneumatic drilling/wall destruction dust shall be suppressed by ongoing water spraying and/or installing dust screenenclosures at site</p> <p>The surrounding environment (side-walks, roads) shall be kept free of debris to minimize dustThere will be no open burning of construction / waste material at the site</p> <p>There will be no excessive idling of construction vehicles at sites</p>
	Noise	<p>Construction noise will be limited to restricted times agreed to in the permit</p> <p>During operations the engine covers of generators, air compressors and other powered mechanical equipment shall be closed, and equipment placed as far away from residential areas as possible</p>
	Water Quality	<p>The site will establish appropriate erosion and sediment control measures such as e.g. hay bales and / or silt fences to prevent sediment from moving off site and causing excessive turbidity in nearby streams and rivers.</p>
	Waste management	<p>Waste collection and disposal pathways and sites will be identified for all major waste types expected from demolition and construction activities.</p> <p>Construction waste will be collected and disposed properly by licensed collectors</p> <p>The records of waste disposal will be maintained as proof for proper management as designed.</p> <p>Whenever feasible the contractor will reuse and recycle appropriate and viable materials (except asbestos)</p>
B. Individual wastewater treatment system	Water Quality	<p>The approach to handling sanitary wastes and wastewater from building sites (installation or reconstruction) must be approvedby the local authorities</p> <p>Before being discharged into receiving waters, effluents from individual wastewater systems must be treated in order to meetthe minimal quality criteria set out by national guidelines on effluent quality and wastewater treatment</p> <p>Monitoring of new wastewater systems (before/after) will be carried out</p> <p>Construction vehicles and machinery will be washed only in designated areas where runoff will not pollute natural surfacewater bodies.</p>

<p>C. Historic building(s)</p>	<p>Cultural Heritage</p>	<p>If the building is a designated historic structure, very close to such a structure, or located in a designated historic district, notification shall be made and approvals/permits be obtained from local authorities and all construction activities planned and carried out in line with local and national legislation.</p> <p>It shall be ensured that provisions are put in place so that artifacts or other possible “chance finds” encountered in excavation or construction are noted and registered, responsible officials contacted, and works activities delayed or modified to account for such finds.</p>
<p>D. Acquisition of land</p>	<p>Land Use Criteria</p>	<p>No land will be involuntarily acquired</p> <p>Works will utilize vacant government land, occur within existing footprint, or follow right-of-way or easements</p>
<p>E. Toxic Materials</p>	<p>Asbestos management</p>	<p>If asbestos is located on the project site, it shall be marked clearly as hazardous material When possible the asbestos will be appropriately contained and sealed to minimize exposure</p> <p>The asbestos prior to removal (if removal is necessary) will be treated with a wetting agent to minimize asbestos dust Asbestos will be handled and disposed by skilled & experienced professionals</p> <p>If asbestos material is be stored temporarily, the wastes should be securely enclosed inside closed containments and marked appropriately. Security measures will be taken against unauthorized removal from the site.</p> <p>The removed asbestos will not be reused</p>
	<p>Toxic / hazardous waste management</p>	<p>Temporarily storage on site of all hazardous or toxic substances will be in safe containers labeled with details of composition, properties and handling information</p> <p>The containers of hazardous substances shall be placed in a leak-proof container to prevent spillage and leaching The wastes shall be transported by specially licensed carriers and disposed in a licensed facility.</p> <p>Paints with toxic ingredients or solvents or lead-based paints will not be used</p>
<p>F. Disposal of waste</p>	<p>Infrastructure for wastemanagement</p>	<p>In compliance with national regulations the contractor will ensure that newly constructed and/or rehabilitated facilities include sufficient infrastructure for waste handling and disposal;</p>
<p>G. Traffic and pedestrian Safety</p>	<p>Direct or indirect hazards to public, traffic and pedestrian by construction activities</p>	<p>In compliance with national regulations the contractor will ensure that the construction site is properly secured, and construction related traffic regulated. This include but not limited to: signposting, warning signs, barriers and traffic diversions;</p> <p>Site will be clearly visible, and the public warned of all potential hazards; Traffic management system and staff training, especially for site access and near site heavy traffic.</p> <p>Provisions of safe passages and crossings for pedestrians where construction traffic interferes.</p> <p>Adjustment of working hours to local traffic patterns, e.g. avoiding major transport activities during rush hours or times of livestock movement.</p> <p>Active traffic management by trained and visible staff at the site, if required for safe and convenient passage for the public</p> <p>Ensuring safe and continuous access to office facilities, shops and residences during renovation activities, if the buildings stay open for the public</p>

PART D: MONITORING PLAN

Activity	What (Is the parameter to be monitored?)	Where (Is the parameter to be monitored?)	How (Is the parameter to be monitored?)	When (Define the frequency / or continuous?)	Why (Is the parameter being monitored?)	Who (Is responsible for monitoring?)
1. Type of activity						
2. Type of activity						
3. Type of activity						

EXAMPLE OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT PLAN CHECK LIST FOR SMALL SCALE CONSTRUCTION/ REHABILITATION UNDER SELECTED SUB-PROJECTS

PART 2: ENVIRONMENTAL /SOCIAL SCREENING		
ACTIVITY	ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUE/PARAMETER	MITIGATION MEASURES CHECKLIST
A. Contractor mobilization(General Conditions)	Notification and Worker Safety	<p>The local construction and environment inspectorates and communities have been notified of upcoming activitiesThe public has been notified of the works through appropriate notification in the media and/or at publicly accessible sites (including the site of the works).</p> <p>All legally required permits have been acquired for construction and/or rehabilitation</p> <p>All work will be carried out in a safe and disciplined manner designed to minimize impacts on neighboringresidents and environment.</p> <p>Workers' PPE will comply with international good practice (always hardhats, as needed masks and safetyglasses, harnesses and safety boots)</p> <p>Appropriate signposting of the sites will inform workers of key rules and regulations to follow.</p>
B. Rehabilitation and /or Construction Activities (civil works)	Air Quality	<p>Keep demolition debris in controlled area and spray with water mist to reduce debris dust.</p> <p>Suppress dust during pneumatic drilling/wall destruction by ongoing water spraying and/or installing dust screen enclosures at site.</p> <p>Keep surrounding environment (side-walks, roads) free of debris to minimize dust. There will be open burning of construction / waste material at the site; There will be no excessive idling of construction vehicles at sites</p>
	Noise	<p>Construction noise will be limited to restricted times agreed to in the permit;</p> <p>During operations the engine covers of generators, air compressors and other powered mechanical equipments should be closed, and equipment placed as far away from residential areas as possible</p>
	Waste management	<p>Waste collection and disposal pathways and sites will be identified for all major waste types expected fromdemolition and construction activities.</p> <p>Mineral construction and demolition wastes will be separated from general refuse, organic, liquid and chemical wastes by on-site sorting and stored in appropriate containers.</p> <p>Construction waste will be collected and disposed properly by licensed collectors</p> <p>The records of waste disposal will be maintained as proof for proper management as designed.</p> <p>Whenever feasible the contractor will reuse and recycle appropriate and viable materials (except asbestos)</p>

C. Wastewater	Water Quality	<p>The site will establish appropriate erosion and sediment control measures such as e.g. hay bales and / or siltfences to prevent sediment from moving off site and causing excessive turbidity in nearby streams and rivers. The approach to handling sanitary wastes and wastewater from building sites (installation or reconstruction) must be approved by the local authorities;</p> <p>Before being discharged into receiving waters, effluents from individual wastewater systems must be treated in order to meet the minimal quality criteria set out by national guidelines on effluent quality and wastewater treatment;</p> <p>Monitoring of new wastewater systems (before/after) will be carried out;</p> <p>Actions of contractors must be accomplished in a way to prevent accidental spilling of wastewater from entering to the reservoirs or into groundwater during processing and mixing of concrete. They must not fall into the watercourses/canals without special settling in dams (pools), and without passing through special gravel filters and other processing.</p>
D. Toxic Materials/ Substances	Asbestos management	<p>If asbestos is located on the project site, mark clearly as hazardous material.</p> <p>When possible, the asbestos will be appropriately contained and sealed to minimize exposure.</p> <p>The asbestos prior to removal (if removal is necessary) will be treated with a wetting agent to minimize asbestos dust.</p> <p>Asbestos will be handled and disposed by skilled & experienced professionals.</p> <p>If asbestos material is to be stored temporarily, the wastes should be securely enclosed inside closed containments and marked appropriately.</p> <p>The removed asbestos will not be reused and should be buried or transported to hazardous landfill; as per the local regulations</p>
	Toxic/hazardous waste management	<p>Temporary storage on site of all hazardous or toxic substances will be in safe containers labeled with details of compon properties and handling information</p> <p>The containers of hazardous substances should be placed in a leak-proof container to prevent spillage and leaching</p> <p>The wastes are transported by specially licensed carriers and disposed in a licensed facility. Paints with toxic ingredients or solvents or lead-based paints will not be used</p>
	Oil substances/wastes	<p>Car washes and places of mechanisms and machines service must be equipped with sumps and oil and petrol catchers;</p> <p>Used oil and technical liquids should pour off into containers and then should send to the recovery; Exclude leakage of petroleum products during transportation.</p> <p>All the oil wastes of operational materials of maintenance should be collected and stored in specially designated areas with following cleaning in established order.</p>

	Polychlorinated Biphenils (PCBs)	<p>Strictly obey the regulatory documents in terms of getting access and operating while taking oil samples and in particular the “Safety rules for maintaining of electrical equipment” the II edition issued on 1989, Moscow; Used only glass bottles for oil sampling;</p> <p>In order to prevent the skin from coming into contact with PCBs, use one-way protective gloves. Protect eyes against possible oil splashes by wearing goggles;</p> <p>The sample should be taken by using the drain tap, located at the bottom of the transformer;</p> <p>As there is a risk that highly toxic dioxins are unintentionally formed and released during the Chlorine identification by using applying the Beilstein Method, testing should only be performed in a laboratory by experienced chemists.</p> <p>In the case the Chlorine testing show the transformers contain PCBs it is necessary to follow the rules prescribed in the Guidebook on Environmental Sound PCB Management in Electrical Equipment, labelling the polluted equipment, keeping used oil and contaminated transformers in the tanks in a guarded facility, until when the proper utilization/disposal measures will be in place.</p>
Dismantling/installing old/new equipment and conducting earthworks	Crane/excavators/ bulldozers operations	<p>It is strictly imperative to obey the existing national regulations on conducting these activities;</p> <p>While approaching to the air electrical lines under tension the works should be carried out under the supervision of electricians;</p> <p>The cranes should be installed and fixed in a stable position to prevent their tipping or spontaneous displacement under the action of its own weight, and the engine.</p> <p>For mechanized management of earthworks it is necessary to check the serviceability of machineries, availability of their fencing and safety devices. Working on defective machines is not permitted;</p> <p>To exclude injuries members of mechanized brigades operating cranes and bulldozers should know and strictly follow all safety engineering rules during operations of relevant machines;</p> <p>Workers serving machines should be provided with instructions, comprising following: (a) Machine controlling instruction and caring about the workplace; (b) Safety engineering requirements; (c) Guidance of signals system;</p> <p>(d) The maximum loads and speeds of machines; (e) The measures have to be taken by the worker in the case of accident or malfunction of the machines.</p> <p>To control the machines are allowed people specially trained and have certificate of competence of controlling machines.</p> <p>The basic requirements of cranes and bulldozers operations are as follows: (a) All rotating parts of machines - gears, chain and temporary transfer, fans, flywheels, etc. must be fenced by casing. Turning on the mechanisms without fences is prohibited; (b) Examination, adjustment, tightening bolts, lubrication and preventive maintenance of the equipment during their work is banned; and (c) In areas where these machines work implementation of any other works and existence of people are not allowed. If in exploit soil will be found large stones, stumps or other objects the machine must be stopped and the objects which can cause an accident should be removed.</p>

	Welding activities	<p>Strictly imperative to obey the existing national regulations on conducting these activities; The personal should have protective equipment, rubber gloves, special boots, as well as special helmets. Prior to starting welding operations, all workers have to pass labor safety training course. Use the protective gear which as minimum includes: (a) Respirator/Welders Mask; (b) Protective clothing: All skin areas need to be protected to protect against molten metal and sparks. This includes: Long sleeve shirts; Pants that cover the tops of shoes; Gloves; Shoes or boots; (c) Eye protection devices against injuries from debris and from the effects of the ultraviolet light; (d) Helmets. Fire protection: prepare and use extinguishers as well as sand and water.</p>
	Dismantling/installing electrical equipment	<p>Strictly obey the existing national regulations on conducting these activities; Carry out the routine inspection of the machinery and equipment for the purpose of trouble shooting and observance of the time of repair; Organize training and instruction of the workers engaged in maintenance of the machinery, tools and equipment on safe methods and techniques of work; It is prohibited: to distribute faulty or unchecked tools for work performance as well as to leave off-hand mechanical tools connected to the electrical supply network or compressed air pipelines; to pull up and bend the cables and air hose pipes; to lay cables and hose pipes with their intersection by wire ropes, electric cables, to handle the rotating elements of power driven hand tools.</p>

**EXAMPLE OF AN ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING PLAN FOR SMALL SCALE CONSTRUCTION/
REHABILITATION UNDER SELECTED SUB-PROJECTS**

PHASE	WHAT is the parameter to be monitored?	WHERE is the parameter to be monitored?	HOW is the parameter to be monitored??	WHEN is the parameter to be monitored? (frequency)?	WHY is the parameter being monitored?	COST	RESPONSIBILITY
Designing	Implementation of ESMP guidelines (RECOMMENDATIONS)	Design project for construction, reconstruction and adaptation.	Review of elaborates and adaptation designs.	Prior approval for construction as part of project monitoring program.	Recommended due to national legislation requiring a construction permit.	Should be part of the Project	PIU E&S specialists Designer, Contractor
Construction	Parameters given in construction permit - all special conditions of construction issued by different bodies	Main Project documentation	A part of regular inspection by the Environmental Inspection agency the Construction Inspection and Municipality	During construction and prior to issuance of the Operation permit	Regular review stipulated in the Law, and if any public complaint is sent to the Ministry of environment and line agencies as Environmental Inspection agency, or the Construction Inspection.	Included in the construction phase, costs of Contractors	PIU E&S Specialists, inspectorate of the ministry of environment and Construction Inspection Municipality
	Construction waste Management (including hazardous)	Supporting documents for waste, which is submitted to the competent communal enterprise	A part of regular inspection by the Environmental Inspection agency and Construction Inspection	After reporting on waste management	Needed in accordance with the waste-related regulations	Expenditure of the Environmental Inspection agency and the Construction Inspection and low costs for the Contractor	PIU E&S Specialists, inspectorate of the Ministry of environment Construction Inspection Municipality
Operation	Waste management	Based on the supporting documents for waste, which is submitted to the Environmental Inspection agency	Reports to the Environmental Inspection agency	After reporting to the Environmental Inspection agency on waste management.	Should be monitored in line with the regulations on waste management.	Costs of the project beneficiary and the Environmental Inspection agency	Project beneficiary, competent communal company and the Environmental Inspection agency

ANNEX 10. MINUTES OF ESF DISCLOSURE



Prishtina, November 3rd, 2023

Meeting Minutes

Topic: Public Discussion on the Environmental and Social Management Framework of the Early Childhood Education and Care for Kosovo's Human Capital Project

Location: Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Innovation (MESTI)

Time: 13:30 – 15:30

This public discussion took place as part of the preparation process for the Early Childhood Education and Care for Kosovo's Human Capital Project (P179656), organized by MESTI, which is the main implementing agency for project preparation and related activities.

The following individuals participated in this meeting:

1. Mevlude Murtezi, Director, Collegium of Directors of Pre-school Institutions of Kosovo
2. Gëzime Rexhepi Çollaku, Director, Association of Private Pre-school Institutions of Kosovo
3. Lulavera Behluli, Project Coordinator, Save the Children
4. Dafina Krasniqi, ECD Officer, UNICEF
5. Shukrije Lecaj, Pedagogical Coordinator, CARITAS
6. Driana Sogojeva, Consultant, MESTI
7. Leonora Shala, Coordinator, MESTI
8. Isuf Gashi, Head of Division, MESTI
9. Nita Prekazi, Senior Officer for International Financial Cooperation, Ministry of Finance, Labor, and Transfers
10. Aurora Osmanaj, Intern, MESTI
11. Luljeta Kabashi, Deputy Director of DAGJ, MESTI
12. Imrane Ramadani, Officer, MESTI
13. Reshit Kurtaj, Education Officer, DKA Prizren
14. Shpresa Kastrati, Environmental Specialist, World Bank
15. Labëri Luzha, Head of the Division for Pre-school Education, MESTI
16. Erjona Bajraktari, Environmental Consultant, MESTI
17. Jora Lumezi, Social Consultant, MESTI
18. Tigran Shmis, World Bank (online)
19. Mjellma Rrecaj, World Bank (online)
20. Mrikë Aliu, World Bank (online)

Agenda:**13:30 -14:00**

- Introduction
 - Avni Rexha – Director, Department of Pre-University Education (MESTI)
 - Labëri Luzha – Head of the Preschool Education Division (MESTI)
 - Tigran Shmis – ECEC Project Representative, World Bank Group

14:00 -14:45

- Presentation: Environmental and Social Management Framework - Jora Lumezi and Erjona Bajraktari, Project Consultants (MESTI)

14:45 –15:15

- Open Discussion/Questions

15:15 – 15:30

- Summary and Closing of the Meeting

Meeting Development:

- The opening speech of this meeting was delivered by Avni Rexha, Director of the Department of Pre-university Education at MESTI, who initially thanked the World Bank for developing this project. He further stated that MESTI prioritizes early childhood education and care, a priority outlined in the Strategic Education Plan. Therefore, he added that the development of this project holds great importance for MESTI because, if implemented as envisioned, it will raise awareness among school staff, parents, and the society as a whole about the importance of early childhood education. Rexha added that ECEC in Kosovo is not highly developed, and for this reason, he believes that this project will greatly contribute to this direction. In conclusion, he also expressed gratitude to the consultants involved in this project, wishing them continued success in the project’s further implementation.
- Next, Labëri Luzha, Head of the Division for Pre-school Education at MESTI, took the floor, thanking the partners for designing the ECEC project related to human capital. She also expressed gratitude to the participants of this public consultation for taking the time to join and discuss the social and environmental management components of the project. She commenced by saying that the Government of Kosovo, through the Ministry of Finance, aims to secure funds from the World Bank for the implementation of the project “Early Childhood Education and Care for Kosovo’s Human Capital”. Furthermore, she stated that the overall objective of the project is to improve quality and equitable access to early childhood education and care services in the country. She added that this project is structured to address key issues in early childhood development services in Kosovo.
- Luzha mentioned that MESTI has been collaborating closely with UNICEF in recent years, and this project fits perfectly into their ongoing efforts. This year, Kosovo’s Parliament approved a Law on Early Childhood Education in August. In response, MESTI has already started drafting Administrative Instructions to put this law into action, including guidelines for Healthy Nutrition in pre-schools. They are also finalizing a key document, the Basic Curriculum for Early Childhood Education, which aims to enhance the quality of early education nationwide. Luzha noted that this project aligns with Kosovo’s National Development Strategy 2030 and the Education Strategy 2022-2026. All these new policies related to early childhood education and care will be integrated into the four components of this project.

Along with the working group established by MESTI, they aim to address crucial issues and contribute significantly to this substantial project, the largest-ever financial investment for ECEC in Kosovo.

- Furthermore, Luzha highlighted that the new law addresses several critical issues contributing to early childhood education and care. These encompass expanding children's access to pre-school institutions, enhancing the quality of education, and efforts to increase the capacity of existing pre-school spaces. There are plans to renovate current facilities, create new modular kindergartens, and extend educational initiatives. Luzha emphasized the extensive efforts of the Government of Kosovo in collaboration with partners like UNICEF, Save the Children, CARITAS Switzerland, and the World Bank in advancing early childhood development. A collaborative project with these partners aims to design and construct 47 new kindergartens across the country over a 5-year period. The new law introduces articles focused on inter-sectoral coordination, a field targeted for regulation or improvement by the World Bank project in Kosovo. She acknowledged the challenge posed by this aspect but deemed it not impossible, as they will engage with international and local experts. She said that the overarching goal is to comprehensively support children in early childhood, prioritizing their health, well-being, and education.
- Luzha also highlighted additional aspects incorporated into the new law, including provisions for training nannies to assist parents who may face constraints in sending their children to preschool institutions, as an alternative new option. Furthermore, she continued with the mention of the components of this project, which are: 1) Improving the Quality of ECEC Services in Kosovo, 2) Fostering Multi-sectoral Integration in ECEC Service Delivery, 3) Increasing Equitable Access to ECEC Services, and 4) Project management, monitoring, and evaluation.
- Moving forward, Tigran Shmis, the representative of the World Bank, addressed the audience. Expressing great honor to speak before this gathering, Shmis anticipated a fruitful discussion. He acknowledged and commended everyone involved in the final steps of submitting and preparing the project on behalf of the entire Bank team. Shmis emphasized that the project responds to a pressing need in the country, focusing on providing access to quality early childhood education and care services for families in Kosovo. Highlighting Kosovo's slight lag compared to other regional countries in this aspect, he mentioned the collaborative efforts with MESTI and the extensive international consultations sought during the project's drafting phase.
- Shmis emphasized that the project places a dual focus on quality and access. Access ensures that children have the opportunity to attend kindergartens, and when the services are of higher quality, it yields better outcomes for children, particularly in their later lives, such as enhanced performance in the job market and an overall improved quality of life. He highlighted that early investment in the care and education of children plays a pivotal role in shaping successful individuals later in life, hence the project's title emphasizing human capital. Shmis articulated that when Kosovo chooses to invest in its young children, it signifies an investment in the country's future, crucial for economic development. He pointed out that the 22 million euros invested in this project will result in significantly larger benefits down the line, considering it not as an expense but as an investment in Kosovo.
- Furthermore, the World Bank representative delved into the project components and their societal impact, highlighting a specific project activity known as community grants. This activity will enable all municipalities to participate in a competition, providing an avenue to comprehend how societies and communities perceive early childhood development. The focus is on understanding their concerns, satisfaction levels, ideas, both negative and positive aspects of the project, and more. Additionally, the project will conduct various studies on the quality of services in the country, examining the roles of

teachers, identifying areas for improvement, and assessing the outcomes of children in pre-school institutions. Shmis concluded by emphasizing that these represent just the initial steps of the project. The next phases involve submission to the World Bank's senior management, approval by the Kosovo Assembly, and finally, the official signing of the agreement that marks the commencement of the project.

- Erjona Bajraktari, appointed by MESTI as a consultant for preparing project documents related to the environmental and social framework, commenced the presentation of foundational documents. She initiated the discussion with the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), designed to preempt, minimize, or alleviate potential adverse environmental and social impacts associated with the project implementation. The Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) was formulated to establish policies and procedures that prevent and minimize the project's necessity to acquire privately owned land, thereby averting impacts on the income loss of affected parties. The Labor Management Procedures (LMP) document facilitates the identification of crucial labor requirements and associated risks, aiding the borrower in determining essential resources to address labor-related issues. Furthermore, the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) seeks to activate stakeholder involvement at appropriate stages during the project's preparation and implementation. Bajraktari indicated that she would now proceed with presenting the first two documents, ESMF and RPF, while her colleague would cover the remaining two, LMP and SEP.
- The environmental consultant for the project highlighted that the overall anticipated impacts from the complete implementation of the project are expected to be positive in social aspects. Furthermore, Bajraktari mentioned that activities under component 3, involving the reconstruction of existing buildings, reorganization of pre-existing kindergarten spaces, and the construction of new kindergartens, might entail medium-term and local environmental and social impacts. These impacts are temporary and can be effectively avoided or minimized by applying protective measures in accordance with World Bank standards, the health and safety protection policies of the World Bank, and compliance with the environmental and social legal framework of the Republic of Kosovo. She emphasized that the primary social impact requiring careful consideration during project implementation is associated with the risk of excluding needy and disadvantaged groups, preventing them from benefiting from the project. Bajraktari added that the level of environmental and social impacts of the project, primarily linked to the implementation phase of planned activities under component 3, is assessed to be moderate.
- Furthermore, Bajraktari provided an overview of the ESMF document, emphasizing its foundation on existing environmental policies, regulations, and laws. This document conducts a thorough examination of the current legal landscape in Kosovo, ensuring alignment with World Bank standards. She clarified that MESTI will assume responsibility for overall implementation, coordination, results monitoring, and communication with the World Bank concerning all project-related activities. Moreover, she introduced the establishment of a Central Project Implementation Unit (CPIU) within MESTI, tasked with offering technical and operational support for project activities in targeted regions/municipalities. This includes functions such as procurement, financial management, and the management of environmental and social impacts.
- Continuing, Bajraktari proceeded with the presentation of the second document, the RPF. This document provides guidelines and procedures to minimize the loss of land, private assets, and resulting income due to project implementation. She emphasized that any unavoidable impacts should be addressed with sufficient mitigating measures to restore affected individuals' living standards to pre-project levels. In conclusion, the consultant stated that in case of any discrepancies between the Kosovar legal framework and the World Bank Involuntary Resettlement Standards, the provisions of RPF will prevail and become

part of the legal agreement signed between the Republic of Kosovo and the World Bank within the project financing framework.

- Subsequently, Jora Lumezi, the project consultant for social issues, took the floor to present the final documents, LMP and SEP. Lumezi outlined that the LMP document aims to address potential work risks, which are considered moderate, with a specific focus on health and safety at work, including concerns related to COVID-19. She highlighted the document's strong emphasis on raising awareness about gender-based violence, harassment, and challenges related to workload. The commitment to addressing these risks and ensuring fair practices, safety, and compliance with labor regulations is emphasized in the document. Additionally, Lumezi mentioned that the LMP provides a summary of labor legislation, focusing on three main areas: National Legislation (Labor Law 03/L-212) in Kosovo, Legal Provisions for Health and Safety at Work (Kosovo Law on Safety and Health at Work 04/L-161), and World Bank Environmental and Social Standards (ESS2). According to Lumezi, the project places significant emphasis on fair treatment, prevention of discrimination, and ensuring equal opportunities for the workforce. Lumezi explained that an integral part of LMP is the Grievance Redress Mechanism, serving as a unified platform for addressing complaints and concerns for project employees. This mechanism includes a clear definition of who the employee should contact to file a complaint, a framework for addressing the complaint within a specific timeframe, the option to escalate the complaint to a higher organizational level, the right to representation, protection against retaliation, access to legal remedies, and the submission and handling of anonymous complaints. In conclusion, Lumezi emphasized that workers have the right to refuse to work if their safety or well-being is at risk or if proper health and safety measures are lacking.
- Furthermore, Lumezi proceeded with the final document, the SEP, which serves several purposes, including the identification and analysis of stakeholders, planning engagement modalities and effective communication tools for consultations and disclosure, defining the roles and responsibilities of various actors in implementing the SEP, establishing the project's grievance mechanism, providing feedback to stakeholders, and monitoring and reporting on the SEP. She explained that the plan categorizes project stakeholders into three groups: those affected by the project, other interested parties, and individuals or groups that are disadvantaged/vulnerable. According to this document, key participants in the project's execution include Local and Regional Authorities, Private Companies and Associations, Preschool Staff and Local Communities, Government and Regulatory Bodies, Non-Governmental Organizations and International Organizations, and Individuals or groups that are disadvantaged/vulnerable.
- Lumezi highlighted that the SEP has various objectives, such as compliance with Kosovo's legal requirements and alignment with World Bank standards, identifying key stakeholders, ensuring effective communication, addressing grievances, defining roles and responsibilities, and more. She emphasized that an integral component of this plan is the establishment of a grievance redress mechanism, similar to the previous document, which includes an online platform and a complaint registry. The goal is to inform all relevant actors about the procedures for submitting complaints regarding project activities and to provide timely responses to their potential concerns.
- Following the presentation of the four crucial project documents within the social and environmental framework, a session of questions and open discussions with the participants commenced. Luzha from MESTI initiated the open discussion, mentioning that these prepared documents would initially be shared in internal public discussions, specifically with the dependent institutions of the Government of Kosovo. Subsequently, they would be shared with the wider public to gather opinions from those not present at the meeting, seeking comments and ideas to ensure the comprehensiveness of these documents.

- Further, Lulavera Behluli, Project Coordinator at Save the Children, took the floor. She commenced by extending congratulations to the Preschool Education Division at MESTI for their commendable efforts and the initiation of this highly significant project for the country. Emphasizing the paramount importance of the preschool education quality component, Behluli underscored that it should be a top priority for this project. She further highlighted the shared objective among MESTI and all partners regarding aiming to increase children’s enrollment in preschool institutions. Behluli pointed out that the latest PISA report indicated no significant performance difference between children who attended preschool education and those who did not. Consequently, she stressed the critical need to enhance the quality of preschool education for the proper development of children. Additionally, Behluli emphasized the crucial role of inter-sectoral cooperation in such a project, ensuring collaborative synergy among all stakeholders for more effective outcomes.
- Furthermore, Isuf Gashi from MESTI, also a member of the working group, raised another significant concern: rural constructions, modular constructions, and adaptations of existing structures. He emphasized the necessity for the project to provide more detailed information regarding locations and property issues, considering that building permits are contingent on property conversion into municipal ownership. Gashi identified the primary challenge of the project as securing suitable locations, a task that should be entrusted to experts. He also highlighted the potential environmental and social impacts in both urban and rural areas where the respective constructions are planned. Addressing the location challenge, Luzha assured that there would be continuous collaboration with local municipalities, which share priorities in ECEC, women’s employment, and other social aspects. Consequently, she expressed confidence that the matter of locations would progress smoothly with easily attainable solutions. Regarding other concerns raised by Gashi, it was noted that all details regarding the environmental impact surrounding the constructions would be outlined in documents prepared by project consultants, shared with participants and the wider public. Additionally, the project consultant, Bajraktari, clarified that specific details concerning locations, expropriation, etc., would be determined in subsequent phases of the project.
- The subsequent topic in the discussion was introduced by Mevlyde Myrtezi, Director at the Collegium of Directors of Preschool Institutions in Kosovo. She emphasized the significance of conducting research on the current state of ECEC at the national level, aligning with the specific needs of the country. Myrtezi advocated for a focused approach on two key elements highlighted during the discussion, namely component one and two – the capacity building of ECEC professionals and the promotion of healthy nutrition for children. Drawing from her hands-on experience in ECEC through fieldwork, she underscored the pressing need for improvement in these areas, particularly in rural settings. Consequently, she urged the project representatives to give special attention to these aspects. Regarding this, Luzha acknowledged the existing deficiencies in these domains within Kosovo and affirmed that the project would actively address these issues, particularly concerning children’s health. According to her the plan involves conducting a comprehensive analysis to identify specific intervention needs in kindergartens across Kosovo’s municipalities. Additionally, she highlighted the development of an administrative guideline on healthy nutrition and the collaboration with experts to create new menus.
- Next, Gëzime Rexhepi Çollaku, Director of the Association of Private Preschool Institutions, took the floor, addressing the future prospects for private preschool institutions. She expressed concern about the constant risk of closure and external pressures faced by these kindergartens, despite their role in increasing early childhood education enrollment. Rexhepi Çollaku sought clarity on the potential collaboration with these private institutions in the future, whether initiated by the World Bank or the Government of Kosovo, as they have lacked state support thus far. Luzha responded by highlighting the presence of over 200 licensed private kindergartens nationwide, leading to the establishment of the Association of Private

Preschool Institutions through UNICEF for coordination and mutual strengthening. She outlined that projects from MESTI, including this World Bank initiative, will focus on capacity building for all educational staff in preschools across the country, irrespective of their affiliation with public or private institutions. The project will also involve drafting new administrative guidelines, encompassing support for the private sector by the Government of Kosovo in the realm of ECEC. Luzha emphasized the active participation of private sector actors in the drafting process. In conclusion, she conveyed a positive outlook for the collaboration to deepen, emphasizing the involvement of these institutions in decision-making and ensuring the representation of all stakeholders' voices.

- Moreover, Leonora Shala from MESTI underscored the paramount importance of children's health. She highlighted the group within MESTI actively raising awareness and working diligently in this regard. Shala pointed out the significant steps taken, such as the inaugural drafting of administrative guidelines on healthy nutrition for children in kindergartens, the introduction of new menus sponsored by UNICEF, the incorporation of nutrition into the educational curriculum as an integral component, and various other initiatives. Conclusively, she expressed the team's receptiveness to comments and ideas for continuous improvement in this domain, assuring that they are committed to addressing all concerns comprehensively.
- Luljeta Kabashi from the Division for Children with Special Needs at MESTI proposed that it would be beneficial for this project to also encompass children with special needs. She emphasized the necessity and significance of intervening with these children in preschool institutions for our country. Kabashi continued by stressing the importance of preparing educators with sufficient knowledge to deal with children, provide care, and empower them, ultimately enabling these children to lead independent lives in the future. In response, Luzha affirmed that this project will prioritize the early identification of children with special needs and aim to reduce child mortality. Additionally, she highlighted that all constructions will adhere to MESTI's existing infrastructure standards, subject to review through this project for updates that favor children with special needs. Luzha illustrated this with an example, pointing out that many kindergartens currently lack elevators, and such deficiencies will be addressed with the World Bank project.
- The public discussion concluded with Luzha expressing gratitude to all participants for their valuable contributions. She affirmed that MESTI will maintain coordination with the partners involved in this consultation concerning the planned activities within this project. Furthermore, she indicated that the documents prepared will undergo updates based on the feedback received during this meeting.