



# Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 20-Jan-2021 | Report No: PIDA31049

**BASIC INFORMATION****A. Basic Project Data**

Country Mauritania	Project ID P175778	Project Name Additional Financing for the Social Safety Net System Project II	Parent Project ID (if any) P171125
Parent Project Name Social Safety Net System Project II	Region AFRICA WEST	Estimated Appraisal Date 18-Jan-2021	Estimated Board Date 17-Mar-2021
Practice Area (Lead) Social Protection & Jobs	Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Islamic Republic of Mauritania	Implementing Agency Taazour General Delegation

## Proposed Development Objective(s) Parent

The Project Development Objective is to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the nationwide adaptive social safety net system and its coverage of poor and vulnerable households with targeted social transfers, including in refugee and host communities.

## Components

Component 1: Updating and enhancing the Social Registry

Component 2: Enhancing the socio-economic inclusion of poor households

Component 3: Strengthening the shock response system for households vulnerable to climate and other covariate shocks

Component 4: Project Coordination and Management

**PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)****SUMMARY**

<b>Total Project Cost</b>	13.00
<b>Total Financing</b>	13.00
<b>of which IBRD/IDA</b>	0.00
<b>Financing Gap</b>	0.00

**DETAILS****Non-World Bank Group Financing**



Trust Funds	13.00
SAHEL ADAPTIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION PROGRAM	13.00

Environmental and Social Risk Classification

Substantial

## B. Introduction and Context

### Context

1. **The COVID-19 crisis is disproportionately affecting poor households.** The impact is felt through at least three channels: (a) a decline in labor income or non-labor incomes (remittances); (b) rising prices; and (c) a spike in health expenditure associated with treatment. Prior to the pandemic and the ensuing restrictions and lockdowns, the national poverty rate was estimated at 31 percent<sup>1</sup>. The pandemic is both increasing the vulnerability of households that were already vulnerable and affect households that were on the verge of falling into poverty thus likely increasing the poverty rate. In September 2020, three out of five Mauritanian households reported being uncertain about the evolution of their well-being over the next 12 months<sup>2</sup>. All areas are strongly impacted and the difference between urban and rural impacts is narrow.

2. **The effects of the pandemic will exacerbate the impact of recurrent drought, particularly among poor households, during the 2021 lean season (June to September).** Usually, between 300,000 and 800,000 individuals are food insecure during the lean season. The magnitude of the number of affected households generally depends directly on the magnitude of the drought, but also on other factors (such as locust invasion, floods, and international food price shocks). Preliminary results from the November 2020 Harmonized Framework<sup>3</sup> estimate that 409,940 individuals will be food insecure during the next lean season (June-Sept 2021)<sup>4</sup>. These households are often forced to adopt negative coping strategies, such as reducing the number of meals per day, migrating to work, and reducing expenditure on health and education. These same households will be even more exposed in 2021 because of the effects of COVID-19 on their income and well-being.

### Background

3. **The Mauritania Social Safety Net System Project Phase II (PASyFiS II) was approved on March 10, 2020 and has been effective since June 9, 2020.** The Project reinforces the existing social safety net system and ensures the continuity of the PASyFiS I project which ended on October 31, 2020. It is framed

<sup>1</sup> *Enquête Permanente sur les Conditions de Vie des Ménages en Mauritanie*, ONS, 2014

<sup>2</sup> *Covid-19 : Suivi de l'impact sur le bien-être des ménages*, November 2020, Moritz et Alt

<sup>3</sup> The *Harmonized Framework* ("Cadre Harmonisé") is a global analytical framework of national and regional mechanisms for the prevention and management of food crises taking into account the various performance indicators of food and nutrition security and the inference of contributing factors. See <http://www.food-security.net/document/cadre-harmonise-manuel-version-2-0/>

<sup>4</sup> The 2021 projections of the *Harmonized Framework* take into account both the impacts of climate shocks and those of Covid19



around four components. Component 1 aims to improve the efficiency of the Government's social programs by updating the Social Registry and promoting its usage. Component 2 is focusing on enhancing the socio-economic inclusion of poor households by strengthening and extending the Social Transfer Program, *Tekavoul*, as well as supporting an adequate re-certification and exit strategy for former *Tekavoul* beneficiaries and facilitating their inclusion in the Civil Registry. Component 3 is strengthening the shock-responsive system by further developing the early warning system (EWS), the *Elmaouna* program, the pilot of *Tekavoul* to respond to shocks and the shock response financing strategy. Component 4 is supporting the coordination and management of the project.

### C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

PDO (identical to the Parent project)

The Project Development Objective is to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the nationwide adaptive social safety net system and its coverage of poor and vulnerable households with targeted social transfers, including in refugee and host communities.

#### Key Results

- 27,000 additional vulnerable households supported through the shock-responsive safety net program *Elmaouna*
- 9,000 additional vulnerable households supported through the pilot of a vertical/horizontal expansion of the regular safety net program *Tekavoul*

### D. Project Description

4. **The US\$13 million AF will provide the opportunity to mitigate the dual impacts of COVID-19 and climate-related shocks for vulnerable households in 2021.** Therefore, upcoming safety net interventions will seek to support vulnerable households to help them to cope with the cumulative impacts of COVID-19 and the climate shock. The AF will exclusively support the scale-up of existing activities included in the Parent Project. The original PDO, the closing date, the components and sub-components will remain the same. The results framework will be revised to reflect the scaling-up on the indicator targets, but no additional indicators will be introduced.

5. **More specifically, the proposed AF will finance the scale-up of the shock-responsive programs as follows:** (i) support the implementation of the *Elmaouna* program; (ii) pilot an extension of the *Tekavoul* program in case of shocks. The original project planned to support an average of 8,000 vulnerable households per year for the first three years of the project (2021 to 2023), either through the *Elmaouna* program or through the *Tekavoul* expansion option. The additional financing will allow *Elmaouna* and *Tekavoul* to support an additional 36,000 households (27,000 and 9,000 additional households respectively).

6. **Therefore, the first activity supported by the AF is the scale-up of the shock-responsive safety**



**net program Elmaouna to support an additional 27,000 vulnerable households (US\$ 9.6 million):**

- (a) In the Parent Project, the Elmaouna Program planned to support 18,000 households (6,000 households per year in 2021, 2022 et 2023). With the proposed AF, the Elmaouna Program will support 27,000 additional households, bringing the total number of households supported by the project through Elmaouna to 45,000 (27,000 in 2021, 9,000 in 2022 and 9,000 in 2023).
- (b) The areas of intervention will be based on the outcome of the *Harmonized Framework* in coordination with WFP, UNICEF and NGO's and with priority given to the areas worst impacted by the COVID-19 crisis.
- (c) The beneficiaries will be selected from the Social Registry based on food insecurity and COVID-19 related criteria (to be defined among the 60 socio-economic characteristics of households included in the Social Registry) to identify the most vulnerable people affected by the combined effects of the crises on food security and access to basic services.

**7. The second activity supported by the AF is the pilot of a vertical/horizontal expansion of the regular safety net program Tekavoul in order to support an additional 9,000 vulnerable households (US\$ 3.3 million):**

- (a) In the Parent Project, the pilot planned to support 6,000 households (2,000 households per year in 2021, 2022 et 2023). With the proposed AF, Tekavoul will support 9,000 additional households affected by shocks bringing the total number of households supported by the pilot to 15,000 (9,000 in 2021, 3,000 in 2022 and 3,000 in 2023).
- (b) The Additional Financing will pilot a new way to deliver shock-responsive support through the horizontal and vertical expansion of the regular safety net program Tekavoul, which is implemented by the Taazour General Delegation. It will complement Elmaouna geographically by intervening in a different set of affected districts.
- (c) *Tekavoul* would respond to shocks by expanding vertically (temporary transfer increase) and horizontally (increase in number of beneficiaries selected from the Social Registry) in areas where *Elmaouna* does not provide support.

**8. The Additional Financing will enable support to 53 % of the overall projected needs identified by the Harmonized Framework for 2021.** This effort will be complemented by the NGO's and WFP interventions. In addition, this AF will complement the previous COVID-19 safety net interventions by the government.

Legal Operational Policies

Triggered?

Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50

No

Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60

No



Summary of Assessment of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

9. **The *Environmental and Social Review Summary and the Stakeholder Engagement Plan* have been revised in order to** (i) update the information related to the project progress and activities and (ii) include the AF related provisions. The AF consists only of a scaling up of existing activities already included in the initial ESF assessment and therefore does not bring in additional social and environmental risks.

10. **The project and the additional financing are not supporting any rehabilitation/renovation of infrastructure.** There will therefore be no adverse risks and impacts from works on the environment. From a social perspective, the project is expected to have a positive social impact on the poorest households and refugee communities.

**E. Implementation**

11. **Similar to the parent project, the *Taazour General Delegation* has overall responsibility for the proposed AF implementation.** The *Taazour General Delegation* will be responsible for the overall implementation and fiduciary management of the project and is housing a dedicated Project Coordinator and fiduciary specialists (procurement, accounting, audit and gender and social specialists) to support all project activities. Technically, the Elmaouna program implementation will be delegated to the Food Security Office (CSA) which will sign a Memorandum of Understanding with Taazour and the pilot for expanding Tekavoul will be implemented by Taazour which is hosting the regular safety net program.

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