



Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary

Concept Stage

(ESRS Concept Stage)

Date Prepared/Updated: 09/15/2021 | Report No: ESRSC02257



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Region	Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any)
World	OTHER	P177397	
Project Name	Implementation of the International Comparison Program (ICP) in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Other	Investment Project Financing		9/30/2021
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)		
Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT)	Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT)		

Proposed Development Objective

Financing (in USD Million)	Amount
Total Project Cost	0.20

B. Is the project being prepared in a Situation of Urgent Need of Assistance or Capacity Constraints, as per Bank IPF Policy, para. 12?

No

C. Summary Description of Proposed Project [including overview of Country, Sectoral & Institutional Contexts and Relationship to CPF]

D. Environmental and Social Overview



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

The project will be implemented in the following ten CIS countries: Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan and Uzbekistan. These countries have very different environmental and social conditions, also the project will support only TA activities and at the central level.

D. 2. Borrower’s Institutional Capacity

The project will be implemented by the Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT) Economic Statistics Department.

CIS-STAT is an interstate body acting in the framework of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) for the purpose of coordinating the activities of National Statistical Offices (NSOs), promoting the organization of information exchange, analysis of socio-economic development of the states and elaborating common recommendations in the field of statistics. In its activities, CIS-STAT is guided by the Statute of the CIS, inter- state agreements adopted in the framework of the Commonwealth, decisions of the Council of the Heads of States, the Council of the Heads of Governments of the CIS, and the Economic Council. The CIS-STAT is subordinated to the Council of the Heads of Governments of the Commonwealth and carries out its own activities in close cooperation with national statistical services, Economic Council, Executive Committee of the CIS and other bodies of the Commonwealth.

CIS-STAT Economic Statistics Department has technical responsibility for the project. The Department is under direct supervision of the Economic Statistics Department. Program and budget monitoring are provided by Economic Statistics Department, which oversees all CIS-STAT technical cooperation projects and ensures compliance with technical and financial reporting. The planning, monitoring and evaluation exercises to be carried out during the project’s implementation period will place emphasis on systematically identifying synergies with other programs and projects in execution.

Consultants will be hired for supporting the elaboration of correct and effective solutions on financial and procurement issues within the project implementation in accordance with the World Bank guidelines.

The CIS-STAT will be supported by external consultants and other inputs which will be purchased based on the World Bank’s Procurement Regulations.

The implementing agency institutional capacity relevant to this Projects will be assessed during project preparation, and it is proposed its responsibilities in this regard to be spelled out in the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) and the Grant Agreement that will be signed between the World Bank and CIS-STAT. While a similar project has been implemented in 2018 involving CIS-STAT and CIS countries, the borrower may have limited capacity or experience in implementing World Bank’s Environmental and Social (E&S) due diligence activities relevant to this project. Capacity building activities on ESF will be supported under the project by E&S Specialists as needed.

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

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Low



Environmental Risk Rating

Low

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to ensure successful conduct of the International Comparison Program (ICP) activities in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS) region, and to further institute the ICP as a permanent element of the regional and national statistical program, as per the United Nations Statistical Commission (UNSC) recommendation. The project is targeted at enhancing statistical capacity of the CIS National Statistical Offices (NSOs), especially in relation to economic statistics. To achieve this objective the proposed grant will implement a series of technical assistance (TA) activities, including: (a) conducting regional workshops; (b) supporting participation in international meetings and conferences; (c) preparation of operational materials and calculation of purchasing power parity (PPP) estimates; and (d) production of knowledge materials and publications relating to economic statistics and publications illustrating regional ICP results. Respectively, no project environmental risks and adverse impacts are anticipated as the proposed activities will not support any activities including civil works which might generate direct risks and/or adverse impacts, nor TA activities which would relate to development of feasibility studies or business plans that would lead to further investment operations and might indirectly cause potential risks and negative environmental impacts.

Social Risk Rating

Low

As per PDO, the project will be conducting various TA activities such as regional workshops, meetings, conferences, productions and dissemination of operational and knowledge materials and publications, to enhance statistical capacity of the CIS NSOs, especially in relation to economic activities. The ICP implementation in countries may present number of socio-economic indicators: poverty and inequality, health and education, labour productivity and infrastructure. These indicators inform and help governments, national and international policy makers, and institutions to analyze, change and measure the effectiveness of economic policies. The ICP implementation requires extensive and accurate economic data collection by the participating CIS countries. Estimation of PPPs, the main objective the ICP, requires data on price and national accounts expenditures. The expenditures are required at aggregate level, and they are sourced from countries' GDP compilation. Hence, the ICP does not require or collect individuals' personal data. The longevity of COVID-19 pandemic may cause disruption and technical challenges experienced by the countries such as delays in data collection and compilation. Some of the TA activities such as face-to face meetings, workshops may be affected and restricted due to ongoing pandemic. The mitigation measures may include alternative data collection methods, relying more on online platforms for data collection, and conducting trainings, conferences and workshops in a virtual manner. Project activities will not involve civil works. The labour related risks are low as workers involved in the Project are public servants representing regional and local statistical agencies of the respective countries, or international consultants hired by the PIU. The activities for this project will not require the acquisition or conversion of any land nor will the activities restrict access to resources. At this initial stage of the project preparation none of the identified activities are likely to result in adverse social impacts or risks.

Public Disclosure

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

B.1. General Assessment

ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts



Overview of the relevance of the Standard for the Project:

The project will support only TA activities such as conducting regional workshops; supporting participation in international meetings and conferences; preparation of operational materials and calculation of PPP estimates; and production of knowledge materials and publications relating to economic statistics and publications illustrating regional ICP results. It will not finance any civil works which might generate direct risks and/or adverse environmental and social impacts, nor TA activities which would relate to development of feasibility studies or business plans that would lead to further investment operations that might indirectly cause such risks and adverse impacts.

At this stage, there are no identified adverse social impacts of the project activities as described above. The project team will communicate with the borrower that any subsequent activities stemming from the project would be prepared in accordance with World Bank’s ESF and will be reflected in the ESCP to be prepared and disclosed prior to Approval. Based on the low risk and the nature and scale of the activities it is recommended that an Appraisal Environmental and Social Review Summary (ESRS) is not required.

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

Due to discrepancies between requirements of the World Bank’s Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs) and National Environmental and Social Assessment laws and regulations in the participating countries, the project will not use Borrower Framework.

ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

The project involves a number of stakeholders, these are: The UNSC deciding the operational modality of the program; the National Implementing Agencies that plan, coordinate, and implement the national ICP activities and facilitate data and information flow; and the CIS-STAT which acts as Regional Implementing Agency for the CIS region; the countries’ NSOs including the staff of the NSOs.

At the country level key beneficiaries of the project are the CIS countries of Armenia, Azerbaijan, Belarus, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyz Republic, Moldova, Russian Federation, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, and Uzbekistan. As countries’ NSOs are ICP stakeholders, and the staff of the said NSOs will participate in workshops making them beneficiaries.

The ICP has a set governance framework, which ensures that the global, regional, and national efforts to produce reliable PPP estimates and related measures of real expenditures adhere to approved policies, protocols, methodologies, and quality assurance standards and that the estimates are produced efficiently, in keeping with available resources. This governance framework also ensures that all stakeholders have a full understanding on the program, and that they are frequently informed on the progress and consulted for feedback. For this, each body holds meetings as per their set schedule. In addition, through the Technical Advisory Group, a group of leading academics, practitioners, former Chief Statisticians, and prominent users, assure methodological soundness and overall quality of the PPP estimates.

Taken together, the governance framework ensures that all interested stakeholders are consulted and that these consultations and collaborations ensure strong feedback loops to the implementing agencies at national, regional and



global levels. Furthermore, for general audience, the ICP maintains its public website, which lists various uses of the ICP results, archives all meeting documents, reports and manuals. The ICP also releases frequent newsletters.

The borrower shall ensure that participation in workshop and training by project workers, trainees and other participants is based on the principles of equal opportunity and fair treatment.

Based on the nature and the scale of the risks and adverse impacts of the project and that this a well-established program with a governance structure, which ensures full transparency of the program, as well as strong and inclusive stakeholder engagement, it is recommended that the elements of a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) are included as part of the ESCP and preparation of a stand-alone SEP is not considered necessary. The feedback loop can be strengthened, if needed, to function as a grievance mechanism (GM) whilst the ESCP and project documentation will be disclosed through the ICP public website.

B.2. Specific Risks and Impacts

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

ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions

Project workers will be civil servants and the consultants. Consultants engaged in project activities will be hired following the Bank’s procurement guidelines. The Project work force will include direct workers—public sector employees of National Statistical Offices who will coordinate and implement the national ICP activities and facilitate data flow to and from Regional Implementing Agencies. As part of project preparation an assessment will be undertaken as to whether there are any gaps relating to ESS2 requirements for civil servants and direct workers, including consultants, and measures put in place in the ESCP to address those gaps. No physical works will be financed.

As the project will support conducting meetings and workshops at hotels and/or government offices in project countries' capital cities, in the current conditions of the COVID 19 pandemic this may lead to increased infections of participants. To address this issue the project will consider organizing them virtually. Secondly, in the case of organizing these events in person, there will be strictly implemented all prescribed by WHO and National Authorities requirements: (a) all participants should be in healthy conditions and their temperatures will be checked at the entrance; (b) respecting physical distancing; (c) wearing masks; (d) providing sanitizers; (e) periodical cleaning of workshop premises; and (f) other national health authorities requirements (vaccination and/or the results of COVID 19 testing).

Due to TA nature of the activities, the Project’s labour related risks and environmental adverse impacts are deemed low. It is therefore proposed that labour issues be addressed through the Recipient’s commitment in the ESCP: (1) include commitment of the Grant Recipient to strictly follow national and the Bank’s guidelines on the employment of consultants; (2) outline measures and activities to be taken into account to prevent and address Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) related issues. The Code of Conduct will be prepared for governing the conduct of workers to ensure health and safety and prevent SEA/SH; and (3) require the Recipient to



include, in the ToRs and contracts for consultants, measures to ensure compliance with the ESS2, satisfactory to the Bank including ensuring a worker grievance mechanism is in place for use by consultants as well direct workers.

ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

As the project will support only TA activities, it is not expected it will generate any issues related to this ESS requirements.

ESS4 Community Health and Safety

As the project will support only TA activities, it is not expected it will generate any issues related to this ESS requirements, but the risks of COVID 19 infection during conducting training and workshops. To address these risks the project will organize them virtually. In the case these needs to be done in person, then there will be strictly implemented all prescribed by WHO and National Authorities requirements: (a) all participants should be in healthy conditions and at the entrance their temperatures will be checked; (b) respecting physical distancing; (c) wearing masks; (d) providing sanitizers; (e) periodical cleaning of workshop premises; and (f) other national health authorities requirements (vaccination and/or the results of COVID 19 testing).

ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

This standard is considered not relevant for the Project. The activities for this project will not require the acquisition or conversion of any land nor will the activities restrict access to resources.

ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

As the project will support only TA activities, it is not expected it will generate any issues related to this ESS requirements.

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

This standard is considered not relevant for the Project. The activities will not adversely impact any communities nor will there be any direct benefits. The project activities will support institutional capacity building.

ESS8 Cultural Heritage

This ESS is not relevant as the project will not support any activities with direct or indirect risks and impacts on Cultural Heritage.

ESS9 Financial Intermediaries

This ESS is not relevant as the project will not use FIs.



B.3 Other Relevant Project Risks

No other risks are anticipated.

C. Legal Operational Policies that Apply

OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways No

OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas No

III. WORLD BANK ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL DUE DILIGENCE

A. Is a common approach being considered? No

Financing Partners

The project will not be financed from other sources.

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

Actions to be completed prior to Bank Board Approval:

Preparation of, disclosure, and consultation of the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).

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

Elements of Stakeholder Engagement Plan including tailoring existing feedback mechanism to function as project grievance mechanism.

- Compliance of consultant hiring process with ESS2 including availability of worker grievance mechanism for consultants as well direct workers.
- Possible measures to address any identified gaps relating to labour and working condition requirements for civil servants and direct workers including consultants.
- For SEA/SH – aspects to be covered in Code of Conduct for workers, SEA/SH sensitive grievance mechanism, and awareness raising for all project workers.
- Ensuring implementation of WHO and National Requirements in terms of preventing COVID 19 infections.
- Compliance with health and safety measures related to COVID-19 pandemic according to respective countries’ regulations.

IV. CONTACT POINTS

World Bank

Public Disclosure



The World Bank

Implementation of the International Comparison Program (ICP) in the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS)
(P177397)

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Borrower/Client/Recipient

Borrower: Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT)

Implementing Agency(ies)

Implementing Agency: Interstate Statistical Committee of the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS-STAT)

V. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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VI. APPROVAL

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