

 Early Warning System

WB-P145347

Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project



Quick Facts

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| Countries | Afghanistan |
| Specific Location | Baghlan - Bamyan Road and Charikar - Pol-e-Khomri Highway |
| Financial Institutions | World Bank (WB) |
| Status | Active |
| Bank Risk Rating | A |
| Voting Date | 2015-10-20 |
| Borrower | Government of Afghanistan |
| Sectors | Transport |
| Potential Rights Impacts | Healthy Environment, Housing & Property, Labor & Livelihood, Marginalized Groups, Right to Food |
| Investment Type(s) | Grant |
| Investment Amount (USD) | \$ 250.00 million |
| Project Cost (USD) | \$ 255.00 million |



Project Description

The Republic of Afghanistan through the Ministry Works, and with financing from the World Bank, is undertaking a project that aims to improve connectivity across the Hindukush Mountain Range, between the Baghlan Kunduz region and the Jalalabad Kabul region. The project aims to upgrade two existing roads, the Salang Highway and the Baghlan to Bamiyan road through the country's mineral belt and part of its agricultural heartland. The final construction of the roads will include fiber optic cables and ducts.

On the Salang highway (87 km length), civil works will be limited to maintenance, repairs and rehabilitation, with no widening of the roads. Therefore the majority of construction will be centered on the existing Baghlan to Bamiyan road (152 km), which is an unpaved 2-lane road. The planned civil works in the project proposal involve new asphalt pavement along the entire length of the road, as well as the improvement of the drainage system and the addition of retaining walls and two bridges. The present width of the road ranges between 5 and 12 meters, and the rehabilitated road is projected to be 10 meters, with two 3.5m lanes and 1.5m road shoulder on either side. The widening of the road will require land acquisition and resettlement, involving the "cutting of slopes and filling of valley areas" and, "to these unprotected slopes, significant erosion and therefore sediment transportation and deposition are expected and need to be mitigated."

Location: The project will undertake physical works on two separate roads in Afghanistan: On the Salang highway (87 km in length), located between Charikar and Pol-e-Khomri in the northern region of Afghanistan, and on the Baghlan to Bamiyan road (152 km in length).

Resources needed: Land acquired including agriculture and orchard land



Early Warning System Project Analysis

Risk Assessment: Category A.

The World Bank classifies proposed projects based on the type, location, sensitivity, and scale of the project and the nature and severity of its potential environmental impacts. Category A is assigned to a project only if it is likely to have “significant adverse environmental impacts that are sensitive, diverse, or unprecedented.”

APPLICABLE SOCIAL & ENVIRONMENTAL STANDARDS

Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01

This safeguard is triggered due to anticipated environmental impacts during the construction of two roads, compounded by the significant challenges posed by the mountainous terrain through which the roads pass, in terms of soil erosion and sediment transportation concerns, risks of slides from potentially unstable slopes, [and] storm water drainage concerns. Additional risks include road safety concerns and difficulty with suitably disposing of spoil material.

Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.1

This safeguard is triggered due to the physical and economic impacts of land acquisition. The implementation of the project is expected to have significant impact on agriculture land, housing settlements in the villages and other structures or buildings, both public and private. At this point, resettlement information is only available for segment one of the proposed road reconstruction, which takes place between km 0 and 23.70 km, of the 152 km road. Within this segment, there are 10 villages, and a total of 658 people will be affected directly in terms of land loss, loss of buildings/ structures, houses and shops, etc. Some of these families are also losing a part of their homestead, including yard for cattle and edible gardens.



People Affected By This Project

OUR RISK ASSESSMENT

Due to the fact that the detailed resettlement action plan is currently only available for the first of six segments of the project, the following numerical information reflects only the impact of that single first segment. The expected social and environmental impacts of the full project are likely much greater.

It was stated that the Environmental Impact Assessment will be translated into both Pashto and Dari, however, all official documents are currently only available in English, and both the Environmental and Social Impact Assessments had an expected publication date of May 15, 2015, yet are currently unpublished

Based on the World Bank's project documents, this project poses potential risks to the following human rights:

The Right to a Healthy Environment

This project involves civil works that pose various potential environmental impacts, including, excavation and embankment, rock blasting, gabions and revet mattresses, slope reinforcement and retaining walls, aggregate courses, construction of 2 new bridges and 133 culverts, reinforcing steel, stone masonry for retaining wall, guard wall, culvert inlet/outlet structure, bed protection, lined ditch, vegetation (bush) clearing, earth (soil) movement, topographic leveling, alignment and realignment of road segments, road pavement, coal tarring, as well as disposing of spoil material.

Right to Freedom of Expression, Assembly and Association (Right to Education)

There is no information available as to how project planners intend to account for the fact that 43 families have at least one child going to school.

Right to Livelihood

This right is triggered due to loss of agricultural land, livestock and shops, as well as resettlement which may adversely impact the ability to physically reach places of employment for laborers. Of the individuals affected by the project, the majority have employment year round in the following sectors: 123 are farmers, 41 work in livestock (including 29 women), 50 people work in agricultural labor or government-related services and 11 people work in trade or shop keeping. In terms of transitional assistance, the Resettlement Action Plan states that compensation for transitional periods of livelihood relocation will be replaced with a new paradigm of resettlement action based on improving livelihoods, which will be available to not only directly affected persons, but any willing person living in the area. There are not any details on what this new plan entails, however.

The Right to Housing and Property

This right is triggered as the project implementation is expected to have significant impact on agriculture land, housing settlements in the villages and other structures or buildings, both public and private. Land clearance for the project will require acquisitions and demolition of houses, shops, walls and other structures on the right of way of the road alignment. Rather than establishing a resettlement site with a proper infrastructure, the project will be allotting cash compensation for families to relocate their residences to a site of their choice, according to their convenience and preferences.

Right to Food

This right is triggered due to loss of livestock and agricultural land. In segment one, the majority of the affected families (74) own cow(s), some of them own sheep/goat(s) and almost half of them (44/94) own poultry birds. Additionally, 34 families are losing their agriculture land, including both orchard and non-orchard land.

Rights of Marginalized and Discriminated Against Groups



Investment Description

- World Bank (WB)

Bank financing: World Bank, Investment Project Financing

Borrower: Islamic Republic of Afghanistan

Amount of bank loan or investment: 250 million USD

Total project cost: 250 million USD



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Consultation:

World Bank documentation indicates that between 2009 and 2015, consultations with affected communities as well as district officials and other stakeholders have taken place. During the consultation process, major issues of concern were raised by community members and representatives. Many people were skeptical about adequate compensation for the loss of cultivatable land, with additional concerns over clear titles and ownership documents, resulting in potential hurdles to resettlement and compensation. Concern about existing public structures including grave sites were raised, which are not addressed in the resettlement action plan. Further, there was confusion regarding the processes for grievance redress mechanisms. And finally, by individuals losing shops, livelihood compensation was requested.

The following Resettlement Action Plan schedule is currently underway:

1. Finalization and validation of project affected families, 15th May 2015
2. Proactive disclosure of Resettlement Action Plan, 15th August 2015
3. Management Information System of Resettlement Action Plan, 15th September 2015
4. Disbursement of compensation, 15th June 2016

A multi-tier grievance redress system will be set up to deal with complaints stemming from the implementation of the Resettlement Plan. This includes a Grievance Redress Committee, which will be comprised of a representative from the Project Management Unit in the Ministry of Public Works, a representative from Arazi, a representative from the Ministry of Justice, a representative of the District Governor, a representative of the Provincial Directorate of Public Works, a safeguard officer from the Environmental and Social Management Unit of the Project Management Unit, a representative from the implementing NGO, and community representatives.

Throughout the duration of construction, project-level grievance redress mechanisms are as follows: Grievances can first be submitted to the district governor's office, Project Management Unit representative, or to the implementing NGO. Should a grievance not be solved at this initial level, it may be submitted to the Member Secretary of the Grievance Redress Committee, who will raise the complaint at a GRC meeting. The Grievance Redress Committee will meet every two weeks throughout the duration of the project, and community members will be informed in advance, and able to attend the meetings. A summary of the meeting will be sent to the relevant applicants if a grievance is raised. Appeals are also available, as issues not resolved at Grievance Redress Committee level may be escalated to the Ministry of Public Works level.

Further, the World Bank Inspection Panel is an independent complaint mechanism and fact-finding body for people who believe they are likely to be, or have been, adversely affected by a World Bank-financed project. It is not necessary to exhaust the grievance mechanism procedures before accessing the Inspection Panel. If you submit a complaint to the Inspection Panel, they may investigate to assess whether the World Bank is following its own policies and procedures for preventing harm to people or the environment. You can learn more about the Inspection Panel and how to file a complaint at:

<http://ewebapps.worldbank.org/apps/ip/Pages/Home.aspx>

ACCOUNTABILITY MECHANISM OF WORLD BANK



Bank Documents

- [Afghanistan - Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project \(English\)](#) [Original Source]
- [Afghanistan - Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project : chair summary \(English\)](#) [Original Source]
- [Afghanistan - Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project : environmental and social management framew](#) [Original Source]
- [Afghanistan - Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project : environmental assessment \(Vol. 2\) : Append](#) [Original Source]
- [Afghanistan - Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project : environmental assessment : Environmental a](#) [Original Source]
- [Afghanistan - Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project : environmental assessment : Environmental a](#) [Original Source]
- [Afghanistan - Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project : environmental assessment : Executive summa](#) [Original Source]
- [Afghanistan - Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project : P145347 - Implementation Status Results Re](#) [Original Source]
- [Afghanistan - Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project : P145347 - Implementation Status Results Re](#) [Original Source]
- [Afghanistan - Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project : resettlement action plan \(English\)](#) [Original Source]
- [Afghanistan - Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project : resettlement action plan \(English\)](#) [Original Source]
- [Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet \(Appraisal Stage\) - Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project - P14](#) [Original Source]
- [Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet \(Concept Stage\) - Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project - P1453](#) [Original Source]
- [Official Documents- Agreement for Advance Q894-AF \(English\)](#) [Original Source]
- [Official Documents- Disbursement Letter for Grant D093-AF \(Closing Package\) \(English\)](#) [Original Source]
- [Official Documents- Financing Agreement for Grant D093-AF \(Closing Package\) \(English\)](#) [Original Source]
- [Official Documents- Supplemental Letter Ref. Financial Data for Grant D093-AF \(Closing Package\) \(Eng](#) [Original Source]
- [Official Documents- Supplemental Letter Ref. Performance Monitoring Indicators for Grant D093-AF \(CI](#) [Original Source]
- [Project Information Document \(Appraisal Stage\) - Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project - P145347](#) [Original Source]
- [Project Information Document \(Concept Stage\) - Trans-Hindukush Road Connectivity Project - P145347 \(](#) [Original Source]