Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary
Concept Stage
(ESRS Concept Stage)

Date Prepared/Updated: 04/20/2020 | Report No: ESRSC01111
BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Project ID</th>
<th>Parent Project ID (if any)</th>
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<td>Afghanistan</td>
<td>SOUTH ASIA</td>
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Project Name: Drought Early Warning, Finance, and Action Project

Practice Area (Lead) | Financing Instrument | Estimated Appraisal Date | Estimated Board Date
Social Protection & Jobs | Investment Project Financing | 7/13/2020 | 8/31/2020

Borrower(s) | Implementing Agency(ies)
Islamic Republic of Afghanistan | Ministry of Finance

Proposed Development Objective(s)
Increase the food and nutrition security of the most vulnerable households living in water-scarce, rural areas and enhance their near-term resilience to drought

The project will support the strengthening of the capacity of the Government of Afghanistan to improve early warning, preparedness, and drought risk mitigation by using weather information-based decision support for financing of relief, response and advance actions that help mitigate the impact of drought on farmers, pastoralists and vulnerable communities.

Financing (in USD Million) Amount
Total Project Cost 200.00

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]
The project proposes a proactive approach to provide regular and predictable cash and/or food support to chronically and seasonally food insecure households during normal years (non-drought years) and scale up the support during
drought years to extend the support to households most vulnerable to drought shocks to enhance their resilience. To achieve such a proactive approach, the project will develop (i) an early warning system that generates timely, robust and actionable early warnings of the onset of a drought, (ii) procedures for early financing to support pre-agreed early actions and rapid responses, and (iii) a safety net delivery system that can provide support to extremely poor and food insecure households during normal years and that can be scaled-up during a drought to extend support to others vulnerable households who will be affected by the shocks that will be caused by the drought.

D. Environmental and Social Overview

D.1. Project location(s) and salient characteristics relevant to the ES assessment [geographic, environmental, social]

The proposed project will be implemented throughout the entire country. The Early Warning [component-A] will provide support to the hydromet agencies to improve their capacity for meteorological and hydrological information collection and analyses. This component will also support strengthening institutional coordination and information dissemination.

As the 2018 drought revealed, the lack of technical capacities in monitoring drought conditions on a near-real time basis (through the use of satellite remote sensing), the absence of a clear definition of drought (spatial and temporal) and a weak dissemination mechanism of alerts and declaration have been the main causes delaying the initiation of the related emergency response. The relevant agencies involved in hydromet data collection, early warning and disaster risk management are still insufficiently coordinated and their capacities to provide services limited.

In normal years, the proposed activities under component C will cover 500,000 households for support in the eighty-one most food insecure rain-fed districts of Afghanistan, scattered across 15 provinces located in all 7 regions. The selection of the target districts in normal years is based/will be based on a combination of a) food insecurity at household level, as derived from the Afghanistan Living Condition Survey (ALCS, 2018) and b) drought proneness at district level as derived from a satellite based analyses of historic drought events during the past 20 years. These priority districts are concentrated in the central highlands and the northeast, areas characterized by poor roads, few employment opportunities, and lack of access to services. Livelihoods depend on subsistence, rainfed agriculture. Within these districts, chronically food insecure households and seasonally food insecure households will be targeted. An estimated 56% of these households are chronically food insecure, and an additional 24% are seasonally food insecure. This component will largely focus on building a shock-responsiveness social safety net delivery mechanism. In normal years, within the selected communities, the identification of beneficiaries will be coordinated by the Community Development Committees (CDCs), building upon the successful experiences developed by the implementing agencies (MRRD) in other WBG projects (i.e. CCAP).

At baseline, an estimated 13 million Afghans, or 45 percent of the population, were considered food insecure in 2016/17. This number climbs to 70 percent of the population in the winter. In terms of nutrition, about 35 percent of Afghans do not consume a diet of sufficient quality—inadequate dietary diversity has almost doubled between 2011-12 and 2016-17, especially in rural areas. Investments in roads and infrastructure have focused on the major cities and ring-road, bypassing the remote areas with the highest incidence of food insecurity. During shock years, the activities under component C will be expanded both geographically and with further resilience focus to the districts most affected by drought conditions, as identified by the AF-DEWS developed by GOIRA with the Project support [component-A].

D. 2. Borrower’s Institutional Capacity

The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) will have overall responsibility for project implementation. The Ministry has been successfully implementing the Citizen’s Charter Afghanistan Project (CCAP) in rural areas. The project will build on the capacity and experience gained through CCAP and its established CDCs for
targeting of selected beneficiaries and delivery of the Early Action component activities - the activities will be carried out closely with the Early Warning Committee chaired by NSIA and MRRD, and the Early Action Committee Headed by ANDMA and IDLG. A PMU will be established within the lead Ministry i.e. MRRD and will provide support to relevant entities involved in implementation of project activities, related to both Component A and C. Detailed implementation arrangements will be worked out during preparation to ensure that MRRD has sufficient implementation capacity and that it promotes complementarity and avoid overlap between the different PMUs under its watch. The PMU to be established will include sufficient social mobilization staff (experts and facilitators), for community-based labor-intensive works management as well as relevant project coordinators who will link between activities under other agencies. Budget will be included for institutional capacity development activities, including to strengthen the human and logistical resources of GRM team, operationalize the complaints management system and optimize grievance redress actions. Also, MRRD has more than 15 years of experience with the Bank project implementation and its Safeguards Policies, the Ministry of Finance is also leading the Public Private Partnership (PPP) project which is a category A project and is going to soon establish a safeguard delivery unit to oversee the overall World Bank Safeguards Policies and ESF Standards Implementation in the Category A and High Risk projects funded by the World Bank. However, NSIA has not implemented Bank funded projects and will not have such experiences and therefore; the ESMF will assess the need and will propose measures to develop the capacity of NSIA to manage the WB ESF requirements under this project.

The Ministry of Finance (MoF), which leads the secretariat of the High-Poverty Council (HPC), will have the responsibility to implement the Early Finance component. MoF will mobilize the financing needed to provide support to beneficiaries for both under the normal year and shock years.

The National Statistical Information Authority (NSIA) will be the collaborating agency in charge of coordinating the implementation of Early Warning component. The agency will establish a National Early Warning Technical Committee (NEWC) to collect, analyze and report drought-pertinent data to generate early warnings and advisories to sectoral ministries.

The Hydromet agencies – Afghanistan Meteorological Department (AMD) and Water Resources Department (WRD) will be the key agencies monitoring and tracking long term meteorological and hydrological indices relevant to drought and other natural hazards. They will collaborate within the DEWC to ensure consistent and timely information flowing into Drought analytics, advisories and other early warning systems.

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

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC) Moderate

Environmental Risk Rating Moderate

Since the project will establish a system of drought early warning and the positive outcome from this activity would be a better response to potential droughts and could result in positive indirect environmental impacts. The project will also have specific labor-intensive public work activities that will contribute to the conservation and rehabilitation of natural resources including vegetation, soil and water. The labor-intensive public work activities will be selected by the relevant communities based on the specific needs of the situation of the area in which the project will be implemented. A possible menu of the activities will be identified during the project preparation in consultation with relevant government and UN agencies who are currently implementing similar activities.

However, the following could be some of the labor-intensive activities that might be implemented by the project: (i) rehabilitation and or maintenance of small-scale irrigation schemes, access roads, existing developed water sources...
such as ponds, (ii) making terraces on hillside to reduce soil erosion and conserve water, (iii) tree planting on
degraded areas, (iv) small flood control structures to protect farmlands and residential areas, (v) gully control etc. All
the labor-intensive public works that will be implemented under this project are by human labor and simple tools and
no involvement of heavy machineries. The soil erosion control and water conservation, planting trees to restore
degraded land, flood and gully control will all have positive impacts on the local environment and will enhance the
awareness of the local communities about the conservation and reversing degradation.
However, rehabilitation and maintenance of small-scale irrigation schemes and access roads could have potential
adverse impacts on the local environment if not properly managed. However, such potential impacts would not be
expected to be significant, would be limited to the project footprints, are expected to be temporary and reversed and
thus the Environmental Risk and Impact would be moderate.

**Social Risk Rating**

The implementation of the project activities could entail some possible social risks, for example: i) social inequalities
and exclusion, and discrimination of certain categories of people, such as vulnerable and marginalized groups (i.e.
ethnic and religious minority, female-headed households, persons with disabilities, pastoral nomads, returnees and
IDPs for labor intensive activities; ii) weak communication and weakened trust in government; iii) low integration of
certain stakeholders (civil society, academia, elected CDCs, irrigation associations); iv) labor management issues, such
as late payment of wages/ benefit transfers, child labor, etc. and working condition; v) Gender-Based Violence (GBV)
and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) and sexual harassment (SH). In addition, security challenges can lead to
social exclusion, discrimination and marginalization in the beneficiary’s selection process. While these issues could
occur, they are not expected to happen on a large scale, nor are they expected to be significant because of the design
of the project. The project has been specifically designed to be inclusive of vulnerable groups, including women and
other marginalized groups and strong community participation in the project design and implementation process.
The social risk rating at this stage is classified as moderate (M). The key factors for this risk rating include, the overall
social risks are not significant on human population and the project does not involve activities that have a high
potential for harming people or the environment. The social risks are predictable and expected to be temporary
and/or reversible, low in magnitude and site-specific, without likelihood of impacts beyond the actual footprint of the
project and risks and impacts can be easily mitigated in a predictable manner. During the preparation of safeguards
documents, if additional information become available, the rating will be revisited and adjusted accordingly.
The existing Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) of the ongoing CCAP project will be assessed for its functionality
and efficiency, and if there are any gaps, they will be addressed and built upon to ensure that it can be used for the
proposed project. Measures to mitigate gender-based violence (GBV) will also be taken into account, both as part of
the overall project and, more specifically, in the GRM. To promote ownership, the project will put in place strong
communication and civic engagement actions to receive feedback from beneficiaries, especially women and other
vulnerable/marginalized groups.

**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:*

This standard is relevant as the proposed activities under Component 3, item (i) Regular Support: include
rehabilitation of small scale irrigation schemes, access roads, improving ponds, check dams, gully plugging and etc.
could have potential adverse impacts on the downstream flow, aquatic life and others and can cause tensions among upstream and downstream water users. There will be civil works, albeit very small in nature, and will have positive and some adverse environmental impacts that could be mitigated with implementation of relevant mitigation measures. The activities under some other components could cause potential downstream impacts related to the technical assistance activities, as well as item (ii) Productive support to selected households: They could include, a livestock, poultry or other agriculturally oriented support packages, strengthen resilience by introducing new practices or technologies, e.g., community storages, community-level sustainable soil, moisture and watershed management practices; alternative livelihood promotion schemes in non-arable areas. Beneficiaries of the productive packages will be carefully selected based on objective criteria and in a transparent manner. Details of eligibility criteria for accessing productive packages, process and procedures of training, duration of support, monitoring and evaluation methods etc. will be developed during the project preparation.

When normal disputes on upstream and downstream water users and other similar disagreements and issues emerge the Project relevant mechanisms and measures considered in the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and the country traditional Water Master (Merab) system and the project social mobilizers will solve such disputes as has been the case in the other World Bank funded projects and there is a well-established dispute resolution system practiced by most of the communities in Afghanistan. The NGOs and the WB funded projects have added value to this system and provided many trainings and now it is working well.

Since the project specific location and other details cannot be determined by appraisal, a framework approach will be followed. The ESMF to be prepared by appraisal will set out the principles, rules, and procedures to screen, assess, manage and monitor the mitigation measures of environmental and social impacts of those investments that are not known at the time of project appraisal. The ESMF will include TOR for limited Environmental Assessment (EA) and Social Assessment (SA) and these studies will be used as the basis to develop Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) with other relevant plans (i.e. labor management plan, OHS plan). The EA/SA could be done separately or jointly by a team but the ESMP for each subproject would be a combined document for managing both Environmental and Social impacts and risks. The combined ESMP will be incorporated into community agreement for small scale community-based activities. The subprojects activities are expected to be small in size, will mostly have positive environmental and social impacts but it might also have potential temporary footprints that could be mitigated and reversed and thus there will be no need for preparation of full EIA/SIA and only preparation of a simple Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) will be sufficient in nearly all cases.

As an exception if there is some sensitive area from the Environmental and or Social point of view or for any other reason to have a full Assessment then a full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA)/Social Impact Assessment (SIA) will be undertaken by a team and therefore the ESMF document will have a generic ToR for the EIA/SIA. The required E&S instruments will be clearly outlined in the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) which will be also prepared prior to project appraisal. The ESMF and the TORs for E&S studies will be subject to meaningful consultation and the World Bank clearance. These documents will also be disclosed in-country on the MRRD website and in the World Bank website by appraisal. Other E&S plans when needed will be prepared during the implementation stage.

The overall potential environmental risks and impacts could be: (i) The lack of enforcement capacity in the country, (ii) the complexity of Project design, involving different stakeholders (MRRD, MoF, ANDMA, NSIA, NGOs, Communities and etc.) engaged in the planning and implementation in multiple sites and activities of different nature (e.g. soil and water conservation activities through labor intensive public work; cash and food transfers to the poor households; etc.); which requires assessment of their environmental risks and impacts and to monitor the
The functionality and efficiency of the existing GRM of the ongoing CCAP project will be assessed to ensure that it can be effective, including through a strong participatory and inclusive plan of social communication. The Project will have to recruit sufficient social mobilization staff (experts and facilitators), strengthen the human and logistical resources of GRM team, operationalize the complaints management system and optimize the grievance redress actions. This system should be complemented by the establishment of tools to anticipate and manage GBV/SEA and SH risks.

Areas where “Use of Borrower Framework” is being considered:
Use of borrower’s framework is not being considered for this project. The project will comply with the Bank’s new Environmental and Social Framework and its Environmental and Social Standards, as well as with the applicable WBG EHSGs. The Project, however, is also subject to the national and local permits and clearances as per the existing legal-institutional framework. The exact requirements to obtain such permits and clearances will be recorded in the ESCP.

ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure
The project will design a detailed Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), information sharing mechanism and the Project Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) which will be consulted and disclosed with key stakeholders throughout project cycle. These instruments will have to be tailored for the local peoples and pastoral nomads that will aim to design culturally appropriate processes that are respectful to their traditional mechanisms. Consultation activities will be held with project affected and interested parties in locations that will be identified in consultation with the communities and the local authorities. Other relevant stakeholders will include, the Project’s Steering and Technical Advisory Committees, representatives from departments and municipalities, pastoral nomads’ representatives, Mirabs/ Water Associations, Irrigation Associations, Provincial Department of Energy and Water, NEPA, and relevant universities, Community Development Councils (male and female CDCs), NGOs, local communities, media, etc. The SEP will also include how to engage with vulnerable and disadvantaged sections of the population in the project area. The vulnerable and disadvantaged stakeholders such as landless, IDPs, returnees, ethnic and religious minorities, female -headed households, persons with disabilities, elderly, children, pastoral nomads and etc. will be identified
during project preparation and specific measures for their participation in consultation process will be addressed in the SEP.
The project will include measures to strengthen the social accountability, citizen engagement and customer responsiveness. This will include: (i) effective consultations, (ii) establishing a functional GRM, (iii) and establishing a substantive interaction between beneficiaries and the government on issues of project design and choice of options. A project level Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) will be set up and build on the one put in place for the on-going CCAP project, with a strong participatory and inclusive plan of social communication. The project will include Citizen Engagement Indicators in the project documents. During the implementation stage, it is envisioned that the client will carry out beneficiary satisfaction surveys in the selected sites to evaluate public satisfaction through phone surveys, workshops, and community score cards. The SEP with consultation strategy will be prepared, consulted and disclosed by appraisal. The SEP will address timing and methodologies for meaningful and participatory consultations, including arrangements for information disclosure to all stakeholders. The SEP is a living document which will be updated throughout the project cycle.

B.2. Specific Risks and Impacts

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

ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions

The project could involve community workers and civil servants. For the community workers, the Labor Management Procedures (LMP) will provide measures to address the terms and conditions of labor-intensive activities, nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for short-term employment for food insecure and vulnerable households to drought risks in all targeted districts, restrictions on child and forced labor, and occupational health and safety requirements. The civil servants would be governed by the civil service code, which forbids child and forced labor; the LMP may include OHS measures in case they are not in the civil servants’ existing contracts. The LMP will also include measures to ensure GBV/SEA risks are addressed. The country already has its national laws and regulations related to labor. However, following project effectiveness, the GRM for workers will be established to ensure that the working conditions comply with these laws and regulations and also with the WB Standards. Complaints received and resolved will be reviewed during the implementation support missions.

In accordance with the requirements of ESS2, MRRD will commit (through the ESCP) to develop Labor Management Procedures (LMP) applicable to the entire project before appraisal. According to project LMP, the ESMP for labor intensive activities will include labor management plan (LMP) for each site during implementation stage and the ESMP with LMP will be included in the community agreement documents for each sub-project. The labor management procedures will also include GRM for workers so that they have an official way to communicate grievances or other concerns to the management.

ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

ESS3 is relevant as the project will be national in scope and selected vulnerable districts to droughts and other natural disaster in all relevant districts across all 7 regions in Afghanistan. Water is a scarce resource and a limiting factor for agriculture production in most parts of Afghanistan because there is very little water storage and management
capacity in the country therefore more and more efforts will be undertaken in managing water and increasing its conveyance and application efficiencies and to protect its quality. The Environmental Assessment (EA) will include risk assessment and the site-specific ESMP for each site will include measures for energy and water efficiency techniques/best practices to be implemented- in some special cases, if needed, the EIA will evaluate the resource utilization. Also, the proposed activities are expected to cause the potential increase in the use of chemical fertilizers, pesticides to increase agriculture production. As the project will contribute to water use efficiency the farmers might increase use of fertilizers and pesticides, the ESMF will define institutional responsibilities and guide IPM and preparation of management plans at the local level. The project ESMF will also provide relevant appropriate specific guidance for preparation of Pest Management Plan for the project.

**ESS4 Community Health and Safety**

ESS4 is relevant as the proposed activities can pose community health and safety risks and impacts during the proposed labor intensive activities. The client will evaluate the potential health and safety risks and impacts on project-affected communities and propose mitigation measures in accordance with the mitigation hierarchy. The ESMF will include identification of necessary measures to improve community health and safety and the ESMP for each site will include health and safety measures, including measures to address GBV/SEA risks. The Project expected impacts on provisioning and regulating ecosystem services are expected to be positive, as the Project activities are designed to support environmentally friendly landscapes Irrigation infrastructures and systems to improve water use efficiency, in consultation with WUA/Irrigation Water User Association and Mirabs when relevant. The project does not involve security personnel, as the activities will be carried-out by community itself.

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

The project will screen out any possible need of land acquisition and resettlement impact. If, for any reason, land acquisition is required then the relevance of this Standard will be reviewed accordingly. The project activities are not expected to cause permanent land impacts, as the project will support rehabilitation of the existing infrastructure. The project ESMF will further assess the likelihood of applicability of ESS5 and will include a negative list for exclusion of projects that will cause involuntary resettlement or restrictions on land use and livelihoods.

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

This standard is relevant as the project intends to promote the early drought warning system, enhance water and soil conservation, and improve resilience of vulnerable communities to drought and improve adaptation to climate changes which could have positive impacts on the sustainable management of land, water and land vegetative cover and could have potential positive impacts on the living natural resources and the local environment. The ESMF will provide check lists and guidelines to be adapted and applied by site specific projects, could improve biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of living natural resources in the focused areas. The ESMF will prepare generic ToRs for all potential Assessment tools, e.g., EA/SA, ESMP, Pest Management Plans (PMPs), and will ensure avoiding, minimizing and mitigating adverse impacts on biodiversity and ecosystems by using relevant formats and check lists to be applied during preparation of site specific assessments and mitigation plan preparation as well as negative lists to avoid any sensitive sites within the scope of this project. Since the overall project risk is moderate
from the environmental point of view, the Project will not implement any activity that may have potential adverse impacts on critical habitats when identified during the assessment later on during selection of sites and implementation. During the preparation of the ESMF and the management plan, a meaningful consultation process will be conducted with the key stakeholders.

**ESS7 Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities**
This is not relevant as there are no Indigenous people in the project area.

**ESS8 Cultural Heritage**
Not relevant at this stage, as the project is not expected to cause impact on cultural heritage. However, the ESMP for labor intensive activities will include a chance find procedure to be applied.

**ESS9 Financial Intermediaries**
This ESS is not relevant as there will be no FI working on this project.

**B.3 Other Relevant Project Risks**
Insecurity and FCV context are the main challenge and it would be extremely difficult for project staff to visit some insecure districts, and there’s always that worry that the resources are not getting into the right hands.

**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?**
Financing Partners
N/A

**B. Proposed Measures, Actions and Timing (Borrower’s commitments)**
Actions to be completed prior to Bank Board Approval:
- Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP)
- Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) – this plan will also include communication strategy, GRM system and information disclosure.
- Labor Management Procedures (LMP)
- ESMF with TOR for SA/EA, ESMP with relevant plans (i.e. labor management plan, OHS plan, PMP) – the ESMF will also include social & environmental baseline assessment with generic ESMP and a framework for Abbreviated Resettlement Plan.

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

The ESCP will reference a number of different E&S documents to be developed and implemented during the course of the project operations. These include:

- Preparation & implementation of site specific ESMPs (with relevant plans)
- Implementation arrangements with resources for SEP and LMP and other E&S instruments
- Implementation of capacity building plan and conduct the ESF training.
- Preparation of Pest Management Plan (PMP)
- GBV Action Plan with preventive measures for GBV/SEA.

C. Timing

Tentative target date for preparing the Appraisal Stage ESRS 24-Jun-2020

IV. CONTACT POINTS

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Implementing Agency(ies)

Implementing Agency: **Ministry of Finance**
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VI. APPROVAL
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Practice Manager (ENR/Social) Christophe Crepin Recommended on 12-Mar-2020 at 10:52:38 EDT
Safeguards Advisor ESSA Agi Kiss (SAESSA) Cleared on 20-Apr-2020 at 23:26:23 EDT