



# Project Information Document/ Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet (PID/ISDS)

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 20-Oct-2018 | Report No: PIDISDSC24976

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

Country Lebanon	Project ID P167101	Parent Project ID (if any)	Project Name Social Safety Net System Project (P167101)
Region MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA	Estimated Appraisal Date Jan 14, 2019	Estimated Board Date Nov 29, 2019	Practice Area (Lead) Social Protection & Labor
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Ministry of Finance	Implementing Agency Ministry of Social Affairs	

**Proposed Development Objective(s)**

The project development objective is to provide income support and improve access to social services for poor and vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugees, increase employment opportunities for the extreme poor Lebanese, and develop the building blocks of Lebanon's Social Safety Net (SSN) system.

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

<b>Total Project Cost</b>	400.00
<b>Total Financing</b>	400.00
<b>of which IBRD/IDA</b>	300.00
<b>Financing Gap</b>	0.00

**DETAILS****World Bank Group Financing**

International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)	300.00
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**Non-World Bank Group Financing**

Other Sources	100.00
Bilateral Agencies (unidentified)	100.00



Environmental Assessment Category

B - Partial Assessment

Concept Review Decision

Track I-The review did authorize the preparation to continue

Other Decision (as needed)

Concept package cleared by Country Director.

## B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

***The project relevance, design, scope, and components are subject to revision based on discussions with the incoming Lebanese Government upon its formation.***

**Poverty and vulnerability levels are high and rapidly increasing in Lebanon.** According to the recently released Lebanon Crisis Response Plan (LCRP 2017-2020), 3.3 million people out of Lebanon's 5.9 million total population are in need (56% of the population). Although not strictly comparable, poverty in Lebanon pre-Syria conflict, stood at 27% (Household Budget Survey 2011-12).<sup>1</sup>

**Deteriorating poverty and vulnerability levels are the direct result of limited economic opportunities, particularly for poor and vulnerable women and youth.** Prior to the onset of the Syrian crisis, 70 percent of working age men were participating in the labor force, compared to 24 percent of working age women. Females and youth face higher unemployment rates than men (18 and 34 percent respectively, versus 9 percent amongst men, compared to a national average of 11 percent). The large influx of Syrian refugees has further deteriorated labor market outcomes<sup>2</sup>, especially among poor and vulnerable women and youth. The labor force participation rate of Syrian refugee men is estimated at 85 percent compared to 73 percent for Lebanese men. This high level of participation is contributing to a growth rate in the labor force that is 35 percent faster than the population growth rate. Syrian refugees tend to have lower education levels, and due to the lack of formal job creation in the economy, they are constrained to work in the informal economy, competing with poor and vulnerable Lebanese. It is estimated that an additional 220,000 Lebanese, primarily unskilled youth, are expected to become unemployed.

**Limited income support and constrained access to quality social services for the poorest and most vulnerable are exacerbating economic and social exclusion.** Despite the coordinated multi-sectoral response by many partners and donors on the ground, significant gaps remain in essential service delivery. This is largely due to the high variability of needs, structural challenges (i.e. limited institutional capacity, governance-related challenges, etc.) and limited resources. Indeed, a 2014 community-level vulnerability assessment of the most vulnerable communities shows that Lebanese

<sup>1</sup> The Syrian conflict is estimated to have increased poverty among the Lebanese population by an additional 170,000 people in 2014, with the existing poor pushed deeper into poverty. At the same time, of the 1.5 million Syrian refugees in Lebanon, 71% live below the poverty line and an astonishing 93% are food insecure, which represents a 4% increase from 2015.

<sup>2</sup> Increasing labor supply by 30-50%.



citizens and Syrian refugees reported difficulties in accessing shelter, water, education and health services.<sup>3</sup> In addition, the assessment revealed that the lack of livelihood and employment opportunities is a key concern.

**Limited access to and quality social services has also contributed to increased social tension between host communities and Syrian refugees.** Competition over scarce resources leads to frustration, scapegoating and discrimination, which contributes to domestic violence, drug abuse, and participation in radical collective action and crime.

#### Sectoral and Institutional Context

**Lebanon spends little on Social Safety Nets (SSNs) and subsidies crowd out needed expenditure on social programs.** Poor access to and quality social services is the result of having a weak SSN system and the crowding out of funding for SSN in Lebanon. Similar to many countries in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), Lebanon's main SSN consists of poorly targeted energy subsidies, which account to approximately 4.5% of the country's GDP and effectively crowds out spending on much needed social and human development programs. Lebanon's non-subsidy SSN spending did not even reach 1 percent of the country's GDP in 2013. Equally problematic is that Lebanon's non-subsidy SSN programs are numerous, duplicative, relatively small, and dwarfed by the humanitarian system in size, reach and technology. In addition, capacity and institutional challenges at the central and local level have hindered the delivery of essential social services in Lebanon. This includes: (i) lack of defined roles and responsibilities, and lack of performance framework for social workers; (ii) limited offers, quality and relevance of social services at Social Development Centers (SDCs); (iii) poor physical and technological infrastructure both at the central and local levels; and (iv) lack of reliable data and interoperability across databases within the Ministry of Social Affairs (MoSA).

**To address some of these challenges and contribute to poverty alleviation, the World Bank is supporting MoSA to implement the National Poverty Targeting Program (NPTP), a well-targeted, yet relatively small program that has become the main SSN in Lebanon.** The NPTP, whose targeting accuracy post-recertification<sup>4</sup> is comparable to that of international good practices, targets the poorest and most vulnerable Lebanese. The NPTP is currently providing 108,000 beneficiary households health and education subsidies, and the poorest 10,000 beneficiary households food assistance (e-card food voucher) for improved food security. The NPTP will also soon pilot a "graduation" program, through which women and able-bodied poor from the poorest 675 NPTP households will receive a package of services that will complement the food assistance and is anticipated to improve the households' levels of income, savings, and consumption. The NPTP is also serving as a "targeting" platform for other human development programs including the primary health care programs under the Ministry of Public Health and humanitarian assistance, thus helping to bridge the humanitarian-development divide. However, to date, the NPTP is small-scale, barely reaching 8% of the population and funded from limited grants. Only six years since its establishment, the NPTP is still considered in its early stage of development compared to mature SSNs in Brazil, Chile, Columbia, Philippines, among others.

**On the other hand, since the start of the Syria crisis, the humanitarian community in Lebanon has been providing Syrian refugees in Lebanon basic assistance and livelihood support through the Lebanon Crisis Syria Plan (LCRP).** Cash is increasingly the main modality for providing humanitarian assistance in Lebanon, mainly consisting of a combination of food and winter assistance, or of food, winter and multi-purpose cash. More than 217,000 vulnerable Syrian, Lebanese

<sup>3</sup> The assessment was published in 2014 by the REACH initiative, the United Nations Office for the Coordination of Humanitarian Affairs (OCHA), and UNICEF.

<sup>4</sup> The NPTP uses the Proxy Means Testing (PMT) method to identify extreme poor households. The PMT methodology, whose design was supported by the World Bank, relies on the collection of easily verifiable and measurable household characteristics to calculate a household "Welfare Score." The PMT formula was updated in 2016 by the World Bank Poverty Team, based on which MoSA carried out recertification of NPTP beneficiaries.



and Palestine households have benefited from at least one form of cash assistance in 2017<sup>5</sup>.

#### Relationship to CPF

Lebanon's Country Partnership Framework (CPF) (FY17-FY22) (Report # 94768-LB) aims to mitigate the immediate, and potentially long-lasting impact of the Syrian crisis on Lebanon, while strengthening state institutions, addressing existing vulnerabilities, and bolstering efforts on longer term development challenges, all through interventions that foster inclusion and shared prosperity. Specifically, the CPF works through two focus areas as a way to renew the social contract between the state and the citizens: (i) expand access to and quality of service delivery; and (ii) expand economic opportunities and increase human capital.

SSNSP is aligned with and will contribute significantly to advancing the goals and specific objectives of the CPF. First, SSNSP will provide emergency income support to the poorest and most vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugees (the latter through donor financing), thus improving their food security, building their resilience, and enabling them to invest in the human capital of their children. Second, SSNSP will provide the poorest Lebanese, and in particular women, self-employment opportunities, to complement the emergency income support and thus ensure sustainable increases in livelihoods. Third, SSNSP will help to increase the availability of quality social services at the local level both in the short and medium term, which would have a long-lasting impact on the human capital of the most vulnerable populations. Finally, and by establishing a SSN, the SSNP will help to build the capacity of the Government to deliver essential social and productive inclusion services in a sustainable manner, thus contributing to the country's long-term development.

SSNSP is anchored in effective coordination and collaboration both at the policy, technical and financial levels across all relevant partners and donors, including those working on the humanitarian field, which would contribute to bridge the humanitarian (short-term) and development (medium-term) divide.

### C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

The project development objective is to provide income support and improve access to social services for poor and vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugees, increase employment opportunities for the extreme poor Lebanese, and develop the building blocks of Lebanon's Social Safety Net (SSN) system.

#### Key Results (From PCN)

- Percentage increase in households' (Lebanese and Syrian refugee) **food security**, broken down by increases in consumption scores, dietary diversity, and better coping mechanisms;
- Percentage increase in **employment rates** among extreme poor Lebanese individuals benefiting from the graduation program, total, broken down by gender;
- Percentage increase of **utilization rates of offered social services**, by Lebanese and Syrian refugees;
- Percentage increase in **perceived level of social cohesion/stability** in selected communities.

### D. Concept Description

The SSNSP is proposed as a multi-donor five-year program to provide income support and improve access to social services for poor and vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugees, increase employment opportunities for poor Lebanese, and develop the building blocks of the SSN system. Specifically, the program will seek to: (i) scale-up the NPTP for extreme poor Lebanese; (ii) provide, subject to availability of funding, social assistance to Syrian refugees; (iii) improve access to and quality of social and services for all vulnerable populations; and (iv) establish the building blocks of a SSN system for

<sup>5</sup> Lebanon Inter-Agency Coordination in Focus: Cash-Based Assistance under the LCRP - May 2018.



MoSA programs in Lebanon. It is anticipated that the project would benefit from concessional financing of US\$400 million, through IBRD (US\$300 million) and the Global Concessional Financing Facility (GCFF) (US\$100 million) for Components 1, 3 and 4. SSNSP is also a candidate to benefit from IDA18 funding to cover Component 2, which directly targets refugees, with a tentative allocation of US\$75 million. This would bring the **total proposed funding to US\$475 million**.

The project is proposed to consist of the following components:

**Component 1: Scale-up of the NPTP (estimated US\$315 million)<sup>6</sup>**, to provide income support and promote the livelihoods of the extreme poor Lebanese. This includes:

- Provision of the e-card food voucher to the current 10,000 beneficiary households (57,000 individuals), and its gradual increase over five years to reach all the 43,000 extreme poor households (245,600 individuals);
- Expansion of the NPTP “graduation” program from 675 to 15,000 NPTP households over a five-year period. Based on the CGAP/Ford Foundation model, the ongoing NPTP graduation pilot provides self-employment opportunities for 675 individuals (of which at least 50% women) from the poorest 675 NPTP beneficiary households. It provides participants a comprehensive package of services, to help them achieve increased levels of consumption, income and savings. SSNSP will assess options for strengthening the current pilot, including the provision of wage-employment opportunities to the program’s participants. It is estimated that around 9,000 households will have achieved the established graduation indicators, thereby no longer being eligible for the e-card food voucher.<sup>7</sup> This would enable the GoL to recover approximately US\$13 million *during the duration of the Program alone*, with significant larger returns in the medium and long-term both from not providing these 9,000 beneficiaries the e-card food voucher, and the profitability of the beneficiaries’ micro businesses.

**Component 2: Provision of social assistance to Syrian refugees, subject to availability of IDA 18 funding (estimated US\$75 million)**. This objective of this component would be to complement humanitarian funding for Syrian refugees, and provide a select number of targeted Syrian refugee households with basic assistance. Specifically, this component would consider, based on available funding, the provision of food vouchers, and/or regular/seasonal multipurpose cash for targeted Syrian refugee households.

**Component 3: Provision of quality social services for all vulnerable populations (estimated US\$75 million)<sup>8</sup>**. The objective of this component would be to increase access to quality social services which would help improve social cohesion among Lebanese and social stability between Lebanese and Syrian refugees. Services may include: livelihoods, child protection, Gender Based Violence (GBV), social care, disability services, psycho-social support, and community-based interventions. Specifically, the component will finance:

- Identification, piloting and scale-up of the delivery of a package of social services for SDCs, to improve social cohesion and ensure that the basic needs of all poor and vulnerable are met.
- Creation of a Community Social Development program to be implemented by select SDCs/municipalities/NGOs, to restore and/or create community assets, further improve social service delivery at the local level, empower local stakeholders, promote the inclusion of youth and women, and build trust/social cohesion. The program can benefit from MoSA’s successful National Volunteer Service Program (NVSP), which promotes youth volunteerism to achieve these objectives, and in particular social cohesion.

<sup>6</sup> There will be savings incurred from not providing the e-food voucher to those households who will no longer be eligible following graduation. These potential savings, however, may be needed in case other households fall into extreme poverty following potential economic shocks.

<sup>7</sup> Assuming a graduation rate of 60%, which is lower than the graduation range/average of the adopted model.

<sup>8</sup> Includes administrative costs associated with technical expertise needed to manage the component’s activities.



- Investment in physical infrastructure for MoSA and selected SDCs, to improve their service delivery capacity in the medium/long-term.

**Component 4: Development of the building blocks of a SSN system (estimated US\$10 million)<sup>9</sup>**, which includes:

- Development of a unique ID for beneficiaries of SDCs services;
- Creation of a social registry and related Information Systems (IS), to support MoSA to better assess demand and administer its programs;
- Establishment of a Case Management System (CMS), to equip social workers to provide individualized and integrated assistance to poor and vulnerable households;
- Strengthening of the NPTP Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), to enable MoSA to handle complaints effectively and efficiently; and
- Strengthening of MoSA monitoring and evaluation (M&E) system, to improve access to quality data for the tracking of all MoSA social services at the central, local, and social worker level.

Component 4 will leverage the activities planned under the GoL's Digital Transformation Strategy as part of the World Bank support for the realization of e-Government in Lebanon. The prospective Strategy leverages technology as a driver of change aimed at achieving a shift in the government by interconnecting the public-sector entities and enhancing the information and data flows to increase transparency and improve governance and policy-making.

***Expected Impact of SSNSP***

Preliminary analysis of the impact of SSNSP revealed the following.

- Beyond strengthening food security among poorest households, the expansion of the food voucher will:
  - Substantially reduce depth and severity of poverty Providing e-card to 40,000 HH will reduce extreme poverty from 8 to 3.7% & poverty gap from 1.8 to .6%;
  - Positively impact the economy (i) create 1200 jobs and raise US\$ 2.7-3.2 million in taxes without distorting prices; and (ii) generate US\$ 472 million in additional benefits over 5 years
- The scale-up of the graduation pilot will contribute to improved employment outcomes among one of the hardest-to-place populations in the labor market.
- By providing income support and employment opportunities to the poorest Lebanese households, the scale-up of the NPTP would also contribute to defuse tensions between Lebanese and Syrian refugee and thus increase social cohesion/stability.

***SSNSP and Fiscal Reforms***

SSNSP is aligned with the GoL's commitment to advancing fiscal and sectoral reforms. Indeed, the development of a SSN system coupled with the graduation program is expected to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of social spending, which would in turn help to ease fiscal pressure and contribute to the sustainability of SSNs. However, it is critical for the GoL to have a long-term financing strategy for SSNs, and to transition from donor funding to ensure sustainability. As part of said strategy, SSN strengthening and expansion could come from: (i) savings from a possible energy subsidy reform, and (ii) the identification of and subsequent re-investment of inefficient government spending. With this in mind,

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<sup>9</sup> Includes administrative costs associated with technical expertise needed to manage the component's activities.



the SPJ and Energy GP teams are working closely to assess the impact of a possible energy reform on poverty and inequality. In addition, the World Bank is looking at initiating with the GoL a sector-wide Public Expenditure Review (PER) to identify inefficient spending and reallocation opportunities.

### ***SSNSP and Gender***

The SSNSP will include several interventions which promote economic and social inclusion of poor and vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugee women. These include: (i) provision of income support to women as direct beneficiaries; (ii) promotion of sustainable livelihoods via graduation program (target of at least 50% women); (iii) empowerment of women at the local level via CSD program (target of at least 50% women); (iv) provision of social services that cater to the specific needs of women (i.e.: GBV; specialized psycho-social support, social care, health-related services, etc.); and (v) development of a gender-sensitive CMS.

### ***Humanitarian-Development Nexus***

The SSNSP does not seek to integrate the national SSN system for poor Lebanese, managed by MoSA, and the SSN system for Syrian refugees managed by the United Nations. Instead, the SSNSP will help to improve coordination and to the extent possible, align both systems for increased effectiveness and efficiency of available support. The SSNSP would seek to bridge the humanitarian-development divide by: (i) further strengthening the World Bank-World Food Program (WFP) partnership for scaling-up the NPTP e-card food voucher; conducting a harmonized assessment of joint vulnerabilities of poor Lebanese and Syrian refugees; and rolling out of a “social ID card,” to be provided to all SDC users (poor and vulnerable Lebanese and Syrian refugees), in partnership with the United Nations high Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) . Further, the multi-year scope of the SSNSP will help to address weaknesses of humanitarian funding, which is on an annual basis.

### ***Implementation Arrangements and Donor Coordination***

The SSNSP will be the responsibility of MoSA and the Presidency of the Council of Ministers (CoM) through a dedicated Project Management Team (PMT). These are similar implementation arrangements of the ongoing NPTP, but will need to be strengthened given the scale up and additional dimensions of the proposed project. The previously established “Social Inter-ministerial Committee” led by the Prime Minister will be revived. The project will also strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Social Affairs as a way to build increased capacity and sustainability. To ensure ownership and an integrated approach for SSN among donors and UN partners, MoSA is expected to chair a “SSN Forum,” which would bring selected relevant actors to *inter alia* contribute to the formulation of SSN policies and programs in the country.

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## **SAFEGUARDS**

### **A. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)**

The Project will be implemented nationwide in urban and rural areas. Component 1 beneficiaries are mostly expected to come from the North and the Bekaa, as these two regions have the highest concentration of extreme poor households. Components 2 and 3 will benefit both Lebanese and Syrian refugees throughout the country, especially those who use the local Social Development Centers.

### **B. Borrower’s Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies**



Potential environmental impacts could be expected under Component 3 of the project, which may arise when the physical SDCs are built / rehabilitated, as well as labor associated risks. Component 1 is also expected to result in potential social tensions/conflict between refugee and non-refugee populations. The physical impacts are expected to be temporary and could be avoided/mitigated using simple measures. Any potential impacts on laborers or during working conditions can also be avoided/mitigated using simple measures.

Although the MoSA does not have in-house environmental management capacity, it is expected that contractors/supervising engineers would have sufficient capacity to implement such mitigation measures, and the environmental requirements will be included in the bidding documents for such construction works. Social impacts/conflict can also be avoided by ensuring the proper mitigation measures are implemented. However, social capacity at the MoSA is low due to deficiencies in the technical expertise.

The Bank will thus work closely with the borrower to ensure support is provided with preparation of the TOR to hire the social and environmental specialists as part of the PIU team and to document the status of environmental and social impacts and mitigation measures during project implementation. The ministry has a hotline number that is used for complaints as part of a grievance redress mechanism which is being handled by one-two staff. A GRM Specialist will also be hired as part of the PIU to further develop and manage the nascent GRM system and to oversee these staff.

**C. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team**

Mohammad Farouk Ibrahim Kandeel, Environmental Specialist  
Noushig Chahe Kaloustian, Social Specialist

**D. Policies that might apply**

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	<p>Limited construction works might be included under Component 3. The impacts/risks are expected to be of low significance and could be mitigated through providing adequate environmental and labor and occupational health and safety management for construction sites. In case this component is confirmed, an ESMF will be prepared prior to appraisal and will include standard measures to be included in the construction documents.</p> <p>Component 1 of this project may also result in social conflict / resource competition between refugee and non-refugee populations. Under Component 3, these risks would be directly related to the nature of the social services proposed to be provided (livelihoods, GBV, disability services, psycho-social support) and any potential negatives outcomes of those services such as social exclusion. A separate social impact assessment report will be prepared prior to appraisal that will accordingly inform project design and help to</p>



determine the mitigation measures to be implemented. Although the ministry currently has a hotline as part of their grievance redress mechanism, this will be further developed and managed for this project by a GRM Specialist to be hired as part of the PIU.

Performance Standards for Private Sector Activities OP/BP 4.03	No	The project will not be implemented by the private sector.
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	No	The project is not expected to have any impacts on natural habitats.
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	The project is not expected to have any impacts on forests.
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	The project will not involve procurement or utilization of pesticides.
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	No	The project is not expected to have any impacts on physical cultural resources.
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	No	The project will not have any impacts on indigenous people.
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	No	The project will not involve any involuntary resettlement.
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	The Project will not support construction or operation of dams.
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	The Project will not have any components in international waterways.
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	The Project will not have any components in disputed areas.

**E. Safeguard Preparation Plan**

Tentative target date for preparing the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

Dec 03, 2018

Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing should be specified in the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

Due to the potential environmental and social impacts identified under components 1 and 3 of this project, an ESMF and a separate social impact assessment report will be prepared prior to appraisal. The ESMF will assess the possible impacts related to construction works as well as the potential impacts to laborers and will identify the measures that should be implemented to avoid/mitigate those impacts including a grievance redress mechanism. A separate social impact assessment will also be prepared prior to appraisal to assess the existing social baseline conditions that will inform project design and that will more clearly identify potential impacts to define the mitigation measures . A meaningful stakeholder consultation will also be conducted ensuring that all vulnerable groups, women, elderly, are also included in the consultation session and to address and document their concerns. The ESMF and social impact assessment will be reviewed and cleared by the Bank, and disclosed in-country and on the Bank's website.



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**APPROVAL**

Task Team Leader(s):	Haneen Ismail Sayed, Rene Antonio Leon Solano
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**Approved By**

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Country Director:	Saroj Kumar Jha	05-Dec-2018