



Project Information Document/ Identification/Concept Stage (PID)

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 01-Feb-2018 | Report No: PIDC141991



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any)	Environmental Assessment Category	Project Name
P166327		C - Not Required	Community Engagement and Social Accountability Project
Region	Country	Date PID Prepared	Estimated Date of Approval
EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA	Kyrgyz Republic	01-Feb-2018	
Financing Instrument	Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency	Initiation Note Review Decision
Investment Project Financing	Aga Khan Foundation	AGA KHAN FOUNDATION	The review did authorize the preparation to continue

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Financing (in USD Million)

SUMMARY

Total Project Cost	0.00
Total Financing	0.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. The Kyrgyz Republic is a landlocked, mountainous country in Central Asia with a multi-ethnic population of about six million. Despite inheriting well-developed infrastructure, the country has seen a significant decline in living standards since the break-up of the Soviet Union as a result of disruption in established trade and broader relations with other former Soviet republics. It is also prone to exogenous geographic and economic shocks, and has suffered from social disturbance over the last decade. While there has been a substantial decrease in the poverty rate (from 40% of the population living below the national poverty line in 2006 to 30% in 2014), the



Kyrgyz Republic remains one of the poorest economies in the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) region, with a GNI per capita of US\$1,170 in 2015 (Atlas methodology).

2. Almost two-thirds of the Kyrgyz population live in isolated, rural and mountainous areas. Many of the traditional providers of social and economic services (mostly collective or state enterprises) no longer function. The disappearance of these structures has left significant voids in the provision of basic services and infrastructure maintenance, especially in rural areas. While living conditions have improved in some areas due to significant donor investment, progress has been affected by frequent changes in government, a region-wide economic slowdown, and currency depreciations. Almost 70 percent of all poor households are in rural areas, and poverty varies greatly by region, with almost half of the country's poor concentrated in two southern oblasts (Jalal-Abad and Osh).

3. The country has experienced a number of conflicts since independence, and faces a broad array of interlinked risk factors, be they social, ethnic, economic, demographic, political, institutional, or environmental. The long-term stability and growth of the country will depend on inclusion efforts in southern Kyrgyz Republic, alongside progress on anti-corruption and governance challenges. The Fergana Valley is one of the most unstable regions in Central Asia due to its multi-ethnic and interspersed populations, complex and intertwined borders, and dwindling natural resources.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

4. Community-driven development (CDD) is relatively well-established in the Kyrgyz Republic. The Bank and KfW have supported a Village Investment Project (VIP) for nearly a decade with the dual objectives of making locally-relevant investment decisions and empowering communities. Moreover, there is a well-established vehicle for CDD projects—a Community Development and Investment Agency, called ARIS, which was established in 2003 specifically for this purpose. The Bank has also expanded its support for CDD in the country through multi-sectoral CDD projects involving pasture and livestock management and irrigation, and a World Bank pilot project implemented by the Aga Khan Foundation (AKF) that has promoted social cohesion through community-based approaches in conflict-affected areas. Social accountability efforts, however, especially those that strive to empower end users in oversight roles for better governance, are relatively new, and the principles of social accountability are not well understood. Efforts to work with youth in the Kyrgyz Republic are also relatively new, small in size and generally stand-alone.

5. In 2008, to strengthen the role of local government in the country's development, the Kyrgyz Republic adopted an amendment to the legal framework for local governance, which assigns more political, administrative, and fiscal autonomy to local governments. Local self-governments (LSGs) now have increased responsibilities towards local populations, and there are increased opportunities for the local administrations (Aiyi Okmotus or "AOs") to work closely with communities on local development initiatives. However, despite efforts to strengthen the AO role in village investment, fiscal transfers to LSGs are extremely limited and these local-level authorities have not yet developed the capacity for accountable and transparent decision making and financial management. Nevertheless, local development planning is practiced and community investments form a part of Local Development Strategies (LDSs).



6. Youth^[1] remain amongst the most vulnerable groups in the Kyrgyz Republic. They account for 35% of the total population of the country. In spite of a relatively high per capita investment in the education sector (4% of GDP), and a public education system that is mandatory through 9th grade, and free through to 11th grade, the country's schools have done little to equip young people with the tools to find meaningful and secure employment. The system also fails to provide opportunities for young people to contribute to innovative and constructive solutions to societal challenges. The IMF estimates that youth make up 50% of the country's unemployed population, and more than 60% of youth live in rural areas that lack not only infrastructure and services, but also economic opportunity. The national youth unemployment rate in 2015 was 15%, and youth not in employment, education or training (NEET) was 21.4%.^[2] Facing limited opportunities, many young people, particularly men, seek employment in urban areas or abroad—typically in the Russian Federation.

7. Challenges faced by women are exacerbated within this context, both in terms of voice and agency, and livelihoods opportunities. Female employment rates are consistently lower than male across all age groups. The jobs women take, when they are able to obtain them, tend to be more informal and lower paid. In addition, a lack of affordable childcare, and gender norms restricting women's employment outside the home create barriers to their ability to work. While awareness of these constraints is increasing, more action is needed to address family and societal resistance to women working outside the home.

8. In the Kyrgyz Republic, the Fergana Valley region is characterized by high levels of unemployment and underemployment, and migration has become the norm. For those that remain, the lack of economic opportunity, deteriorating infrastructure and unreliable service provision has fostered apathy and a sense of exclusion, particularly for youth. This is also an area where, during consultations, communities articulated concerns regarding risk-taking behavior, such as drugs or alcoholism fueled by idleness, or the allure of more extreme political ideologies and the loss of their children to the Syrian conflict. To address the needs of the target communities in the context of the Fergana Valley, it is necessary to address exclusion from economic opportunity and societal marginalization alongside improving infrastructure and services.

9. In this context, the proposed project will work in parallel with and complement the CASA1000 Community Support Project (CSP) activities, focusing on communities living along the 450 km CASA1000 transmission line in the Fergana Valley area of the Kyrgyz Republic, traversing three oblasts (Jalal-Abad, Osh and Batken) and an estimated 22 (inhabited) Aiyl Aimaks (AAs), with a total population of about 330,000. The Corridor of Impact (CoI) is defined as a 3 km-wide corridor centered on the final route of the transmission line. It is currently estimated that there are about 37 "corridor" villages (those within the CoI) with a combined population of 87,500.

[1] In this project, youth project beneficiaries are limited to adults, that is, above 18 years old as per national legislation.

[2] International Labor Organization. 2015. *Country Profile: Kyrgyz Republic*.



Relationship to CPF

10. The proposed project is consistent with the World Bank’s Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) for the Kyrgyz Republic which is aligned with the Kyrgyz Government’s National Sustainable Development Strategy (2013-2017). The CPS FY14-17 includes several target results to which the CASA1000-CSP and this related project can contribute. This includes public service delivery, and the maintenance of scarce natural resources and physical infrastructure. It will also contribute to the goals of improving the efficiency and quality of essential public services, and improving the management of agriculture, forestry, livestock, pastureland, and water resources, while underpinning the CPS goal of ensuring energy security and the development of the export potential of energy. The Project contributes to the World Bank’s goals of improving governance by making the state more accountable to its citizens and strengthening citizens’ voice in the activities of the state.

11. In line with corporate mandates, the project prioritizes the engagement of citizens in implementation and meets gender targets for analysis, activity, and monitoring.

C. Project Development Objective(s)

Proposed Development Objective(s)

To support youth engagement and social accountability for better services and infrastructure in selected areas of the Kyrgyz Republic.

Key Results

1. Percentage of young (women and men) beneficiaries who report that their role/voice in local decision making has been enhanced as a result of project support
2. Percentage of target communities who report enhanced trust in community relations as a result of project support
3. Percentage of community members who report increased knowledge as a result of project awareness raising initiatives (from youth facilitator information campaigns)
4. Percentage of community members who report that project interventions have improved accountability and responsiveness in local communities

D. Preliminary Description

Activities/Components

12. Drawing on lessons from World Bank CDD programming that promotes social cohesion and addresses conflict risks,[1] the Project will support a range of activities to promote youth-focused community mobilization and social accountability activities. The aim is to ensure that: (i) communities, particularly youth and marginalized groups, are actively engaged in selecting poverty-focused project interventions; (ii) investments in social and economic infrastructure (including electricity) are those that have been most highly prioritized by communities; and (iii) all members of the target communities are provided with the

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information, facilitation and capacity building necessary to make decisions that are needs-based, and inclusive of women, vulnerable, and poor households. The focus on poverty-alleviating investments is part of the Bank's twin goals, and inclusion will form an explicit aspect of the community mobilization process. A gender target that 50 percent of the beneficiaries should be women/girls will also be rigorously implemented and checked.

13. The Youth Needs Assessment and the Conflict Study conducted during project preparation drew attention to the following issues in the target communities: (i) the disempowerment of youth, particularly the low levels of employment among them; (ii) cultural norms that make young people, especially young women, voiceless; (iii) the growing impact on children left by parents who have migrated for employment; (iv) minority exclusion and inter-ethnic relations; (v) gender-based violence; and (vi) the limited capacity of local institutions to manage and mitigate risks and provide services. To address these interconnected issues, the project will develop and implement a youth-focused community mobilization process that is designed to engage and empower young women and men to facilitate community engagement and deepen participatory processes.

14. Project activities are also focused on promoting youth-focused social accountability to advance effective feedback mechanisms regarding social and economic infrastructure investments. This includes activities to empower youth and communities through knowledge sharing and implementation of social accountability tools such as community scorecards and social audits.

Component 1: Support for community mobilization and capacity building (CASA1000 MDTF US\$300,000)

15. Component 1 will support community mobilization activities needed to ensure that investments in social and economic infrastructure are decided by communities and responsive to the needs of all community members. The objective of this component is to support youth leadership and build local institutional capacity for subproject needs assessment, planning, implementation, management, and monitoring. This is expected to help activate communities and help ensure that target communities are engaged in decision making over local investments.

16. An innovative process of engaging youth as leaders of the community-led processes will drive this component. From the outset, the project will fund youth mobilization events to select and build the capacity of approximately 150 youth as youth facilitators (two men and two women from each target village), who will take a leadership role in community mobilization and represent youth interests in project processes.[2] To represent each target community at the AA level, a legal entity, known as the Corridor Village Investment Association (C-VIA), will be established and legally registered. The C-VIAs will represent and be accountable to the communities they represent. The head of the AO will be an active member of the C-VIA in his/her respective AA, along with nominated representatives (two men, two women, 50 percent youth) from each corridor village. The C-VIAs will carry out a number of representation, coordination, financial management, and procurement functions. The C-VIAs will be held to account through community monitoring and social audit processes (see Component 2).

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17. The community mobilization process will engage local stakeholders to help ensure that the community mobilization and social accountability process is understood by local leaders and officials, especially in the AOs and Aiyl Kenesh. To this end, representatives from these bodies will be included in capacity building sessions and be appointed to pre-defined roles. The community needs identification and prioritization process will serve as an input to LDSs to inform the long-term development of local areas. The C-VIAs will also ensure that activities prioritized through the community mobilization process form part of LDSs. In addition, in order to ensure that prioritized sub-grants[3] include not only social infrastructure, but also livelihoods and youth development, support will be provided to pilot in the LDSs the inclusion of Youth Development Plans (YDPs) that specifically address the needs and challenges of young people, and identify youth-specific opportunities and strategies to enhance the voice and agency of young people, improve access to services, cultivate employable skills, and generate opportunities for local employment and income.

18. The component will support the full range of youth-led community mobilization activities, with complementary capacity building support, in the first year. This cycle of activities will establish a system to engage communities, build the capacity of youth to play community facilitation roles, and encourage women to participate actively and equally. The outcome will be gender-sensitive, poverty-focused and community-owned decisions regarding the village sub-grants to be funded by the CSP. Capacity building will cover participatory methodologies, community governance and accountability systems, conflict resolution mechanisms, organizational development, sustainability, and equitable use. This component will cover the costs of a direct contract with ARIS for the rapid launch of community mobilization efforts.

19. The component will also support the ongoing community mobilization activities being carried out by AKF in Years 2-4. This will include: (i) technical advisory support to the project on community engagement; (ii) youth development; and (iii) leading and handing over innovative mechanisms for community mobilization. To this end AKF will draw on global experience in youth programming and community driven development in support of project activities, and lead AKF training events, exchanges, and workshops to support youth facilitators, C-VIAs, AOs, members of the Aiyl Kenesh, youth and other community stakeholders.

Component 2: Support for youth engagement in awareness building and social accountability (CASA1000 MDTF US\$450,000)

20. In order to build knowledgeable, cohesive and sustainable communities, and address the disempowerment of youth in target areas, in Years 1-4, Component 2 aims to build the voice and agency of young women and men by supporting: (i) awareness-building activities; and (ii) social accountability activities to be carried out by young women and men within target communities. The activities will be focused on building communities that are armed with knowledge on development-related issues and the ingredients of good local governance (including performance, transparency, and accountability). Component 2 activities will also provide skills for broader youth engagement in local civic affairs.

21. **Awareness building and access to information.** The project will build the capacity of youth to lead awareness-building activities on livelihoods and services that create more informed and active communities. As a means to empower youth, build their confidence, and develop trust within their communities, the



project will adopt this innovative approach to awareness building, enabling youth to learn about, become expert in, and then function as community focal points, disseminating information on a range of community development topics. Youth facilitators will mobilize informal groups to take part in trainings and workshops and then undertake outreach roles in their communities. Knowledge transfer is likely to include:

22. *Promoting efficient energy.* To complement village electricity improvements, community awareness-building initiatives will focus on energy efficiency and alternative energy sources (e.g. insulation, lighting options, heating stoves, solar street lighting, etc.). The project will support the training of youth to access information and develop knowledge in these areas, for example, by facilitating visits by entrepreneurs to villages (e.g. on heating stoves or insulation) and supporting youth to organize community awareness events. This approach will then be extended, or broadened to address particular interests, needs, or concerns within target communities.

23. *Enhancing local services and livelihoods.* Awareness-building activities might include topics that build the capacity of communities to make informed decisions, better utilize existing community infrastructure and services, promote accountability and improve performance. For instance, safety and security (associated with street lighting improvements), quality of child care (associated with kindergartens), hygiene and sanitation in schools/village cleaning (associated with school rehabilitation works and first aid points (FAPs)), value chain development (associated with livelihoods), e-services and e-business (associated with access to the internet). Awareness building could also focus on designing infrastructure investments that would promote community-level resilience to disaster and climate risk. Youth facilitators will consult with communities and work with project staff to identify locally relevant topics. Youth will also be trained in innovative methods, such as community theater,[4] to raise community awareness and generate local solutions to local problems. Community theater uses role playing, short skits, music, singing, dance/movement, and improvisation techniques to highlight a development challenge in the community. It engages community members as the actors and utilizes participatory techniques to brainstorm solutions. For example, using this technique, youth could raise awareness in their communities of the challenges faced by the elderly, by children left with grandparents, and by minority groups, as well as facilitate the development of community-driven solutions to address these problems.

24. Youth-focused awareness-building activities undertaken in communities will thus include:

- selecting key topics for youth awareness-building activities based on village-level interests and priorities;
- training youth in selected topics through access to specialized information, mentorships, and mobilization of technical expertise;
- youth convened information sessions, community events, trainings, and workshops on chosen topics to build community awareness and increase legitimacy of youth leadership; and
- youth-driven innovative approaches to generate ideas to address village level problems through locally-tailored solutions.



25. **Social accountability.** A second set of activities will enable a group of (different) young women and men in the target villages to play a role in the social accountability mechanisms developed for the project, and to identify areas where social accountability would help address community issues. This component will provide support for young community members to check and ensure that sub-grants are implemented according to the agreed procedures and community preferences. This will include support for hands-on training of a group of 150 “community reporters” to measure and monitor, ensure transparency and disclosure, and instigate structured social accountability mechanisms that contribute to regular project monitoring. Specifically, this will include:

26. *Community reporting.* The community reporters will generate and share project information—tracking the CSP community decision-making and implementation process (decisions over subprojects, YDP-related activities, the participation of communities and of women, procurement, construction, and financial management). Results will be posted on information boards, social media, and reported in local newspapers. Community reporters will also document best practices and lessons learned. The project will recognize, through awards and certification, community reporters’ efforts to promote transparency, ensure effective delivery of sub-grants or other local services, and raise other relevant issues.

27. *Participatory monitoring through community scorecards.* The community reporters will introduce and work with communities to perform an annual community scorecard process. The community scorecard will enable communities to assess and provide feedback on project processes, enable service providers to carry out a self-assessment, and promote dialogue between communities and project implementers that results in concrete action plans. This will include community feedback on the CASA1000 and the CSP as a benefit-sharing mechanism. From Year 2, the scorecard will enable feedback and responsive action on infrastructure and services supported by the CASA1000 CSP (electricity improvements, kindergartens, schools, FAPs, livelihoods facilities, etc.) as well as other services selected by communities. This area of action will be linked to the ARIS Beneficiary Feedback Mechanism, and will, over the life of CASA1000 CSP, introduce technology-based tools for the collection of information.

28. *Social audits.* A key aspect of the accountability established in the project will be the transparency, disclosure, and community oversight achieved by social audit meetings at the AA level. This mechanism will act as a check—that community decisions are not captured or changed, that communities are aware of the work being undertaken by C-VIAs and ARIS on their behalf, of the community scorecard processes carried out at the village level, and that all project finances (budgets and expenditures, contracts and payments) are available for target community scrutiny. While C-VIA staff will be responsible for invitations to the social audit meetings, producing information, and posting it on village noticeboards, community reporters will mobilize community members, and write up and disseminate the results back to communities and for inclusion in project reports.

29. Starting in Year 3, the project will support the capacity building of youth to apply these governance skills to other sectors, with the aim of enhancing the role of young women and men in broader local civic and community affairs. While this provides a ready-made opportunity to improve the efficiency of the investments (e.g. kindergarten teacher performance, feedback on FAPs/power outages), initiatives will be



selected through participatory processes by the youth themselves. In later years, this component will look for opportunities to support efforts to link to government e-services, as the *Taza Koom* (a national project that aims to connect every village to the internet via fiber optic cable by the year 2020) is rolled out across the South, introducing civic technologies identified by youth.

Table 1: Summary – CSP Youth Engagement

Function	Youth Role	Description	Target numbers
Community Mobilization and Awareness Building	Youth Facilitators	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young women and men (ages 18-28) from target villages • 50 percent women; 2 women and 2 men in each target village • Serve voluntarily as community mobilizers; facilitate YDPs/youth initiative groups; lead community awareness-building initiatives (trained in technical aspects of relevant CSP social/economic infrastructure) • Capacity building and technical support provided by community development support officers • ARIS facilitator certification following training and quantified/qualified work experience • Selected youth facilitators will serve in C-VIAs 	150
	Youth Accountants	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young women and men (ages 18-28) in target villages • 50 percent women • Must have graduated from basic bookkeeping course(s) and have skills to support accounting functions of the C-VIAs • Paid from C-VIA operating budget • Will enable youth to obtain practical experience, and, where necessary, to work alongside qualified financial management officers as a basis for future employment opportunities • Youth will obtain certification after an agreed period of experience 	21+ (each CVIA)
Social Accountability	Community Reporters	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 50 percent women; 2 women and 2 men in each target village 	150

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and Monitoring		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Young women and men with writing skills • Serve voluntarily to track the CSP community decision-making and implementation process and promote social accountability mechanisms • Support implementation of an annual community scorecard process and social audits • Utilize technology-based tools for information collection and dissemination • ARIS social accountability certification following training and quantified/qualified work experience 	
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Component 3: Support for project management, M&E and communications (CASA1000 MDTF US\$250,000)

30. Component 3 of this grant will be allocated to support project management, M&E and communications. This will include project management costs for AKF and the start-up activities for project management and coordination by ARIS for community mobilization activities (through a direct contract with ARIS).

31. **Project management.** This will include coordination and supervision of implementation, financial management, annual audits, and monitoring and evaluation. AKF will be responsible for preparing work plans and operational manuals, managing the budget, managing relations with local authorities and communities, and developing terms of reference for the necessary consultancies. This component will include costs for project staff, including a project manager, three field facilitators, finance specialist, M&E specialist, technical advisers, management support, and drivers. This component will support the recruitment of project-specific consultants, operational support mechanisms, financial management at the national, oblast and district levels, travel, telecommunications, printing and other office expenses, as well as managerial oversight, and internal and external audits. Also, this component will fund equipment and supplies, including computers and printers, office equipment and supplies, and fuel and car rental costs. The direct contract with ARIS will finance initial start-up activities for project management of community mobilization, M&E, and communications activities including a dedicated project management team, support for the initiation of relationships with communities, development of the C-VIAs and youth facilitators, and engagement with the AOs.

32. **Monitoring and evaluation.** AKF will be responsible for tracking the progress of the activities specific to this project, carrying out semi-annual assessments of outcomes and results, communicating and reporting regularly on the progress of the project to agreed stakeholders, and disclosing project documentation as agreed. In the first year, this component will also finance the internal- and community-level monitoring, and will fund a baseline survey focused on all results indicators of the CSP project included in the POM.



33. Communications. With support from the World Bank, a Communications Action Plan (CSP-CAP) will be developed prior to effectiveness of this grant, with the specific aim of: (i) improving community understanding of the CASA1000 family of projects (the transmission line project and the CSP); and (ii) establishing trust in the CSP and managing expectations by transparently communicating CSP scale, scope, and eligibility. As with other aspects of the project, this component will include all parts of the community, including youth, in messaging. ARIS will facilitate the dissemination of CASA1000 materials[5] and messaging, ensure ongoing information sharing and two-way communication, monitor impact of communications efforts, and train communications staff and youth to take part in communications activities. ARIS will work closely with a communications firm (hired separately) to ensure that messages and materials meet the needs on the ground in target villages. The direct contract with ARIS will also include support for the implementation of this CSP-CAP aligned with the first stages of construction of the CASA1000 transmission line.

[1] The process will build on, but further elaborate the VIP3 (P146970) process and incorporate lessons from the Social Cohesion and CDD project (P132577) experience in promoting social cohesion through CDD, as well as the Pasture Livestock and Management Improvement Project (P145162), while responding to the background studies (Conflict Study and the Youth Needs Assessment) that highlighted the risks associated with youth in the target areas.

[2] These activities will draw on the relevant local youth structures to bring youth together: youth committees and informal work or sports groups will serve as project entry points.

[3] Note: sub-grants will be administered under the CASA1000 Community Support Project.

[4] Community theater was piloted in the Social Cohesion through Community-Based Approaches Project in the Kyrgyz Republic as well as in other CDD processes globally.

[5] A survey will be conducted by an external communications firm to develop tailored CASA1000 messages, design and produce communications materials, and train relevant implementing partners. These materials will be supported directly from the MDTF.

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SAFEGUARDS

E. Safeguard Policies that Might Apply

Safeguard Policies Triggered by the Project	Yes	No	TBD
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01		X	
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04		X	



Forests OP/BP 4.36		X	
Pest Management OP 4.09		X	
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11		X	
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10		X	
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12		X	
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37		X	
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50		X	
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60		X	

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