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

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 22-Feb-2017 | Report No: PIDISDSC20858
## BASIC INFORMATION

### A. Basic Project Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Project ID</th>
<th>Parent Project ID (if any)</th>
<th>Project Name</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Vietnam</td>
<td>P158981</td>
<td></td>
<td>Vietnam Social Security Modernization Project (P158981)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Region</th>
<th>Estimated Appraisal Date</th>
<th>Estimated Board Date</th>
<th>Practice Area (Lead)</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>EAST ASIA AND PACIFIC</td>
<td>Mar 08, 2017</td>
<td>Jun 08, 2017</td>
<td>Social Protection &amp; Labor</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Lending Instrument</th>
<th>Borrower(s)</th>
<th>Implementing Agency</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Investment Project Financing</td>
<td>Ministry of Finance</td>
<td>Vietnam Social Security,MOLISA</td>
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### Proposed Development Objective(s)

The Program Development Objective (PDO) is to enhance the reliability and efficiency of client services of social insurance and social assistance, as well as support synergies in social protection data systems.

### Financing (in USD Million)

<table>
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<th>Financing Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
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<tr>
<td>Borrower</td>
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<tr>
<td>International Development Association (IDA)</td>
<td>100.00</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Total Project Cost</strong></td>
<td><strong>110.00</strong></td>
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### Environmental Assessment Category

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Category</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tr>
<td>B-Partial Assessment</td>
<td>Track II-The review did authorize the preparation to continue</td>
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**Note to Task Teams:** End of system generated content, document is editable from here.

Other Decision (as needed)
B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. Vietnam has experienced rapid and inclusive economic growth since the early 1990s. Economic renovation (Doi Moi) reforms launched in 1986 have transformed it from one of the world’s poorest countries to a lower-middle-income one—with per capita gross national income of US$1,980 in 2015, and GDP growth between 1990 and 2014 averaging 5.5 percent. Growth has also been inclusive: incomes have risen across the income distribution, with only modest increases in inequality and an income Gini coefficient of around 0.39 in 2012, well below neighbors such as China and Malaysia. The percentage of people living in extreme poverty dropped from 50 percent in the 1993 to less than 3 percent today. In addition, social indicators have improved sharply, with outcomes in general education at or above many OECD countries (as measured by PISA), coverage of health insurance at around 70 percent of the population, and huge improvements in coverage of basic infrastructure such as electricity, roads and sanitation.¹

2. Nonetheless, significant challenges remain. In particular, a slowdown in productivity growth, slow formalization of the labor market, remaining welfare gaps of ethnic minorities (who make up 14 percent of the population but 60 percent of the poor), and environmental degradation coupled with the impact of global climate change threaten the long-term sustainability of the country’s development. Furthermore, despite major infrastructure spending needs, Vietnam faces shrinking financing options on account of growing fiscal pressures and insufficient private sector participation. Finally, the institutions of governance that were adequate to carry the country to its lower-middle-income level are now exposing gaps that need to be addressed with urgency and boldness, especially as pressures emerge from economic integration, urbanization, an aging population, and aspirations of a rising middle class. These challenges are well understood by the Government of Vietnam (Go), as reflected in the recent Vietnam 2035 report jointly prepared with the World Bank Group.²

3. As Vietnam aspires to move from lower-middle to upper-middle income status it faces a range of new challenges: one is demographics. Vietnam will age very rapidly from around 2018. After staying roughly constant for decades, the old age dependency ratio will climb steeply from 10 to 22 between 2015 and 2035 and continue to rise in the following decades to nearly 50. This will put pressure on health and social security systems for more fiscally sustainable policies and greater efficiency in service delivery, but also for improved financial protection for older people, in line with the social security coverage expansion targets of GoV’s second challenge is stimulating productivity growth as the demographic tailwind of recent decades dissipates. This will require growth of formal sector employment and continued improvement in the business environment. While wage employment increased from 32 to 38 percent of the labor force between 2007 and 2014, formal sector employment (with written contract and social security cover) remained at only 23 percent in 2015. Two areas which the Go has targeted in this regard are continued expansion of wage employment and reduction in the compliance burden on firms for public services, including taxation, social security, customs and others, which should also lower barriers to movement into formality among currently informal firms.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

4. In recent years, Vietnam has placed increased emphasis on reforms of its social protection system, both with respect to policies and delivery systems. In particular, the Resolution on Social Policies for 2012-20 sets out a wide ranging social protection and social services agenda, setting targets for expanded social insurance coverage and

¹ The Vietnam SCD provides details on these and other indicators.
² Vietnam 2035: Toward Prosperity, Creativity, Equity, and Democracy.
providing policy directions towards reducing fragmentation and ensuring minimum living standards. In 2014, the National Assembly approved amendments to the Social Insurance Law and the Health Insurance Law. Though these amendments move the system in the right direction, further reforms will be required given the challenging financial outlook for the pension system and the emerging speed of aging. Vietnam Social Security (VSS) has also developed a Modernization Plan for 2016-2020, which commits to comprehensive business process re-engineering, establishment of a nationally integrated MIS, and HR reforms within the organization. For social assistance, a Master Plan for social assistance reforms has been developed by MOLISA.

5. In its efforts to achieve an effective, efficient, and sustainable social security system, Go has committed to modernizing social security administration as a key building block. The Social Security Development Strategy (SSDS) as approved in Decision No. 1215/QĐ-TTg of 2013 calls for continuing the modernization of Vietnam’s social security administration, strengthening capacity to improve the quality and efficiency of client service and implementation of social security policies. The 2014 social insurance reforms lay the legal framework for the SI and HI schemes respectively, including a strengthened framework for administration and specific commitments to move away from paper-based business processes. MOLISA has also been strengthening its delivery systems, with a strong emphasis on streamlining program administration and data management.

6. Vietnam Social Security (VSS) is the public agency responsible for implementing social insurance policies nationwide. It manages the SI, HI, and unemployment insurance (UI) funds, and is responsible for registration of firms and individual contributors, contribution collection and compliance, benefit processing and payment, and other administrative functions for all social insurance programs. As noted, VSS has developed a comprehensive Modernization Plan for 2016-2020, which is supported by a five year IT Development Plan and a three year expenditure framework which was endorsed by the National Assembly and by decision of the Prime Minister in 2015. The Modernization Program aims to: (i) standardize and automate business processes to manage client identification, collect SI contributions, settle HI claims, and pay benefits payment for SI, UI and other insurances accurately and conveniently for firms and individual clients; (ii) consolidate the VSS organizational structure and build human resources capacity to ensure sustainable implementation of SI/HI policies and adapt the staff skills mix to the demands of a more automated and client-centric organization; and (iii) modernize information system and information technology infrastructure to support efficient implementation, and make VSS more responsive to the service needs of a more mobile labor force, firms and health providers. This includes introduction of an integrated electronic social security card which would be used by both VSS and MOLISA clients to facilitate use of services and tracking of client transactions in the VSS and MOLISA business systems. A cross-cutting goal of the Modernization Plan is to make VSS services more client-oriented and improve customer satisfaction.

7. Apart from VSS, the other key agency in the social protection sector is the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (MOLISA). In addition to its policy mandates on both social insurance and social assistance, the MOLISA national network manages most social assistance programs, social care services, programs for merit people and people with disabilities, employment services and payment of unemployment insurance benefits. It also manages the Poverty Census, which is the backbone instrument for identifying poor and vulnerable households in Vietnam (the most recent Poverty Census was carried out in 2015). MOLISA has in recent years created a national database based on the poverty census which has basic information on all poor and near poor households and individuals within those households.

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8. In performing their functions, there is a need for major and regular data exchange between MOLISA and VSS: on the list of poor and near-poor households (which is needed to determine who is eligible for subsidized health insurance coverage); on the list of those who have made unemployment insurance contributions to VSS and are eligible for unemployment benefit payments from MOLISA; on merit people and those with disabilities (who have preferential social security provisions), etc. However, to date there is no common data exchange platform or individual and household identification system which would allow reliable and real-time exchange of such operational data. Currently, data are manually exported between the two systems with no defined protocols for managing mismatches in individual and household records. Given the common identification and shared transactional needs of VSS and MOLISA, there is potential for realizing significant operational synergies from a common system of client identification and client interface with both systems.

9. The rationale for social security modernization is several-fold:

- surveys have identified a high compliance burden on firms for VSS contribution reporting (estimated at 276 hours annually according to Doing Business 2014), due to cumbersome business processes and low levels of automation. For example, diagnostic work under a World Bank TA with VSS found that at least 55 percent of the business operations were entirely manual, and only around 12 percent of processes were fully automated. In addition, there is no unique identification system for firms or individuals across VSS programs and across provinces (and sometimes even districts within provinces), making reliable record keeping challenging and complicating use of VSS services by individual social security contributors and beneficiaries;
- the current delivery systems of VSS are fragmented, across business lines and across different parts of the country, a situation which inhibits portability of social security rights, reduces the efficiency of the VSS national office network, and encourages errors and duplication in the system. For example, currently subnational VSS offices are unable to exchange information on contributors, benefits, and usage of insured health services with the national level or with one another, resulting in duplication of records, incomplete contributions and transactions histories, and the potential for fraudulent use of services. Individual workers also encounter significant inconvenience and service discontinuity when they seek services from VSS outside their home districts and provinces. MOLISA faces similar challenges in information management across its programs, with as yet no way to get a consolidated picture of benefit receipt for households and individuals across social assistance, merit, disability and other programs.
- while coverage expansion of SI is a goal, Go is simultaneously seeking to limit the growth of public sector employment, so that improved efficiency of VSS operations will be needed to manage a potentially higher client load with a fixed – or even possibly shrinking - staff complement 4;
- there remains substantial scope to improve the efficiency and transparency of insured health services and value for money in health insurance spending, in order to control cost pressures while maintaining quality services; and
- Go has decided that the VSS social security database will be one of six national databases at the core of wider e-government initiatives, requiring a more robust and integrated information systems to achieve seamless interface with other government systems. Such integration across public agencies will require putting some common basics in place. A key one is the ability to uniquely identify every individual. There will also be a need for better systems of data sharing across agencies.

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4 Coverage of the pension system was around 12 million workers (23 percent of the labor force) in 2014, and for health insurance was around 65 million (or 70 percent of the population), the latter in significant measure due to premium subsidies for the poor and near-poor. Go is targeting 50 percent coverage of pensions by 2020 (though global experience suggests this would be difficult to achieve). For HI, the target is at least 80 percent coverage by 2020.
10. To date, different parts of the VSS system have operated on a fragmented system of client identification across individual social insurance business lines. For most programs, there is no robust source of identification at all, and each program has a separate client number, making cross-checking between programs cumbersome and creating significant inconvenience for clients of the system. In addition, there continues to be an antiquated paper card for use by VSS clients for insured health services. The card provides no verifiable identity beyond visual checking against the police ID (and is reported to be used fraudulently by uninsured people who are lent cards), has to be replaced every year, and has no way of being read electronically to facilitate and verify transactions. The VSS Health Insurance Department estimates that 7-15 percent of insured transactions are improper but not able to be detected, due to either fraud on part of the users and/or health facilities improperly charging against cards. Furthermore, the annual costs of printing paper HI cards is over US$6 million equivalent, plus significant amounts of VSS staff time in December each year on the reissuance process.

11. An important element of VSS and MOLISA reforms which aims to improve efficiency, reliability and transparency of its operations is the planned issuance of an integrated social security card (ISSC). This would meet the commitment under the SI and HI Laws to move from paper-based client identification and transaction systems to an electronic social insurance card by 2020. The ISSC would incorporate a unique ID for use within the VSS and MOLISA systems which would be linked to the National ID once it is rolled out towards the end of the decade. A central database of the beneficiaries will be used to issue the IDs and will provide the basic demographic information for issuing the ISSC. The existing VSS household database (which contains household and individual information on around 75 million VSS clients – of which the approximately 30 million MOLISA clients are a sub-set - collected through a household survey in 2015-16 and validated against the HI program database) will be the primary source harmonized with the MOLISA database in order to map the ID into the MOLISA database to facilitate data sharing between MOLISA and VSS.

12. The expected functions of the ISSC would include: (i) identification and authentication of status at the point of service for insured people using VSS services, including health insurance services; (ii) facilitating payment of health insurance, pension and other SI short term benefits administered by VSS; and (iii) beneficiary identification and payment for social assistance programs administered by MOLISA. The ISSC is planned to be a medium-capacity (64KB) integrated circuit chip card and to contain information on personal demographics (e.g., name, date and place of birth, gender, ID number and link to household identifier), relevant information on status for VSS and MOLISA programs (e.g. poor, near-poor or other preferential groups), and fingerprints to allow for biometric authentication of the card user. Additional information such as blood group, most recent health transaction, and chronic diseases is also likely to be included. See Annex 3 for a detailed description of the ISSC design features and issues.

13. In introducing unique identification of VSS and MOLISA clients, an initiative which needs to be taken into account is Vietnam’s planned roll-out of a national ID system over coming years. This initiative has been considerably delayed relative to original plans, leading VSS and MOLISA to introduce a functional unique ID in the meantime. The VSS/MOLISA ID system would incorporate and ensure linkage between the functional ID and the future national ID

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5 Identification means that every eligible person has a unique VSS identifier number (VSS ID) that is associated with the basic information (e.g., first and last name, date of birth, etc) of that person. Authentication refers to the verification that a person holding a social security card is indeed the person described by the card. Authentication processes can be as simple as checking if the photograph on a card matches the person holding the card or more complex like scanning the cardholder's fingerprints and matching them with previously established fingerprints associated with the card/VSS ID using an advanced fingerprint matching method. See Digital Identity and Authentication, International Telecommunications Union, 2016.

6 This would make Vietnam similar to China, which has both a unique functional ID for social security programs and a national ID number, both in the process of being linked in social security information systems.
number as it is rolled-out. In preparation for the seeding of the unique functional ID in VSS and MOLISA systems, a data matching exercise is being undertaken to check on the extent of mismatches between VSS and MOLISA databases with respect to household and individual information. A second aspect of the coordination challenges relates to biometrics. VSS and MOLISA are committed to incorporating fingerprint information on the ISSC in order to strengthen security. At the same time, the Ministry of Public Security (MPS) is authorized to capture biometrics, and has already done so for a small portion of the population (to date, only around 3 million people, but the expansion of the biometric capture process has been stalled). Government is keen to avoid a mass fingerprint capture exercise, and associated deduplication process, being done twice for cost and logistical reasons, and MPS, VSS, MOLISA and others are in the process of deciding the most appropriate way to capture biometrics and incorporate them into ISSCs and both the master database of VSS/MOLISA and the national population database of MPS.

14. A broader e-government initiative of Go which is also relevant is the plan to link six national priority databases in order to improve sharing of citizen and enterprise data across agencies. The six national DBs are the national database on population under the Ministry of Public Security; the national land database under Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment; the national databases on business registration and population statistics under the Ministry of Planning and Investment; the national database on finance under the Ministry of Finance; and the national database on social insurance under VSS. This effort is coordinated by the Ministry of Information and Communications (MOIC). While not all the national databases are yet fully operational and/or populated (including the national ID database), the intention is ultimately to link the six national DBs through an Enterprise Service Bus (ESB) model. For such a system to be fully effective, having common identifiers for individuals (and firms) will be essential, and the matching of the VSS/MOLISA functional ID for individuals with the national ID number will be a key element of such linkage.

15. The current plan of VSS and MOLISA is that the ISSC rollout would be phased and a pilot province would be used to test the processes for identification and issuance of cards, as well as the readiness of VSS and MOLISA service points to operate the necessary card management systems. The pilot would be important in determining the accuracy of the central database of beneficiaries used to partly personalize the ISSCs centrally. Inaccuracies in the central database of beneficiaries will result in cards printed with erroneous information rendering the card unusable. If the wastage rate for the pilot is acceptable, no modification to the issuance process will be needed. If the wastage is significant, the issuance process will need to be adjusted. The indicative steps and timeline for the design, testing and roll-out of the ISSC are discussed in Annex 3.

16. VSS has already started implementation of its Modernization Program, though there remains a considerable way to go. After reviewing its administrative procedures (with World Bank support under an ongoing TA program), VSS has managed to reduce the number of business procedures by either simplification or consolidation. The number of required documents associated with these procedures was also reduced by 55 percent. VSS has also initiated efforts to explore automation of major business tasks. A major policy step in this regard is a new decree on use of e-transactions in VSS operations which is not with the PM’s office for final approval and is expected to come into force around March 2017. This would for the first time provide a solid legal foundation for various forms of e-transactions, both from external users such as firms paying social contributions and individual clients through web portals, and within VSS business systems by not requiring parallel paper versions of all documentation.

Relationship to CPF

The proposed operation would support several elements of the Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) for Vietnam 2012-

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7 See Prime Ministerial Decision No. 714 / QĐ-TTg, 2015.
2016 (Report No. 65200-VN). Under the Opportunity pillar of the CPS (Outcomes 3.1 and 3.2), there is specific reference to addressing “policy reform and institutional strengthening for social insurance” and “weaknesses in basic public service delivery and access”. On the policy side, the Bank has worked closely with the Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs (MoLISA) and VSS on social insurance and social assistance policy reforms in recent years, and the proposed operation would take forward the focus on social insurance and social assistance delivery systems and institutional strengthening. More efficient social security administration is consistent with the emphasis of the CPS Pillar 1 on strengthening competitiveness. The proposed operation would also support the cross-cutting CPS theme of enhancing governance in Vietnam, given the strong emphasis on VSS delivery systems strengthening and public expenditure management.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Note to Task Teams: The PDO has been pre-populated from the datasheet for the first time for your convenience. Please keep it up to date whenever it is changed in the datasheet.

The Program Development Objective (PDO) is to enhance the reliability and efficiency of client services of social insurance and social assistance agencies, as well as support synergies in data systems between the two agencies.

Key Results (From PCN)

17. The PDO level results indicators proposed are as follows:

- Number of VSS and MOLISA clients issued with Integrated Social Security Cards incorporating unique social security ID.
- Number/share of social insurance/social assistance payments made on basis of ISSC.

18. Intermediate results indicators are as follows:

- Officials and service providers trained in card transaction processing system
- Number of VSS/MOLISA service points operating card reading/writing equipment
- VSS/MOLISA unique IDs issued to clients.

D. Concept Description

Note to Task Teams: The following sections are system generated and can only be edited online in the Portal.

SAFEGUARDS

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

Project implementation will be at the national level and in selected project provinces (for rolling-out, TBD). Some
provinces may have a high share of ethnic minority people.

B. Borrower’s Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

VSS will be the implementing agency. However, VSS has not implemented any Bank-financed projects yet. Therefore, it is necessary to strengthen capacity for VSS through providing safeguard training to its staff responsible for project safeguard issues in the early stage of the project implementation.

C. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Giang Tam Nguyen, Khang Van Pham

D. Policies that might apply

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safeguard Policies</th>
<th>Triggered?</th>
<th>Explanation (Optional)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01 | Yes        | The project would have mostly positive impacts as the project enhances the efficiency of social security administration and improve quality of services for clients of VSS, as well as support synergies in social protection implementation between VSS and selected public agencies through the main activity of building an integrated Social Security Card (SSC) system under Component 2. Further, the project will provide advisory services and capacity strengthening to VSS to carry out administrative reform in order to simplify business processes through TA activities under Component 1; and supporting staff training and technical assistance to ensure that the SSC system operates seamlessly with the underlying business systems of VSS under Component 2. The project does not finance any civil works and involve disposal of IT equipment as the result of supporting infrastructure (hardware and data sharing software) to ensure their effective use (e.g., card reading machines at VSS offices, health facilities, and service providers such as VN Post). In addition, TA activities are to build capacity to VSS and support development of the institutional and legal framework for information sharing across databases and agencies. Thus, the project is envisaged to not create potential negative environmental impacts. This policy is triggered as the project will have social implications, especially involvement of ethnic minority groups. Therefore, SA will be conducted by VSS during project preparation to assess the potential adverse and positive impacts of the project and identification.
of measures necessary to avoid adverse impacts or if such measures are not feasible, the identification of measures to minimize, mitigate, or compensate for such impacts. SA will be completed and disclosed in country and the Bank’s InfoShop prior to appraisal.

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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04</strong></td>
<td><strong>No</strong></td>
<td>Given the nature of the activities, the project does not cause any negative impacts such as conversion or degradation of natural habitats.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Forests OP/BP 4.36</strong></td>
<td><strong>No</strong></td>
<td>Given the nature of activities, the project does not cause any negative impacts on forests.</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pest Management OP 4.09</strong></td>
<td><strong>No</strong></td>
<td>The project will neither finance procurement of any pesticides nor cause increase in use of pesticides as its result.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11</strong></td>
<td><strong>No</strong></td>
<td>The project does not involve any civil works so it will not involve significant excavations, demolition, and movement of earth, flooding or other environmental changes. Further, the project is not designed to support management of Physical Cultural Resources.</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10</strong></td>
<td><strong>Yes</strong></td>
<td>Generally, the project will bring positive benefits to beneficiaries of social insurance, health insurance and social assistance programs thanks to an integrated Social Security Card (SSC) System, which will promote more integrated, efficient and user friendly social protection service delivery. However, in some provinces, high rates of ethnic minority (EM) people are beneficiaries of subsidized health insurance and social assistance programs across the country. EM people generally have poorer education and live in more disadvantaged regions, and thus may not effectively access or benefit from the project’s intended benefits. Therefore, a social assessment (SA) will be conducted to understand any specific barriers that may preclude EM groups from benefiting from the project's integrated SSC system, and any adverse impacts or social risks that the project may cause to EM people. The SA will provide relevant recommendations on what works best to effectively facilitate the access of EM groups to the project’s benefits, especially regarding communication strategy, free, prior and informed consultation, alternative measures or tailored support. In addition, an Ethnic Minority Planning Framework (EMPF) will be prepared as a basis for the provinces with high rates of EM beneficiaries to produce Ethnic minority Development Plans (EMDPs) before project activities are</td>
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implemented in their provinces.

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12</th>
<th>No</th>
<th>This policy is not triggered as not land acquisition is envisaged due to the implementation of the project activities.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>The project does not include activities related to new construction of dams and/or rehabilitation of existing dams. In addition, the project activities do not rely on the performance of an existing dam or dam under construction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>The project does not involve the use or potential pollution of International Waterways.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>The project is not located in any disputed areas.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

E. Safeguard Preparation Plan

Tentative target date for preparing the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

Jan 27, 2017

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

All the project safeguard instruments prepared during project preparation including Social Assessment (SA) and Ethnic Minority Planning Framework (EMPF) will be completed and disclosed locally and at the InfoShop by appraisal.

CONTACT POINT

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APPROVAL

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