



Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary

Concept Stage

(ESRS Concept Stage)

Date Prepared/Updated: 01/12/2021 | Report No: ESRSC01802



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Region	Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any)
Tajikistan	EUROPE AND CENTRAL ASIA	P175952	
Project Name	Strengthening Post-COVID Response and Resilience of the Agriculture Sector in Tajikistan		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Agriculture and Food	Investment Project Financing	4/9/2021	6/30/2021
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)		
Ministry of Finance	Ministry of Agriculture		

Proposed Development Objective

The development objective of the proposed project is to enhance resilience of the agriculture sector and strengthen agro-logistics for high-value horticultural value chains in Tajikistan.

Financing (in USD Million)	Amount
Total Project Cost	50.00

B. Is the project being prepared in a Situation of Urgent Need of Assistance or Capacity Constraints, as per Bank IPF Policy, para. 12?

No

C. Summary Description of Proposed Project [including overview of Country, Sectoral & Institutional Contexts and Relationship to CPF]

Agriculture is the main stay of Tajikistan’s economy. It constitutes 20 percent of the country’s GDP and provides jobs for about 61 percent of the population. Yet, it has largely remained subsistence and underdeveloped characterized by low productivity and limited use of improved technologies. The food sector is small and fragmented, contributing to large food and farm input imports. The country imports about 75 percent of food consumed and over 50 percent of the value of agricultural inputs, including seeds, seedlings, animal breeds, fertilizers, and farm machinery. The COVID-19 pandemic amplified development challenges exposing the poor performance of the agricultural sector and the weak early warning, preparedness and response system of public institutions. The COVID-19 pandemic has also



disrupted migrant remittances and trade activities of the highly remittance dependent economy of Tajikistan thereby contributing to declining migrants' transfers and ultimately to contracted household consumption.

The proposed project will be centered around strengthening the resilience of Tajikistan's agriculture by financing public institutions to deliver more and better services to farmers and agribusinesses. It aims at increasing domestic food self-reliance, strengthening the foundation for increased production and export competitiveness of the growing horticulture sector, and improving MoA's and other relevant public institutions' early warning, preparedness and response capacity. The project also aims at enhancing public institutions' strategic engagement with private sector by supporting the development of a viable sector of private micro, small and medium enterprises (MSMEs) in rural areas and generate employment opportunities in regions with few legal alternatives. . The geography of the project activities will be nationwide. The project aims to achieve these by financing following components:

Component 1: Strengthening seeds and seedlings systems: The objective of this component is to support the development of a vibrant system for seed, seedling, and planting materials, which contributes to increased availability and use of new, improved and farmer-preferred seeds, seedlings and planting materials. The approach to be followed in supporting the development of vibrant seed/seedling sector by the proposed project is the Integrated Seed Sector Development approach. This approach will enable to address bottlenecks in the seed/seedling value chain across various seed systems, including formal and informal, private and public, etc. The activities for this component will be country wide, and this component will support:

- (i) strengthening policies, institutions and regulatory framework,
- (ii) improving technology generation (research and development in seeds, seedlings and planting materials),
- (iii) improving the production and multiplication of improved seeds, seedlings and planting materials,
- (iv) enhancing the processing, marketing and distribution of improved seeds, seedlings and planting materials,
- (v) establishing and/or strengthening seed and seedling quality control and assurance system, and
- (vi) the development of local seed banks in remote rural areas.

Component 2: Supporting investments in agro-logistics to enhance horticulture value chains: The objective of this component is to support investments in agri-logistical centers to enhance high-value horticulture value chains, so horticulture production becomes more competitive. The component will support investments for horticulture development initiated under ACP and REDP and derive lessons from similar investments in the neighboring Uzbekistan through investments in several agro-logistical centers, with options for public-private partnerships in their management and operation. These investments will generate climate co-benefits by promoting agricultural diversification towards horticulture, improving food distribution and food safety, reducing food loss and waste, and making construction climate proof and energy efficient. Location and design of these agro-logistical centers will be confirmed during preparation.

Component 3: Building capacity of public institutions on crises prevention and management: The objective of this component is to strengthen the crisis prevention and management capacity of selected public institutions. The COVID-19 outbreak caught many by surprise, exposing weaknesses of the current early warning and agri-food sector monitoring and response capacity of the government. They could not provide reliable estimates of available food/inputs stocks and accurate forecasts for future harvests, causing food hoarding and heightened food price volatility. With amplified climate change, crises such as COVID-19 pandemic will occur even more often. The proposed project will strengthen selected/key public institutions for enhanced capacity, resilience and better early warning and



response, plant protection and quarantine, and locust prevention/eradication, as well as sector planning, monitoring and evaluation through digitalization and capacity building. The support will include investments in digital and laboratory infrastructure of the MoA and other selected public agencies and institutions and capacity building for better early warning and agri-food sector monitoring as well as effective response.

Component 4: Project management and coordination: This component will support project management, coordination, M&E, and implementation of safeguards and fiduciary aspects of the project. The proposed project would utilize the capacity of the existing PIU for ACP at MoA, who are already well experienced with implementation of the World Bank projects.

D. Environmental and Social Overview

D.1. Detailed project location(s) and salient physical characteristics relevant to the E&S assessment [geographic, environmental, social]

Tajikistan is a landlocked country with a population of 9.3 million, of which 73 percent live in rural areas. It has mountains covering more than 90% of the territory (143,100 km²) rendering livelihoods and accessibility extremely difficult. Natural hazards such as floods, earthquakes, landslides, mud-flows, avalanches and heavy snowfalls are quite common resulting in significant economic losses and human casualties. The country consists of 4 administrative divisions, Sughd, Khatlon, Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous (GBO) Oblasts, and the Region of Republican Subordination (RRS) around the Capital, Dushanbe.

Agriculture accounts for 21 percent of GDP (2017) and absorbs half of the labor force. Arable land is in short supply, occupying 20 percent of agricultural land (980,000 ha). Land degradation is among the major risks for agriculture, affecting 97 percent of the country's farmland. Extreme weather events, exacerbated by a changing climate and limited adaptation capacities, pose a further threat. Crop production, especially staple crops and fodder production, fluctuates by year, depending on weather conditions. Women are more vulnerable to the impacts of natural disasters than men due to their limited access to resources, including productive inputs and land.

Agriculture is mostly private, owing to the 1998 land reform. 67 percent of arable land is family farming, followed by 21 percent farm enterprises, and the remaining 12 percent collective farms. More than half of the crops are produced by small farms that average 3.7 ha. Over 178,000 farms compete as individuals in a free market where stakeholders have limited funding, capacity, and capability to meet the market demand for quality seed and planting material, technologies, extension services, and research and development. Farmer's share in the consumer price depends on the Agricultural Value Chains which remain weak, fragmented, and disjointed impeding agricultural expansion.

Only about 20 percent of agricultural products are currently processed. Food industry is characterized by a few large enterprises that provide a small volume of produce for domestic consumption, and a number of small-scale producers. The small-scale enterprises are mostly informal and have little access to financing, marketing, and logistics.

Prior to the COVID-19 Pandemic, 40 percent of households had at least one family member working abroad. Remittances are a major contributor to the national economy, accounting for 37 percent of GDP. The reliance on remittances, along with the dependence on staple food imports (61 percent in 2016) makes Tajikistan vulnerable to external economic shocks. Wheat is the largest food import with half of the requirement is imported. With COVID-19,



remittances have reduced drastically making and economic access to food a major challenge. 53 percent of household expenditures go for food with that rate being higher for the poor.

The project responds to the economic impact of COVID-19 aiming to help ensure food and nutrition security, build resilient livelihoods and institutions, and create jobs. The project will develop a system for seed, seedling, and planting material production through improving policies and technologies for multiplication, processing, marketing, distribution, quality control and assurance systems, and developing local seed banks and agri-logistical centers in rural areas. The project will also invest in public institutions’ early warning and crisis response, plant protection and quarantine, and locust prevention/eradication, as well as sector planning, monitoring and evaluation systems through digitalization and capacity building activities. The proposed project builds on and complements two ongoing projects, the Agriculture Commercialization Project and Rural Economic Development Project.

The project activities will be implemented country wide. Specific sites will be determined during project preparation and implementation.

D. 2. Borrower’s Institutional Capacity

The implementing agency for the proposed project will be the Ministry of Agriculture (MoA). It will be managed by the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) established under the ongoing World Bank-funded Agriculture Commercialization Project (ACP). In the current project the MoA’s safeguards performance tends to be satisfactory. The PIU employs two safeguards consultants in Dushanbe who have the necessary experience and knowledge on WB safeguards policies and national environmental and social assessment frameworks. Furthermore, the PIU has to recruit them as full-time specialists, if not possible, to recruit additional environmental and social risk management consultants to ensure compliance under the new project to be implemented under the new ESF. Since the MoA has limited experience and knowledge on addressing requirements related to new ESSs, in particular on labor and working conditions and labor safety issues, community health and safety, and biodiversity conservation, the ESF capacity building activities will be included into the ESCP.

Public Disclosure

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

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Substantial

Environmental Risk Rating

Substantial

The Environment Risk Rating is Substantial at this time. While the planned activities involve well-defined pest management or moderate to small scale construction, the overall project objective of intensifying agricultural and particularly horticultural production leaves open the possibility of the need for larger scale pest management needs and pesticide use. Both Components 1 and 2 involve the potential for pesticide use in different sub-projects that are, individually, expected to be well defined and mitigable with properly prepared and implemented pest management plans. During project preparation the client will be expected to also examine the larger pest management needs associated with the planned agricultural expansion. There are potential works under all three Components that are limited primarily to the rehabilitation of existing facilities and installation of new systems – though, in a few cases, the construction of moderate sized buildings could be required. Works related risks are likely to occur during the construction phase (occupational health and safety hazards, generation of solid waste, air pollution and noise,



disruption of traffic, etc.) and are easily managed and mitigated. The Ministry of Agriculture PIU has experience delivering Bank projects and will be fully engaged in project preparation.

The Project financed activities will be screened, based on the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) to be prepared for the project prior to project appraisal. The ESMF will outline the guiding principles of environmental screening, assessment, review, management, and monitoring procedures for all envisaged activities. The ESMF will contain a detailed chapter on pest management including an assessment of current pest management practice in Tajikistan; recommended actions by the project to help address short-comings (if any) identified in that assessment; lists of pesticides banned by national law or prohibited by the ESF and ESSs; and guidance on the criteria for and preparation of site specific Pest Management Plans (PMPs) . The ESMF will also apply the integrated risk management approach to support the relevant public institutions and agro-logistics centers to develop adequate risk management strategies to prevent risks and reduce horticulture value chain vulnerability as a whole. It will also provide a check-list for determining if and when site-specific Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA)/Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMP) or PMPs might be required for proposed activities. When required, those ESIA/ESMPs and PMPs will be prepared, consulted on, and disclosed - they will also be reviewed by the Bank during regular implementation support missions.

Social Risk Rating

Substantial

The social risk is rated as Substantial at this stage, as the nature and scale of investments, as well as the project locations and the interventions are not finalized yet. Hence it is very difficult to predict fully the impacts and the risks thereof. The social risk rating will be revisited during the project preparation.

Social Risk could emanate in respect of all the three planned investments. : (i) develop a vibrant system for seed system; (ii) establish high-value horticulture value chains; and (iii) strengthen the public institutions on crisis prevention and management.

Establishing a ‘seed’ system warrants not only development of appropriate farmer friendly technologies (which includes knowledge, skills and management practices) but also disseminate them country wide. Technology development and dissemination needs to be effective and inclusive, reaching out to the nook and corners of the country as well as different sub sections of the farming community including marginal/ small farmer households, women and other vulnerable sections. So one of the key challenges for the project will be to ensure ‘inclusion’. However, exclusion may happen due to differentials in: (i) geography – given the vast expanse of the farming community and that some of the terrain is mountainous and remote, on the Afghanistan border, it is likely that some areas may not be covered by the project; (ii) scale of farming – large and richer elite farmers may receive preferential treatment; (iii) absorption capacity - technologies developed may be more friendly to large farmers; and (iv) administrative expediency and economy in reaching out to the ‘elites’ vis-à-vis huge social intermediation efforts required to reach out to small and marginal farmers across the country. The risk of exclusion can be addressed to a large extent through a well-crafted Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) supplemented with community mobilization plan and an effective IEC campaign.

Increased exposure of farmers and their families to dangerous agrochemicals could be a significant risk. Farmers’ exposure mainly occurs during the preparation and application of the pesticide spray solutions. Other manual labor working in nearby areas treated with pesticides, may also face exposures. The site-specific Pest Management Plans to be prepared during the project implementation will address these issues.



The second and third components involve civil constructions, some anew and others repairs and rehabilitation. The new construction will invariably require 'lands'. While the project is expecting that the Government will make available lands, due diligence is required to ensure that there are no resultant physical, and/ or economic displacements. Risks related to this will need to be avoided or reduced or if involuntary acquisition is inevitable, then, it will have to be addressed. The RPF will provide the next steps on preparing and implementing site specific resettlement plans.

The SEA/SH risk is assessed as moderate based on our past experience of working on a variety of projects in different sectors. The project activities will be exclusively in the rural areas and labour influx is not expected. Earlier assessments do show that sexual harassment in the workplaces in Tajikistan is moderate, while domestic violence is rated substantial. Other risks such as forced labor and child labor are also low.

B. Environment and Social Standards (ESSs) that Apply to the Activities Being Considered

B.1. General Assessment

ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Overview of the relevance of the Standard for the Project:

The project recognizes the following standards as relevant: ESS 1, ESS 2, ESS 3, ESS 4, ESS 5, ESS 6, and ESS 10.

The project will have mostly positive benefits as the interventions will address bottlenecks in the seed/seedling value chain encompassing the public and private sectors and help improve enabling (policy, institutions and regulatory) environment for the seed/seedling sector. The positive social impacts are as follows: a) increased access to better seeds and seedlings will improve productivity, and as such will increase income-generation; b) agri-logistics centers will increase export of horticulture products, which will create employment opportunities in rural areas; and c) enhanced early warning and crop forecasting systems will strengthen the institutional capacities for better agrobusiness planning and practices.

The environmental and social impacts of the project are expected to be largely positive as it will support improved agricultural production and capacity to identify effective agricultural, land, and water management practices. However, potential environmental risks occur in two areas: 1) those related use of pesticides both for individual activities like seed production or vector control in agri-logistic center and more largely associated with the national expansion of agricultural and horticultural production; and 2) those associated with site specific construction activities such as dust, noise, waste management, and electronic or hazardous waste disposals. While temporary and local, environmental risks may include soil loss related to planting activities; temporary, construction related, air or water pollution, or mishandling of pesticides. Such risks are expected to be reversible, short-term, and easily mitigable.

The project's key social risks and impacts related to: a) exclusion as diverse range of small and medium farms and individual farmers as well as other vulnerable sections may get excluded by the project activities/results/benefits due to remote locations, lack of proper knowledge and skills to access and use improved technologies, non-affordable seed products and services; b) small scale involuntary resettlement impacts related to construction of a few buildings; and c) increased exposure to dangerous agrochemicals. No significant risks related to labor influx and



community safety are expected under the project, as most project workers (for the civil works) will be recruited locally. The SEA/SH risk is assessed as moderate mostly due to the status of national Gender-Based Violence (GBV) legislation, gender norms, and the rural location of most project activities.

Social risk screening procedures and mitigation actions will be part of the ESMF and RPF, which will provide the next steps on preparing and implementing site specific plans. The project will provide access to information and communications technology, business development services and other opportunities for farmers, especially vulnerable farmer groups to increase their participation. A Stakeholder Engagement Plan will be developed to outline the activities, budget and responsibilities (local and project-level) for continuous information-sharing and engagement and processing of feedback from project-affected and other interested parties, including rural population in the target areas.

The project is taking a framework approach because the sub-projects to be financed cover a diverse range of construction and rehabilitation activities, most of which will not be identified until after implementation begins. The following instruments will need to be prepared: (i) Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF); (ii) Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF); (iii) Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP); and (v) Labor Management Procedures (LMP).

The ESMF will be based on the relevant ESSs, the World Bank Group's Environmental Health and Safety Guidelines, and applicable national legislation. It will include:

- (a) A detailed chapter on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) with an assessment of current pest management practice in Tajikistan; recommended actions by the project to help address short-comings (if any) identified in that assessment; lists of pesticides banned by national law or prohibited by the ESF and ESSs; and guidance on the criteria for and preparation of site specific PMPs.
- (b) Generic guidelines and procedures to avoid, mitigate, or minimize adverse environmental and social impacts of the potential activities.
- (c) A description of implementing arrangements including details on how environment and social risks, will be managed.
- (d) The criteria for determining acceptable environmental and social risks and pest management procedures for the proposed sub-projects.
- (e) Descriptions of the environmental and social screening or pest management screening processes that will help to define the required site-specific ESF instruments.
- (f) Checklists for preparing site-specific PMPs and Environmental and Social Impact Assessments/Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESIAs/ESMPs).
- (g) ESMP checklists for the small- and medium scale construction and rehabilitation for seed laboratories, local seed banks and agri-logistics centers envisaged by the project.
- (h) Environmental and social monitoring and reporting requirements.
- (i) A section on proposed capacity building activities to help the implementing agencies comply with the ESF.
- (j) Supply chain risk management requirements.

Reference materials include:



1. "Tajikistan: Country Economic Update, Fall 2019." World Bank, Washington, DC
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tajikistan/publication/economic-update-fall-2019>
2. World Bank Group Country Partnership Framework, 2019-2023
<https://www.worldbank.org/en/country/tajikistan/publication/cpf-2019-2023>
3. 'Policy Note on Supporting Agriculture Value Chain', World Bank, 2018
4. Tajikistan National Investment Plan for the Agriculture Sector: Assessment of the Seed and Associated Systems of Tajikistan, October 2020
5. Food security and nutrition challenges in Tajikistan: Opportunities for a systems approach, Mariko Kawabata, Andrea Berardo, Paolo Mattei, Saskia de Pee, United Nations World Food Programme, Tajikistan, Article in Food Policy Journal, October 2020
6. Tajikistan: Country Situation Assessment, The Regional Environment Center for Central Asia, August 2015
7. Technical Note: Public Consultations and Stakeholder Engagement in WB-supported operations when there are constraints on conducting public meetings, March 2020

Areas where “Use of Borrower Framework” is being considered:

Given the newness of the ESF for the MoA PIU, which is implementing the project, the borrower's framework will not be used for the Project as a whole or for any of its parts.

ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

Individuals and groups likely to directly benefit are expected to be identified during project preparation and then further defined once specific project activities are agreed upon. At this stage the following primary project beneficiaries are identified: farmers (e.g., commercial farms, dekhan farms, and household plot owners) and farmers’ organizations/cooperatives and agri-business enterprises. Other interested parties include local authorities (khukumats, mahalla committees, local farmer council representatives) and central and regional level authorities, including Ministry of Agriculture, the State Plant Quarantine Inspection, and other relevant state agencies; agricultural research institutes, as well as agri-business associations and other civil society actors. The mapping of these actors will be presented in the project Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), which will outline the activities and timeframe for engaging with different stakeholder groups throughout the project life, define roles and responsibilities, human resources and budget needed for implementing SEP activities. Key objectives of the SEP are to maintain a constructive relationship with stakeholders, ensure that stakeholder views can be taken into account in project design and implementation, specifically in the management of environmental and social performance, provide means for inclusive engagement with all project affected parties, and ensure that appropriate project information is disclosed to stakeholders in a timely, understandable, accessible, and appropriate manner and format.

Disadvantaged and vulnerable groups under the project are likely to include farmers in remote areas and women groups, especially women engaged in seasonal agricultural work, female-headed households and women farmers who by virtue of constraining social norms and social networks may find it harder to obtain information about the project benefits. SEP will envision measures to ensure that disadvantaged and vulnerable groups have equal opportunity to obtain information and benefit from project activities, as well as have channels for grievance and redress if negatively affected. Such activities will include tailored awareness and information campaigns including targeting women and mahalla-level meetings which community members of all backgrounds and remote areas can



join, distributing information materials through multiple channels such as media, social media, and mahalla leaders, emphasizing the rules and principles of equity and non-discrimination for example in relation to employment opportunities in all training and consultation activities.

The SEP will be prepared, consulted upon and disclosed before the project Appraisal.

The SEP will also describe the project-specific Grievance Mechanism (GM) which will accept, review, and seek to resolve any project related concerns or feedback, and be easily accessible to project-affected parties and local communities, among other stakeholders. GM will have a special window to address SEA/SH complaints such as to ensure privacy and dignity of the affected persons.

B.2. Specific Risks and Impacts

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

ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions

The Project could encompass the following categories of workers: direct and contracted workers. Direct workers will be those deployed as ‘technical consultants’ and ‘project specialists’ by the PIU. They will be governed by mutually agreed contracts. Contracted workers will be employed as deemed appropriate by contractors, sub-contractors, and other intermediaries, details of which will be known as and when activities' implementation begins. No primary supplier workers or community workers are anticipated.

The project proposes some small/ medium scale infrastructure for the construction or rehabilitation of genetics banks, seed laboratories and agri-logistics centers; therefore, the majority of contractors are expected to be from the local vicinity. The expectation is that the majority of labor will be locally hired with the exception of a few skilled workers. The risk of child labor/forced labor is considered to be limited, as based on the national legislation the contractors have to comply with the minimum age of employment and mutually agreed written contracts. However, according to the Tajik Labour Code, the persons between 14 and 16 years old may also be employed with reduced working hours, for employment that is not considered heavy or hazardous, and with parental permission and outside the school hours. For civil works no child labour is allowed; for agricultural works farmers might engage their 14 above children at home plots outside the school hours, however the agricultural workers are not considered the project workers as per ESS2 definition. The SEA/SH risk is assessed as moderate mostly due to the status of national Gender-Based Violence (GBV) legislation, gender norms, and the rural location of most project activities.

The client will prepare Labor Management Procedures (LMP), which outlines the type of project workers, labour conditions and associated labour risks, as well as mitigation measures. Provisions will be also made to train and hire as many as possible workers from local communities where the activities are taking place. The ESMF will include Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) aspects, including specific instruments that will need to be prepared either by the client or the contractors prior to commencement of works (OHS checklists, codes of conduct; safety training etc.). Civil works contracts will incorporate social and environmental mitigation measures based on the WBG EHS Guidelines and the ESMF; other referenced plans e.g. Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), RPF etc. as well as specific language referencing the prioritization of the hiring of unskilled local labor.



All contractors will be required to comply with LMP. All civil works contracts will include standard Codes of Conduct that include measures to prevent SEA/SH. A locally based Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) specifically for direct and contracted workers will also be provided.

ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

As the project aims to expand and intensify horticultural production, there is a risk of increased pesticide use among farmers and facility managers who may not be adequately trained or equipped for safe pesticide management and use.

The ESMF will include a detailed chapter on Integrated Pest Management (IPM) with an assessment of current pest management practice in Tajikistan; recommended actions, including capacity building, to help address short-comings (if any) identified in that assessment; lists of pesticides banned by national law or prohibited by the ESF and ESSs; and guidance on the criteria for and preparation of site specific PMPs.

The ESMF will also include sections on resource efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management, particularly dealing with pesticide use, and the handling and disposal of construction waste.

Assessment of risks and impacts and proposed mitigation measures related to relevant requirements of ESS 3, including integrated pest management; water use; soil and air pollution; and hazardous materials management; and procedures for handling and disposing of material and hazardous waste will be included within scope of site specific PMPs and ESIA/ESMPs as relevant.

ESS4 Community Health and Safety

In order to address risks and impacts that might affect community health and safety the ESMF will include an assessment of work related health risks; works and road safety; excessive noise and dust levels, site safety awareness and access restrictions; and labor influx, and SEA/SH. All these issues will be screened and addressed in site specific ESMPs to be prepared once the investments are identified. The ESMF requires that fencing should be installed around all construction sites and areas where there is a risk to community health and safety. Furthermore, the ESMF requires that site specific ESMPs specify the necessary measures for ensuring efficient waste management, compliance with good labor management practices, disclosing information and maintaining effective communication with local communities throughout the duration of works. The ESMF will also highlight the need for training and also include specific guidelines and requirements and provisions in this regard for PIU staff, local authorities, and project beneficiaries (farmers, enterprises, or cooperatives).

Increased exposure of farmers and their families to dangerous agrochemicals could also be considered as a significant community health and safety risk. Farmers' exposure mainly occurs during the preparation and application of the pesticide spray solutions and during the cleaning-up of spraying equipment. Farmers or their family members who perform manual labor in areas treated with pesticides can also face major exposure from direct spray, drift from neighboring fields, or by contact with pesticide residues on the crop or soil. This kind of exposure is often



underestimated. The site-specific Pest Management Plans to be prepared during the project implementation will address these issues.

ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

The new construction will invariably require ‘lands’, but it will be limited to 2-3 facilities. While the project is expecting that the Government will make available lands, due diligence is required to ensure that there are no resultant physical; and/ or economic displacements. The Client will prepare a Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) to guide activities in this regard. The RPF will define the procedures for: (i) acquiring land (after all technical alternatives have been exhausted), (ii) dealing with any residual impacts from land acquisition (i.e. identifying, establishing the valuation of, and compensating people that suffer economic losses or loss of private property), (iii) monitoring and verification that policies and procedures are followed, and (iv) grievance redress mechanisms. Where resettlement-related impacts have been identified, site-specific RAPs will be prepared by the MoA/PIU in accordance with the RPF.

ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

ESS 6 is relevant due to Project's focus on strengthening seed management and production and increasing horticultural production, which could also increase the use of pesticides. As ESMF will include a detailed chapter on pest management with an assessment of current practices and recommendations for improvement. The ESMF will address relevant issues based on ESS 6 in the chapter on pest management, sub-project screening, and the preparation of site specific PMPs and ESIA/ESMPs. As Project design progresses, the team will review potential identified activities against ESS 6 and include additional mitigation measures, if needed.

ESS7 Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities

This Standard is not relevant, as there are no Indigenous Peoples in Tajikistan.

ESS8 Cultural Heritage

ESS 8 is assessed as Not Relevant to the project. As a precautionary measure, chance find procedures will be included in the ESMF and will be part of mitigation measures to be provided in site-specific ESMPs.

ESS9 Financial Intermediaries

This standard is not currently relevant as no financial intermediaries are party to the project implementation modality.

C. Legal Operational Policies that Apply

OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways

No

Public Disclosure



OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas

No

III. WORLD BANK ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL DUE DILIGENCE

A. Is a common approach being considered?

No

Financing Partners

None identified at this stage.

B. Proposed Measures, Actions and Timing (Borrower’s commitments)

Actions to be completed prior to Bank Board Approval:

Prior to Appraisal, the Client will prepare, to a level acceptable to the World Bank, consult on, and disclose the following documents:

1. Environment and Social Management Framework (ESMF), including an assessment of current pest management practices;
2. Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF);
3. Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and start implementing as early as possible during the preparation; and
4. Labor Management Procedures (LMP).

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

1. Environment and social screening of project activities based on the ESMF, including need to prepare site specific PMPs and ESIA/ESMPs;
2. Application of the RPF to project activities, including the need to prepare site specific RAPs;
3. Application of the ESMF/EHS provisions to project activities, including the possible need to develop contractor instruments for some of the sub-activities;
4. Application of the LMP to project activities, including the possible need to develop LMPs or similar instruments for some of the sub-activities;
5. Ensure that qualified environment and social specialists or consultants are employed to support the Project Implementation Unit throughout implementation;
6. Continued stakeholder engagement throughout project implementation and beyond project closure;
7. Necessary capacity building in areas related to the relevant ESSs; and
8. Regular review and updating, as necessary, of the ESCP.

C. Timing

Tentative target date for preparing the Appraisal Stage ESRS

01-Apr-2021

IV. CONTACT POINTS

Public Disclosure



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Borrower/Client/Recipient

Borrower: Ministry of Finance

Implementing Agency(ies)

Implementing Agency: Ministry of Agriculture

V. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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VI. APPROVAL

Task Team Leader(s): Aira Maria Htenas, Teklu Tesfaye Toli

Safeguards Advisor ESSA Agnes I. Kiss (SAESSA) Cleared on 18-Jan-2021 at 20:52:43 GMT-05:00