

## Executive Summary

The Project responds to the food security and reduced income challenges posed by the COVID-19 crisis by: (i) increasing local food production with an initial emphasis on wheat, key staple crop for the country; and (ii) creating COVID-era short-term employment to rehabilitate productive irrigation infrastructure and support sustainable watershed development for longer term water availability for food production and resilience.

Afghanistan is highly vulnerable to COVID due to the large number of poor and vulnerable households who subsist on daily earnings, limited and constrained access to water and sanitation, and weaknesses in basic health systems, as well as ongoing violent conflict. An estimated 10.3 million (34% of the population) people were estimated to be in acute food insecurity and United Nations has included Afghanistan in a list of countries at risk of famine. The pandemic and related containment measures, including border closures and the recent lockdown of major cities, has led to: (i) massive disruptions to productive economic activity and consumption; (ii) disruptions to imports, including of vital household items, leading to rapid inflation; (iii) reduced exports due to disruptions at border points; (iv) negative impacts on remittances; and (v) increased fiscal pressures, with government revenues expected to decline by at least 30 percent below budgeted levels. Due to the impacts of COVID-19, GDP is expected to contract by at least 5.5 percent in 2020.

## Proposed Project Development Objective

In response to COVID-19 emergency, the proposed project development objective is to support critical food supply chains and create short-term economic opportunities.

## Project Description

The project will take a value chain approach to strengthen agriculture sector in the country by enhancing productivity and strengthening of backward and forward linkages. In order to expedite efficient implementation of project it will strengthen and use existing institutions of the Government of Afghanistan particularly the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL). The proposed project has the following components and sub-components:

**Table 1: Components and sub-components of the project**

Component	USD Million	Implementing Institutions	Response to COVID-19 crisis
<b>A</b>	<b>Productive agricultural water systems (US\$65.7 million)</b>		
A.1	38.6	CDCs and Irrigation Associations / Mirabs	Augment availability of water, improve agriculture productivity and employment generation
A.2	27.1	General Directorate of Natural Resources Management: CDCs and	

			NRM groups (WVG, Forest Association)	
<b>B</b>	<b>Critical food supply chain management (US\$26.4 million)</b>			
B.1	Seed Production, supply and emergency distribution	16.4	Afghanistan National Seed Companies Union (ANSCU) and ISE	Ensure timely and adequate availability of certified seed and other critical inputs
B.2	Support for food processing and distribution	10.0	NPMU/ RPMUs	enhance food supply response and help maintain affordable food prices.
<b>C</b>	<b>Project Management (US\$7.9 million)</b>			
D.1	Project Management Units	7.9	National and Regional Project Management Units	Adoption of best management practices
D.2	Monitoring, evaluation, learning and reporting			Monitoring and reporting of project indicators
D.3	ESMF including GRM			E&S Impact and Risk Management
D.4	Project Management Consultancies			Support to PMUs
D.5	Support to other directorates			Project facilitation
<b>D</b>	<b>Contingent Emergency Response (US\$0 million)</b>			
	<b>Total</b>	<b>100</b>		

### Potential Impacts

from the four components, only one component A (A1 and A2) is likely to have some negative impact of sub-projects, it will be minor, localized, temporary, and can be mitigated through good construction practices with close supervision and monitoring. The interventions of EATS Project such as, rehabilitation of the irrigation channel, watershed construction of protection gabion wall will have some social risks and impacts which is expected to be less severe and mostly temporary, predictable and reversible.

### Objectives of the Resettlement Framework

The objective of this RF is to outline the principles of resettlement and compensation thereof as and when the project reaches that stage. This will not only ensure consistency in resettlement planning but also develop the capacities of the implementing and supervising agencies gradually and simultaneously. The lessons learnt during the course of implementation can easily be integrated in improving the various issues related to resettlement planning and its monitoring. The resettlement framework prepared to be consistent with the following policies:

- Existing national laws and policies related to land acquisition and compensation and;
- The World Bank's Environmental and Social Standard 5 which deals with Land Acquisition, restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement
- The provisions of this RF would be applied for all project activities and studies.

The purpose of this RF is to ensure that all people affected by the proposed project can maintain or improve their pre-project living standards. The RF will apply if proposed irrigation canal rehabilitation and watershed in Component A (1 and 2) directly and negatively affect people as a result of LAR. Screening will help decision-makers determine measures for avoiding, minimizing or mitigating LAR impacts. In line with requirements in ESS 1 and ESS5, the project will adopt a mitigation hierarchy as follow:

- a) Adjust engineering designs to anticipate and avoid land acquisition impacts;
- b) Where avoidance is not possible, minimize or reduce land acquisition impacts;
- c) Inform stakeholders of their right to compensation
- d) Where land acquisition impacts remain, compensate affected people in line with this RF before civil works take place, with compensation entitlement, appropriate disclosure of information and available grievance mechanism as described in this document (Section 3.5.7), or where voluntary donations will apply to, ensure adequate consultations to be take place and the process to be properly conducted and recorded as guided by this RF.

### Legal and Policy Framework for Resettlement

The fundamental principles of policy, which inform the Bank's position on resettlement and land acquisition and which will be followed under this RF for EATS Project are:

- involuntary resettlement should be avoided where feasible or minimized by exploring other viable alternatives;
- Where it is not feasible to avoid resettlement, resettlement activities should be conceived and executed as sustainable development program, providing sufficient investment resources to enable the persons displaced by the project to share in project benefits;
- Displaced persons should be assisted in their efforts to improve their livelihoods and standards of living or at least restore to the extent of pre-displacement levels;
- Displaced persons may be classified and include:
  - a. Those with formal legal rights to land, including customary and traditional rights recognized under the law of the country;
  - b. Those who do not have formal legal rights to land at the time the survey begins but have a claim to such land or assets, provided that such claims are recognized under the law or become recognized through a process identified in the resettlement plan; and
  - c. Those who have no recognizable legal right or claim to the land they are occupying.
- Compensation for losses will be delivered at replacement costs and compensation payments must be received prior to taking possession of the required land or other assets.

The objectives of the World Bank's Environment and Social Standard can be clearly achieved by following the principles described therein however, this RF provides for a more detailed Framework which not only justifies the WB Environment and Social Standards objectives but also the inherent spirit of it which entails a sensitive, transparent and inclusive process of acquisition, displacement and resettlement.

### Eligibility for Compensation

General eligibility is defined as, "people who stand to lose land, houses, structures, trees, crops, businesses, income and other assets as a consequence of the project as of the formally recognized cut-off date will be considered as project affected persons (APs)". For purposes of this RF, the concepts of 'general eligibility' for compensation and who is an AP will be extended to include a group of people losing social and community facilities such as a cemetery and masjid.

Although it is unlikely that many APs will be entitled to compensation or rehabilitation on the grounds that they are losing a substantial amount of land and/or assets under the project, it is as well to set out the full picture on who APs are and what they are entitled to under a project:

- i. All APs losing land with or without title, formal land-use rights or traditional land use rights;
- ii. Owners of buildings, crops, plants, or other objects attached to the land; and
- iii. APs losing business, income, and salaries.

Compensation eligibility will be limited by the cut-off date. MAIL will inform local communities regarding this cut-off date through their regional offices and through the relevant local government agencies. Those that settle after the cut-off date however will be given sufficient advance notice to vacate premises/dismantle affected structures prior to project implementation. Their dismantled structures will not be confiscated and they will not pay fines or sanctions.

### Institutional Arrangements

The resettlement and rehabilitation program described in this RF involves distinct processes, dynamics and different agencies. This section deals with the roles and responsibilities of different institutions for the successful implementation of the project. The primary institutions that are involved in the land acquisition and resettlement process are the following;

1. Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL)
2. Environmental and Social Unit (ESSU)
3. Project Implementation Unit (PMU)
4. Implementing Non-Governmental Organization (NGO)
5. DAIL offices
6. Local Government Units (LGUs)

The agencies involved in the planning and implementation of a resettlement and rehabilitation program are MAIL as the Executing Agency (EA) and the Provincial and District governments

together with the appointed NGO referred to above. The MAIL will be active in the project through the Project Management Unit. In the field, it will act and implement through the regional MAIL offices, especially regional safeguard staff, supported by the national safeguards staff within the PMU, who will coordinate all activities related to resettlement implementation. All activities will be coordinated with the relevant local government agencies and community *shuras/CDCs*.