



Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 10-Apr-2024 | Report No: PIDA37448



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country South Sudan	Project ID P181549	Project Name Productive Safety Net for Socioeconomic Opportunities Project Additional Financing	Parent Project ID (if any) P177663
Parent Project Name South Sudan Productive Safety Net for Socioeconomic Opportunities Project	Region EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA	Estimated Appraisal Date 15-Apr-2024	Estimated Board Date 30-May-2024
Practice Area (Lead) Social Protection & Jobs	Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Republic of South Sudan	Implementing Agency Ministry of Gender, Child and Social Welfare, Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security

Proposed Development Objective(s) Parent

To provide cash transfers and access to income generating opportunities and strengthen the National Safety Net Delivery System.

Components

Cash Transfer and Complementary Social Measures
 Provision of Economic Opportunities
 Strengthened Institutional Capacity and Social Protection System
 Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Knowledge Generation

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)

SUMMARY

Total Project Cost	55.00
Total Financing	55.00
of which IBRD/IDA	55.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS



World Bank Group Financing

International Development Association (IDA)	55.00
IDA Grant	55.00

Environmental and Social Risk Classification

Substantial

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

- 1. More than a decade after independence, South Sudan’s growth prospects remain constrained by a fragile peace agreement and significant vulnerability to various shocks.** Income per capita has fallen to one-third of levels at independence due to multiple challenges: conflict, weak governance, poor infrastructure, and low human development, compounded by climate shocks.
- 2. South Sudan has remained fragile despite the formal end of the conflict in September 2018 with the signing of the Revitalized Agreement on the Resolution of the Conflict in the Republic of South Sudan.** The country faces several development challenges including widespread levels of poverty and elevated violence in several areas, weakened institutions, untapped human capital, poor service delivery, and a non-diversified economy. While several encouraging reforms have been undertaken as part of the peace process to support longer-term stability and development outcomes, prospects for consolidated peace and stability remain uncertain. The lingering impact of the prolonged conflict, which resulted in a major economic crisis, is critically affecting livelihoods, constraining food availability and access to basic services for large segments of the population. Living conditions deteriorated after the 2016 conflict and have not yet recovered. During 2016–2022, average household consumption in South Sudan declined by 15 percent and poverty increased by 6.7 percentage points.¹ An estimated 2 million people remain internally displaced and 2.2 million South Sudanese refugees are still residing in neighboring countries.
- 3. South Sudan’s vulnerability to climate change and natural disasters compounds the country’s humanitarian situation, jeopardizes post-civil war recovery, and undermines development efforts.** Since its independence in 2011, the country has suffered severe droughts (2011, 2015) and floods (2014, 2017, 2019, 2020, 2021, and 2022), resulting in high numbers of casualties, displacements, and loss of livestock—severely affecting people’s livelihoods.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

¹ 2022 Household Budget Survey and Wave 3 of the 2016 High Frequency Survey, as quoted in the October 2023 World Bank Systematic Country Diagnostic Update.



4. **Coverage of social protection in the country remains extremely low.** The SNSOP currently supports the Government in developing its national social safety net system. Despite intensive coordination efforts by the World Bank across the humanitarian development nexus, it is the only financing source of a government-led safety net program covering 96,000 households, of which 7,000 are expected to be refugees, in 15 out of 79 counties of the country. While coverage significantly increased from the previous World Bank-financed safety net operations,² the scale of the social safety net program is not sufficient to respond to the growing needs of poor and vulnerable households in the country, particularly as it is experiencing large inflows of refugees and returnees.

5. **Since gaining eligibility to the Windows for Host Communities and Refugees (WHR) under IDA19, the Government of South Sudan (GoSS) has made important progress in fostering longer-term benefits for refugee and host communities.** With one of the most progressive refugee policy frameworks in East Africa and perhaps globally, South Sudan’s primary challenge in promoting durable solutions centers less on fostering further policy reforms—even as that remains important—and more on implementing policies that have already been set, which, among others, grant refugees the right to work, movement, and access to public services provided through national systems.

C. Proposed Development Objective

Original PDO

To provide cash transfers and access to income generating opportunities and strengthen the National Safety Net Delivery System.

Current PDO

The PDO remains the same as the original PDO.

Key Results

The progress toward achievement of the PDO will be measured by the following outcome indicators:

- a) Access to income opportunities to poor and vulnerable HHs
 - Beneficiaries of social safety net programs (core indicator, number)
 - Of which female
 - Of which refugees (households)
 - Of which host communities (households)
 - Beneficiary and non-beneficiary households reporting satisfaction with community assets created through Labor-Intensive Public Works (LIPW) (percentage)
- b) Provide income generating opportunities to poor and vulnerable households to poor and vulnerable households
 - Beneficiary households receiving economic opportunities (number)
 - Eligible beneficiary households with functional income-generating investments four months after the receipt of the full economic opportunities package (percentage)
- c) Strengthen the national safety net delivery system
 - Project Coordination unit established and functional within MGCSW (Y/N)

² Safety Net and Skills Development Project (SNSDP, P143915) and South Sudan Safety Net Project (SSSNP, P169274).



- Percentage of beneficiaries paid using the integrated biometric and Management Information System (MIS)

D. Project Description

6. **SNSOP was approved in June 2022.** It is financed through an IDA Grant of US\$129 million equivalent (Grant No. E063-SS). The project became effective on October 17, 2022. It is implemented by the Ministry of Agriculture and Food Security (MAFS) and the Ministry of Gender, Child, and Social Welfare (MGCSW). It employs a hybrid implementation modality whereas MAFS engages the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS) through a Standard Output Agreement to deliver public work and cash transfer activities.

7. **Progress toward the achievement of the PDO and overall implementation progress are rated moderately satisfactory with the following progress:**

- Component 1: Cash transfers and complementary social measures.** This component will provide 15 months of cash assistance to 96,000 poor and vulnerable households in 15 counties to meet immediate consumption gaps and build resilience to withstand future shocks. Targeted beneficiaries participate in climate-smart Labor-Intensive Public Works (LIPW) and in behavioral change communications training that aims to promote human capital development. Several preparatory activities have been undertaken including onboarding of the implementing partner (UNOPS), contracting of a financial service provider (FSP) for the cash payments and a management information systems (MIS) service provider for the development of an integrated MIS that is linked with a biometric registration tool and payment application, setting up of project offices in targeted counties, stakeholder and community engagement, formation and training of local committees, and identification and screening of public work subprojects with a particular focus on climate-smart public works.
- Component 2: Provision of Economic Opportunities.** Youth from a subset of Component 1 are the primary beneficiaries for Component 2, in 3 of the 15 counties including a refugee hosting county. Beneficiaries will be provided with a series of livelihoods interventions tailored to the local context. County selection has been finalized using a framework based on need, safety, mitigation of project risk, and maximization of project impact.
- Component 3: Strengthened Institutional Capacity and Social Protection System.** A Project Coordination Unit (PCU) has been fully established and equipped under the MGCSW and there has been revitalization of the National Social Protection Technical Working Group. Capacity assessment and development of a capacity-building plan is under way. The process of handing over the MIS from UNOPS to MAFS has commenced, pursuing the long-term plan to build the capacity of the MGCSW and thereafter hand over the MIS and biometrics system.
- Component 4: Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Knowledge Generation.** As part of the transition from partner-led to government-led implementation, a PCU has been set up in MAFS. A monitoring and evaluation (M&E) strategy and guidelines have been developed and are in use. An impact evaluation for the economic opportunity component has been designed. A third-party monitoring agent (TPMA) has been contracted.



8. **The proposed AF for SNSOP is urgently needed to support the Republic of South Sudan to manage inflow of refugees and returnees fleeing the conflict in Sudan.** The history of continued conflicts—both within South Sudan and in neighboring countries—has resulted in a significant number of refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced persons (IDPs) and created refugee camps and IDP settlements across the country. There are 438,162 refugees and asylum-seekers registered in South Sudan as of February 2024 located in over 21 different locations throughout the country.³ Sudanese refugees including those fleeing conflict in Sudan since April 2023 comprises much of the population (93 percent)

9. **The arrival of individuals fleeing the conflict in Sudan (both refugees and South Sudanese returnees) has further increased the need for humanitarian and development assistance for displaced populations in the country.** Since the outbreak of conflict in Sudan in April 2023, 629,902 refugees and South Sudanese returnees have crossed the border into South Sudan.⁴ This represents a daily inflow of 1,794 people⁵. Until 1st April 2024, the South Sudanese returnees comprised over 78.8 percent of the arrivals. The condition of South Sudanese returnees, who will be accommodated under the host community’s category under this AF, remains precarious and dire.

10. **The proposed AF will bring in complementary support to ongoing humanitarian assistance, while providing income-generating opportunities for displacement-affected refugees and host communities including returnees.** The objective of including refugees and hosts in SNSOP is to foster their socioeconomic integration by providing longer-term and more predictable support for them through their participation in LIPW and Direct Income Support (DIS), which would promote social cohesion, socioeconomic integration as well as financial inclusion through cash transfers. In addition to the safety net assistance, the proposed AF will include complementary social measures (CSMs) aimed at supporting human capital development and economic inclusion of both hosts and refugees. The Parent Project is preparing to support refugees and host communities in two refugee-hosting counties, Jamjang and Maban, that were hosting a large majority of refugees even before the Sudan crisis. These counties are now hosting a much larger refugee population, and the geographical scope of refugee-hosting areas is expanding to other counties due to the inflow from Sudan. The AF will enable SNSOP to scale up its support to refugees, host communities, and vulnerable South Sudanese in existing and additional counties. The following are proposed component allocations for AF3:

11. **Component 1: Labor-Intensive Public Works (LIPW) and Direct Income Support (DIS) cash transfers and complementary social measures (\$43million).** Extend safety net support to an estimated 45,000 additional households including refugees, returnees, and host communities. Geographic expansion will be guided by distribution of refugee population location and food security vulnerability. It will entail increasing SNSOP’s caseload in selected existing SNSOP countries and expanding the project to new counties to respond to the refugee crisis. The AF will consider additional complementary social modules that will respond to specific social issues/barriers that refugees may face—for example, psychosocial support and climate-change-related activities—along with the existing modules (water, sanitation, and hygiene [WASH], early childhood development [ECD], financial literacy, and nutrition).

³ UNHCR. February 2024. “South Sudan Monthly Operational Dashboard.”

⁴ As of 1st April 2024.

<https://app.powerbi.com/view?r=eyJrIjoiZTMwNTIjNWYtYmVhYi00ZGI2LTgwYzAtN2UyNDZmZTRlNjBkliwidCI6IjE1ODgyNjJkLTlzZmItNDNiNC1iZDZILWJjZTQ5YzhlnjE4NiIsImMiOiJh9&pageName=ReportSection95859b8850a76994e6fb>

⁵ South Sudan - Inflow of people (DG ECHO, UNHCR, IOM) (ECHO Daily Flash of 12 March 2024)



12. **Component 2: Provision of Economic Opportunities for Youth.** increase the number of SNSOP households (including refugees and host communities) that will participate in the economic opportunities’ component in existing three counties.

13. **Component 3: Strengthened Institutional Capacity and Social Protection System (US\$2.5 million).** The AF activities will focus on strengthening the existing social protection delivery systems that will continue to serve as the building blocks of national integrated systems and on amplifying capacity-building activities geared toward enhancing the Government’s capacity to design and implement shock-responsive social protection interventions that can cater for forcibly displaced persons.

14. **Component 4: Project Management, Monitoring and Evaluation, and Knowledge Generation (US\$2.5 million).** Increasing the scope/frequency of existing M&E instruments to cover scale-up areas. New learning pieces linked to extending safety net to refugees and the benefits, midline and endline surveys for the economic opportunities impact evaluation including for refugees and host communities (baseline covered under the Parent Project), coordination in refugee-hosting settings, technical assistance focused on selected priority areas of GoSS’s pledges from the Global Refugee Forum.

Restructuring

15. **Adjustments to the Results Framework.** The framework has been adjusted reflect the changed beneficiary numbers including refugees and host communities.

16. **Extension of SNSOP by one year to June 30, 2027.** This extension of the closing date by one year is necessary to accommodate the activities required to expand to new geographic areas, undertake a new round of targeting in existing counties and new counties, enroll the 45,000 new beneficiaries into a 15-month safety net intervention, and allow time for activity closing.

Legal Operational Policies

	Triggered?
Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	No
Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60	No

Summary of Assessment of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

17. **The environmental risk of the project is assessed as moderate.** The climate-smart public works will continue to be labor intensive and will focus on activities that strengthen climate resilience to benefit the community at large, with the aim of improved community assets for better natural resource management, thereby contributing to climate adaptation. The AF will not introduce new public work categories but rather will be limited to the categories of subprojects already agreed under the Project and for which appropriate environmental and social risk management tools have been developed. The public work subprojects include small-scale works which are expected to have positive impacts: employment



creation, income generation and livelihoods diversification. Although the PW subprojects are aimed at enhancing the environment and increasing the productive capacity of the natural resource base, they also have the potential for adverse environmental impacts on human populations and/or the biophysical environment if their location, design or construction do not follow good environmental practices. The potential negative environmental impacts may include open borrow pits, open shallow wells, improper waste disposal, pollution, loss of biodiversity, and health and safety issues. However, due to the small-scale nature of public works investments, the potential negative environmental impacts of the subprojects are expected to be localized, temporary, and easily mitigated through sensible construction management techniques and diligent management practices. Furthermore, these environmental risks will be managed through the Project ESMF procedure which is adequate based on the project performance to date.

18. **The social risk remains substantial.** The social risks may include: (i) social exclusion and elite capture, (ii) insufficient community engagement, (iii) inadequate participation of women, youth, refugees, returnees and other vulnerable groups, (iv) use of child labor, and (v) increased cases of sexual exploitation, harassment and abuse as a result of engagement in the project and due to misunderstanding on the utilization of cash received from the project, (vi) inadequate design of public works activities failing to take into account specific gender/and other vulnerable groups such as refugees and returnees considerations, (vii) communal conflicts over sharing and distribution of resources as well as tension between refugees/returnees and host communities over limited resources and security risks, considering that some project activities could intensify existing and latent conflicts associated with the evolving security situation in the country. The ESM with its annexes prepared for the parent project will continue to be applied to address the risks. The project uses nuanced communication and social messaging to reinforce peaceful cooperation and unity. The project will undertake targeted efforts to mitigate additional risks of GBV through community engagement, messaging, awareness-raising activities, introduction of codes of conduct, worksite location considerations, and security measures at payment sites and aims to strengthen its commitment to GBV prevention, mitigation, and response through the AF. The GRM will be further strengthened to address emerging social risks.

E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

19. **The proposed AF will be implemented through the institutional structures already agreed upon in the Parent Project and under implementation.** MAFS is the lead implementing agency, while the MGCSW will implement activities under Component 3 and participate in project monitoring and supervision. Recognizing the significant institutional capacity gaps at the local levels to ensure effective and accountable delivery of safety net assistance and compliance with environmental and social risk mitigation measures, the MAFS PCU has engaged UNOPS for the implementation of cash transfer activities under Subcomponents 1.1 and 1.2 and is contracting NGOs for Component 2.



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