

Republic of Moldova

Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Protection

**Moldova Emergency COVID-19 Response Project-
Additional Financing (P175816)**

**ENVIRONMENTAL and SOCIAL
COMMITMENT PLAN (ESCP)**

November 23, 2021

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL COMMITMENT PLAN

1. The Republic of Moldova (the **Recipient**) shall implement the Moldova Emergency COVID-19 Response Project the Original Project, with the involvement of the following Ministries/agencies/units: Ministry of Health, Labor and Social Protection (**MOHLSP**). The *International Development Association (hereinafter the Bank)* has agreed to provide financing for the Project. In addition to the financing provided by the Bank, the Recipient has implemented a US\$3.48 million *Pandemic Emergency Financing Facility Fund (PEF) Grant* (“PEF Grant”) which will support activities already defined under the Project under the same project development objective. The Additional Financing (**AF**), which will be provided by the Bank, will support efforts by the government to procure and deploy COVID-19 vaccines and strengthen national immunization systems. For purpose of this document, the term “Project” refers to the Original Project, the PEF Grant, and the AF together. The environmental risks remain substantial, but the nature of these risks is different given the new vaccination-related activities, including uncertainties that may require ad hoc decisions and adjustments, occupational and health safety issues related to the handling of vaccine supplies, and additional production of vaccine-related medical waste. However, the social risks have been assessed to be substantial, due to the broader social risk of inequity in access to vaccines, due to political pressures to provide vaccines to groups that are not prioritized due to need or vulnerability.
2. The Original Project supports the Recipient in responding to COVID-19. Component 1 (Emergency COVID-19 Response) provides immediate support to respond to the COVID-19 outbreak, with a focus on limiting community transmission, building capabilities to handle severe cases, and mitigating the negative financial impacts at the household level. It also supports the development of multisectoral response coordination and community preparedness. In addition, Component 1 supports social assistance efforts to mitigate the effect of containment measures on the poor. Component 2 (Implementation management and monitoring and evaluation) provides financing for a project management unit and monitoring activities. Through Component 1, the proposed AF will fill a critical gap in the Original Project scope, providing funding for the procurement and deployment of safe and effective COVID-19 vaccines, including vaccine-related communication activities, planning and management, supply and distribution, and digital health information.
3. The Recipient shall carry out the Project in accordance with the Environmental and Social Standards (**ESSs**). This Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (**ESCP**) sets out material measures and actions, any specific documents or plans, as well as the timing for each of these.
4. The Recipient is responsible for compliance with all requirements of the ESCP, even when the implementation of specific measures and actions is conducted by the Ministry referenced in paragraph 1, above.
5. Implementation of the material measures and actions set out in this ESCP will be monitored and reported to the Bank by the Recipient as required by the ESCP and the conditions of the legal agreement. The Bank will monitor and assess the progress and completion of the material measures and actions throughout the implementation of the Project.
6. As agreed by the Bank and the Recipient, this ESCP may be revised from time to time during Project implementation to reflect adaptive management of Project changes and unforeseen circumstances or in response to an assessment of Project performance conducted under the ESCP. In such circumstances, the Recipient will agree to the changes with the Bank and will update the ESCP to reflect such changes. Agreement on changes to the ESCP will be documented through the exchange of letters signed between the Bank and the Recipient. The Recipient will promptly disclose the updated ESCP.

7. Where Project changes, unforeseen circumstances, or Project performance result in changes to the risks and impacts during Project implementation, the Recipient shall provide additional funds, if needed, to implement actions and measures to address such risks and impacts.

MATERIAL MEASURES AND ACTIONS		TIMEFRAME	RESPONSIBLE ENTITY/AUTHORITY
MONITORING AND REPORTING			
A	REGULAR REPORTING: Prepare and submit to the Bank regular monitoring reports on the environmental, social, health, and safety (ESHS) performance of the project, including but not limited to stakeholder engagement activities and grievances log.	Quarterly starting from the Effective Date, reports shall be submitted no later than 20 business days after the end of each reporting period, throughout Project implementation	MOHLSP
B	INCIDENTS AND ACCIDENTS: Promptly notify the Bank of any incident or accident related to the Project which has, or is likely to have, a significant adverse effect on the environment, the affected communities, the public or workers. Provide sufficient detail regarding the incident or accident, indicating immediate measures taken or that are planned to be taken to address it, and any information provided by any contractor and supervising entity, as appropriate. Subsequently, as per the Bank's request, prepare a report on the incident or accident and propose any measures to prevent its recurrence.	Minor incidents will be reflected in the six-monthly reports to the Bank, major issues will be flagged to the Bank immediately. A report would be provided to the Bank, as requested.	MOHLSP
ESS 1: ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISKS AND IMPACTS			
1.1	ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: Ministry of Health, Labor, and Social Protection (MOHLSP) shall maintain the existing PIU with qualified staff and resources to support the management of ESHS risks and impacts of the project, including the environmental and social risk management specialists. Additional consultants for waste management and communication will be hired to support relevant activities related to the COVID response and vaccination process.	The PIU has established and included environmental and social focal points for E&S due diligence should be maintained throughout Project implementation. Waste management and communication specialists will be hired under the PIU by effective Date of the AF.	MOHLSP
1.2	ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ASSESSMENT/MANAGEMENT PLANS AND INSTRUMENTS/ CONTRACTORS: a. Assess the environmental and social risks and impacts of proposed Project activities in accordance with the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) prepared for the project, the ESSs, the Environmental, Health and Safety Guidelines (EHSs), and other relevant Good International Industry Practice (GIIP), including relevant WHO guidelines. The ESMF includes a template for Infection Control and Medical Waste Management Plan (ICWMP) and will be updated to include particular requirements related to the monitoring of adverse events following immunization (AEFIs) and provisions for vaccine cold chain management. Assessment includes ensuring that individuals or groups who, because of their particular circumstances, may be disadvantaged or vulnerable, have access to the	a. ESMF already prepared and updated in October 2020 to include PEF additional financing. The ESMF will be updated to reflect vaccine-related activities by the Effective Date of the AF. b. Plans or instruments prepared before launching the procurement process for the relevant activities, and thereafter	MOHLSP

	<p>development benefits resulting from the project.</p> <p>b. Prepare, disclose, adopt, and implement any environmental and social management plans or other instruments required for the respective Project activities as per the screening process, in accordance with the ESSs and the ESMF, and other relevant GIIP, including the relevant WHO COVID-19 guidelines, in a manner acceptable to the Bank.</p> <p>c. Incorporate the relevant aspects of this ESCP, including ICWMP, ESS2 requirements, and any other required ESHS measures, into the ESHS specifications of the procurement documents and contracts with contractors and supervising firms. Thereafter, ensure that the contractors and supervising firms comply with the ESHS specifications of their respective contracts. to, inter alia, ensure access to and allocation of Project benefits in a fair, equitable and inclusive manner, taking into account the needs of individuals or groups who, because of their particular circumstances, may be disadvantaged or vulnerable including with regards to vaccines.</p> <p>d. Adopt procedures, protocols and/or other measures to ensure Project beneficiaries that receive vaccines under the Project do so under a program that does not include forced vaccination and is acceptable to the Bank, as set out in the ESMF.</p>	<p>implemented throughout the carrying out of such activities.</p> <p>c. Before launching the procurement process for the relevant activities, ensure that contractors and supervising firms comply with the ESHS specifications in their contracts through their involvement in the respective Project activities. The project-level ICWMP will be developed and adopted by the Effective Date of the AF and site-specific ICWMPs will be prepared within 90 days of their being identified.</p> <p>d. Before the carrying out of the relevant Project activities, and thereafter implemented throughout the carrying out of such activities.</p>	
<p>MATERIAL MEASURES AND ACTIONS</p>	<p>TIMEFRAME</p>	<p>RESPONSIBLE ENTITY/AUTHORITY</p>	

<p>1.3</p>	<p>EXCLUSIONS: The following type of activities shall not be eligible for finance under the project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Activities that may cause long term, permanent and/or irreversible (e.g. loss of major natural habitat) impacts b. Activities that have a high probability of causing serious adverse effects to human health and/or the environment other than during treatment of COVID-19 cases c. Activities that may have significant adverse social impacts and may give rise to significant social conflict d. Activities that may affect lands or rights of indigenous people or other vulnerable minorities e. Activities that may involve any resettlement or land acquisition or impacts on cultural heritage <p>All the other excluded activities set out in the ESMF of the Project.</p>	<p>These exclusions shall be applied as part of the screening process conducted under action 1.2.a. above.</p>	<p>MOHLSP</p>
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ESS 2: LABOR AND WORKING CONDITIONS			
<p>2.1</p>	<p>LABOR MANAGEMENT:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. The project shall be carried out in accordance with the applicable requirements of ESS2, in a manner acceptable to the Bank, including through, inter alia, implementing adequate occupational health and safety measures (including emergency preparedness and response measures), setting out grievance arrangements for Project workers (including workman compensation in case of COVID-19 infection), and incorporating labor requirements into the ESHS specifications of the procurement documents and contracts with contractors and supervising firms. b. The project shall implement necessary protocols for treating workers and other exposed persons handling medical waste, disinfectant protocols, regular testing of healthcare workers, requirements for proper disposal of sharps, along with the environmental health and safety guidelines for staff and necessary Personal Protective Equipment (PPE), will be included in Infection Control and Medical Waste Management Plan (ICWMP) to be adopted and carried out by ECs and laboratories participating in the project. c. The project Labor Management Procedures (LMP) developed in accordance with the applicable requirements of ESS2, and part of the ESMF will be revised and developed as a stand-alone document. 	<p>The LMP will be revised and developed as a stand-alone document, consulted upon, and disclosed no later than 30 days after the Effective Date of the AF.</p> <p>It will be implemented throughout the life of the project</p>	<p>MOHLSP</p>

ESS 3: RESOURCE EFFICIENCY AND POLLUTION PREVENTION AND MANAGEMENT			
3.1	Relevant aspects of this standard shall be considered, as needed, under action 1.2 above, including, inter alia, measures to: carry out the purchase, storage, transportation and handling of vaccines (including, ultra-cold chain management) in a safe manner and in accordance with the EHSGs, and other relevant GIIP including relevant WHO guidelines; manage and dispose of health care wastes, and other types of hazardous and non-hazardous wastes.	Throughout Project implementation.	MOHLSP
ESS 4: COMMUNITY HEALTH AND SAFETY			
4.1	Relevant aspects of this standard shall be considered, as needed, under action 1.2 above including, inter alia, measures to: minimize the potential for community exposure to communicable diseases; ensure that individuals or groups who, because of their particular circumstances, may be disadvantaged or vulnerable, have access to the development benefits resulting from the project; and prevent and respond to sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment.	Throughout Project implementation.	MOHLSP

4.2	<p>USE OF MILITARY OR SECURITY PERSONNEL: The following measures shall be adopted in case of the engagement of security or military forces (personnel) in the implementation of Project activities for provision of security to Project workers, sites and/or assets, is carried out in accordance with the ESSs:</p> <p>a. Assess the risks and impacts of engagement of the security or military personnel, as part of the assessment referred to in action 1.2 a) above, and implement measures to manage such risks and impacts, <i>(including a stand-alone Security Personnel Management Plan if triggers for serious concern about deployment of armed personnel are identified in the assessment)</i>, guided by the principles of proportionality and GIIP, and by applicable law, in relation to hiring, rules of conduct, training, equipping, and monitoring of such security or military personnel;</p> <p>b. Adopt and enforce standards, protocols and codes of conduct for the selection and use of security or military personnel, and screen such personnel to verify that they have not engaged in past unlawful or abusive behavior, including sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA), sexual harassment (SH) or excessive use of force;</p> <p>c. Ensure that such personnel is adequately instructed and trained, prior to deployment and on a regular basis, on the use of force and appropriate conduct (including in relation to civilian-military engagement, SEA and SH, and other relevant areas), as set out in the Project Operational Manual, ESMF, Security Management Plan; and</p> <p>d. Ensure that the stakeholder engagement activities under the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) include a communication strategy on the involvement of security or military personnel and the GRM will expand to accommodate to grievances related to involvement of security personnel under the Project.</p>	<p>Assessment carried out in the same timeframe than action 1.2 a) above and <i>any required measures shall be adopted before deploying security or military personnel under the Project and thereafter implemented throughout Project implementation, including: The ESMF will be updated to reflect risks and impact of engagement of security personnel by the Effective Date of the AF, and thereafter implemented throughout Project implementation. A Project-level Code of Conduct (included in a stand-alone Security Personnel Management Plan if triggers for serious concern about deployment of armed personnel are identified in the assessment) shall be prepared and adopted, at least 45 days before deploying security or military personnel under the Project and thereafter implemented throughout Project implementation.</i></p>	MOHLSP
ESS 5: LAND ACQUISITION, RESTRICTIONS ON LAND USE AND INVOLUNTARY RESETTLEMENT			
5.1	<p>Relevant aspects of this standard shall be considered, as needed, under action 1.2 above.</p>	<p>Throughout Project implementation.</p>	MOHLSP
ESS 6: BIODIVERSITY CONSERVATION AND SUSTAINABLE MANAGEMENT OF LIVING NATURAL RESOURCES			

	All works will be conducted within the existing footprint of selected facilities, and the proposed project interventions will have no impacts to the biodiversity and living organisms; hence, this standard is not relevant to the proposed project interventions.		
ESS 7: INDIGENOUS PEOPLES/SUB-SAHARAN AFRICAN HISTORICALLY UNDERSERVED TRADITIONAL LOCAL COMMUNITIES			
	Not relevant		
ESS 8: CULTURAL HERITAGE			
	All works will be conducted within the existing footprint of selected facilities; hence, this standard is not relevant to the proposed project interventions.		
ESS 9: FINANCIAL INTERMEDIARIES			
	Not relevant.		
ESS 10: STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT AND INFORMATION DISCLOSURE			
10.1	STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN: Prepare, disclose, adopt, and implement a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) consistent with ESS10, in a manner acceptable to the Bank, which shall include, inter alia, measures to generate community trust and engagement in the carrying out of the Project activities, and provide stakeholders with timely, relevant, understandable and accessible information, and consult with them in a culturally appropriate manner, which is free of manipulation, interference, coercion, discrimination and intimidation.	A draft SEP was already prepared and disclosed, and shall be consulted, updated, and adopted within 30 days of the Effective Date of the AF. The SEP will be applied and updated throughout Project implementation	MOHLSP
10.3	GRIEVANCE MECHANISM: An accessible grievance mechanism shall be established, publicized, maintained and operated to receive and facilitate resolution of concerns and grievances in relation to the Project, promptly and effectively, in a transparent manner that is culturally appropriate and readily accessible to all Project-affected parties, at no cost and without retribution, including concerns and grievances filed anonymously, in a manner consistent with ESS10. a. The grievance mechanism shall also receive, register and address concerns and grievances related to the sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment in a safe and confidential manner, including through the referral of survivors to gender-based violence service providers. b. The grievance mechanism shall also receive, register, and address concerns arising from unintended health consequences after vaccination, especially those resulting in serious adverse effects. c. The grievance mechanism shall also receive, register, and address concerns arising from involvement of security /military persoannle for the project.	The GRM has been established and shall be maintained throughout Project implementation.	MOHLSP

CAPACITY SUPPORT (TRAINING)			
	<p>Project Implementation Unit and other relevant implementing support staff responsible for the project to receive training on the Project’s ESHS plans and instruments, fair, equitable, and inclusive access and allocation of Project benefits (including with regards to vaccines), security personnel training regarding the Project-level Code of Conduct, and the roles and responsibilities of different key agencies in the ESF implementation.</p>	<p>No later than 60 business days after the Effective Date and periodically with the addition of new Project team members join the project throughout implementation.</p>	<p><i>MOHLSP</i></p>