

**INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET
CONCEPT STAGE**

Report No.: AC3121

Date ISDS Prepared/Updated: 08/15/2007

I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country: Kazakhstan	Project ID: P099270
Project Name: SOUTH-WEST CORRIDOR ROAD REHABILITATION PROJECT	
Task Team Leader: Henry G. R. Kerali	
Estimated Appraisal Date: June 17, 2008	Estimated Board Date: September 23, 2008
Managing Unit: ECSSD	Lending Instrument: Specific Investment Loan
Sector: Roads and highways (100%)	
Theme: Regional integration (P);Trade facilitation and market access (S);Other rural development (S)	
IBRD Amount (US\$m.): 150.00	
IDA Amount (US\$m.): 0.00	
GEF Amount (US\$m.): 0.00	
PCF Amount (US\$m.): 0.00	
Other financing amounts by source:	
Borrower	150.00
	150.00

B. Project Objectives [from section 2 of PCN]

The development objective for the project is to increase transport efficiency and improve traffic safety along the South West Corridor between Shymkent - Kyzyl Orda - Aktobe Oblast. The aim is to support local and regional socio-economic development. Benefits will include transport efficiency gains and traffic safety improvement.

The main beneficiaries will be domestic and regional businesses and traders, as well as local populations living along the road corridor. With a higher population density in the southern sections of the road, traffic volumes are relatively high, approximately 10,000 vehicles per day (vpd) close to Shymkent city, mainly due to local commuting. Traffic volumes decrease further north with the majority of traffic comprising trucks transporting goods (around 500 vpd in Aralsk). The Government expects ribbon development to be attracted along the corridor as a result of the project intervention. However, this will require incentives to attract private sector investments to be integrated within the overall South West Corridor development project.

C. Project Description [from section 3 of PCN]

The project will finance major rehabilitation and reconstruction of road infrastructure from Shymkent to Aktobe-Kyzylorda Oblast together with the provision of facilities for transporters (e.g. telecommunications, rest stops, refueling stations) and the elimination of non-physical barriers (such as unofficial check points for transit traffic). The project would serve local travel as well as international transportation of general cargo and other goods produced locally and in the region (Tajikistan, the Kyrgyz Republic and Uzbekistan). Institutional measures would include improvements in the management of road safety, the introduction of an efficient road management system incorporating modern methods for planning and executing road maintenance, and strengthening the capacity of the Committee for Transport Infrastructure Development (CTID) to efficiently implement all investments. The preliminary design prepared by the Ministry of Transport and Communication (MOTC) envisaged the widening of the road and the construction of bypasses around populated areas. The feasibility studies -to match international standards- are being contracted out.

Following preliminary discussions with the MOTC, it is envisaged that the road sections to be co-financed by the Bank would be divided into three separate sub-projects:

Project I: Aktobe / Kzyl Orda Oblast border to Zhosaly (approx 410km). This road section would be implemented first as it is currently in poor condition and it presents an obstacle to transporters. The works will consist of reconstruction along the existing alignment. A detailed design already exists and will be updated once the feasibility study is completed. The objective would be to have this first Bank-financed project approved ahead of the preparation of the 2009 Budget so that the road works can start in early 2009.

Project II: Zhosaly to Turkestan (approx 455km). This road section is also expected to comprise reconstruction along the existing road alignment. The MOTC is considering widening this road section to four lanes in the vicinity of Kzyl Orda, including the construction of a bypass around Kzyl-Orda. The final decision will be made after the feasibility study is completed.

Project III: Turkestan to Shymkent (approx 170km). This project would take more time to prepare because of the high traffic volumes that requires upgrading most of the road section to four lanes. A full Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) may be required for this section, and some land acquisition may also be necessary.

The proposed lending instrument would be a Specific Investment Loan (SIL) or a series of SILs. The main advantage of this would be that the Government would not have to commit to a large loan at the outset. The preliminary project design for the proposed SIL or series of SILs includes the following components:

Component 1: Major Rehabilitation and Reconstruction Works of the road sections, including the provision of consulting services to assist MOTC during project implementation for review of designs, procurement and construction supervision. This would cover approximately 1,200 km of roads, to be divided into the three sections: (i) Zhosaly - Kyzylorda/Aktobe Oblast border (around 410 km), (ii) Turkestan - Zhosaly (around 455 km), and (iii) Shymkent - Turkestan (around 170 km).

Component 2: Institutional Development and Project Management comprising consulting services, studies, the provision of equipment, and training to (i) strengthen the internal management and operations of CTID, (ii) improve road corridor planning, program implementation, and monitoring and (iii) improve the efficiency of road maintenance practices.

Component 3: Road Safety and Roadside Development including technical assistance targeted at specific road safety improvements and roadside developments, such as preparation of a development plan for the entire corridor, public awareness campaigns, implementation of a road safety program, provision of facilities for transit transport (e.g. telecommunications, medical services, rest stops, etc).

D. Project location (if known)

The projects area spans an existing road alignment of 1,035 km length in SW Kazakhstan, termed the South West Corridor (SWC), which requires rehabilitation and/or upgrade. The road section to be financed from the World Bank lies between the city of Shymkent in the SE and the border with Aktobe Oblast on its NW end. The alignment is spread over two Oblasts (administrative districts), Shymkent and Kyzyl-Orda. In the South of the corridor the population density and related traffic is comparatively high and the main function of the road is for local commuting. Towards the Northwest the density of population decreases significantly to very low values and traffic density generally decreases significantly, with most of the traffic relating to transit of cargo. The right of way (ROW) for the road provides for buffer zones of about (30 - TBC) meters width on either side of the road, which are commonly not built up or used for agricultural purposes. The description of the alignment is presented separately for each Oblast as follows:

Project I: Aktobe / Kzyl Orda Oblast border to Zhosaly (approx 410km). This road section was constructed in 1970 and since 1990 there was no investment. The condition of the pavement is poor. The railway line is running in parallel to the road most of the time and therefore it could provide a solution for haulage of materials. The issue of bringing suitable material on the construction site will be critical. Although there is evidence that the existing infrastructure was built using locally available materials, their use is questionable. At least six bridges need reconstruction; most are rather small (20 to 30 meters), one is about 120 meters long. In some areas the road crosses moving sand dunes and the rehabilitation design will have to take this into consideration.

The environmental conditions for project I are characterized by arid climate, sparse vegetation, hardly any year-round surface water courses and large areas with (naturally) hyper-saline soils. Saksaul forests, which are adapted to dry, saline conditions with extreme temperature differences, play an important role in soil stabilization and erosion control. The landscape is very arid, barren, hardly vegetated and prone to wind erosion, dust generation, moving sand dunes. Surface drainage exists mainly seasonally, when flash floods can occur and draining waters can have a high erosion potential. The landscape has a very soft profile with wide valleys and basins, separated by slightly elevated plateaus. Land use is restricted to animal grazing in the natural environment, observed were mainly camels, but with low intensity. Permanent settlements are extremely sparse.

Project II: Zhosaly to Turkestan (approx 455km). This road is in fair condition. Average traffic varies significantly along the alignment, from 3000-4000 vpd on the 240 km stretch South of Kzyl-Orda to about 5000-6000 vpd close to Kzyl-Orda to less than 500 vpd in the North. Most of the road pavement is made out of macadam with a weak bearing capacity. A very large number of crashes are reported (more than 50 deaths in 2005 and 85 deaths in 2006 along the 240 km South of Kzyl-Orda). The main difficulty when repairing the road will probably come for the lack of suitable material. The number of quarries and borrow areas is limited and this should be taken into consideration during the design. The presence of the railway line that runs in parallel to the road the entire alignment might help with the haulage of construction material.

Regarding environmental conditions this section is characterized by an arid climate, resulting in sparse vegetation, few year-round surface water courses and large areas with (naturally) hyper-saline soils. In this zone Saksaul forests are still abundant. Despite the flat morphology erosion is an issue due to frequent flash floods in spring (snowmelt combined with spring rains) and wind erosion in the dry summer period. Land use is restricted to animal grazing in the natural environment, observed were camels, horses, cattle and goats, and irrigated crops close to Syrdariya river. The alignment passes through irrigated land north of Kyzyl-Orda. Despite the arid climate groundwater is very close to the surface in this section, often less than one meter. In the zone of irrigated land villages along the road are sparse (every 10 to 20 km), further north the corridor touches hardly any human settlements.

Project III: Turkestan to Shymkent (approx 170km). The average condition of this section road is fair. Traffic ranges between 6000 and 8000 vehicles per day (vpd) between Shymkent and Turkestan, then falls in the range of 3000 to 4000 vpd further northwest. Local towns are numerous along the alignment between Shymkent and Turkestan. Traffic safety is a primary concern when traveling along this section. The fatality rate is extremely high with 61 deaths reported along the 215km stretch in 2005. The first 160 km from Shymkent to Turkestan are planned to be "Category I" design (the highest capacity category according to KZ road construction standards) with 4 lanes (from currently 2 lanes). The road authority is also planning to construct a bypass around the town of Turkestan.

The climate in this south-eastern section is continental, being characterized by high temperature contrast between hot summers and cold winters and precipitation concentrated over relatively short time periods in spring and fall. The landscape surrounding the highway is set in a wide, flat basin in a geologically highly mature, cratonic environment with few tectonic features. It consists of gently rolling hills, getting progressively flatter towards the north. The natural vegetation is steppe, dominated by grassland with small clusters of forest near rivers and in valleys. The highway alignment runs roughly parallel to Syrdariya river, which it approaches near Turkestan and crosses several times further north. The land is used for agriculture and horticulture between Shymkent and Turkestan, North of Turkestan in progressively arid climate animal grazing starts to dominate.

Land acquisition related to the project location and current planning stage is likely to be managed as follows: In most sections, the road can be reconstructed and even widened within the existing right-of-way, thus requiring no land acquisition. New service centers will be established at strategic locations, and some existing centers will be upgraded. This may require some land

acquisition, but the remoteness of the locations will assure minimal impact, if any, as they are expected to be located where there is limited grazing or no active use of the land. By-passes, the number and location of which are yet to be determined, will require land acquisition, but are not expected to cause relocation, as they will traverse uninhabited land. Additional land may be required for temporary use during construction, for which private owners will be compensated and the land returned to its original condition after use. There is no evidence of illegal or temporary occupation or use of land along the roadway or within the right-of-way and therefore the project does not envisage the removal of unauthorized structures from the right-of-way in carrying out the rehabilitation works. The client will prepare a Resettlement/Land Acquisition Policy Framework prior to Appraisal, which will provide detailed information about procedures and standards set in Kazakhstan for the acquisition of private land and rights-of-way and identify any additional provisions that will be undertaken to assure compliance with OP 4.12. The Policy Framework will also describe the format and timing of the submission of additional, site-specific data, once it is made available during detailed design.

E. Borrower's Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies [from PCN]

Four main institutional entities were identified as relevant to country based environmental and social safeguards during the June 2007 identification mission. Those entities are responsible for the following: (i) environment, (ii) water resources, (iii) forestry and hunting and (iv) land management. For each institution, the mission assessed their roles, their responsibilities and capacity for the implementation of safeguards policies and regulations:

Ministry for Environmental Protection, Environmental Expertise and Nature Use Regulation Department (EENUR): Local units of the MoEP are structured into thematic groups, which at Oblast level including among others (i) environmental expertise, (ii) permitting, (iii) supervision and monitoring, (iv) environmental laboratories. At the Rayon level each of these thematic units is represented by one inspector.

Construction works are supervised by MoEP and its subordinate agencies. Routine operations are usually inspected once per year and carried out by MoEP staff and/or Oblast and Rayon representatives. During construction works Oblast and Rayon level EPAs monitor the sites and play a key role in commissioning the finalized project, thereby checking environmental compliance with design and final implementation of all required environmental restoration and recultivation measures. The EPAs usually liaise with the project developers, the contractors environmental staff and the unit on site, which is a mandatory requirement (called "production control" under the Kazakh legislation).

The EIA process in Kazakhstan is laid down in the environmental code and a set of detailed implementation instructions (Feb. 2004). It foresees 4 stages, which correlate with the respective design activities and range from (i) a desk study for pre-feasibility level, (ii) a preliminary EIA and (iii) a detailed ("full") EIA for the detailed design stage and (iv) an EMP as separate section of the design documentation. In this respect the EA process is logical. It is deemed compatible with international good practice.

For the issuance of a construction permit (CP) a "full" EIA is required (including field studies and site investigations), which needs to be based on the final design, and contain a section with a

detailed EMP. The EMP has to be part of the design documents and is reviewed by the local EPAs as well as by the expertise unit of the MoEP. In the case of road projects it should specifically address river crossings, water courses, soil and vegetation conservation and re-cultivation, protected areas and natural habitats. This EIA needs to be approved by the MoEP and forms the basis of the environmental permit for the construction or operation of a project. This permit can be issued either by the Ministry or one of its local branches. In Kazakhstan EIAs may only be elaborated and submitted for approval by companies or institutions with an official license by the MoEP.

Public consultation is mandatory. The final environmental approval on a large construction project (e.g. major infrastructure like the SW corridor project) is given by the Chief Environmental Expert of the MoEP's Expertise Department.

EIA instructions deviate from international good practice and the Banks safeguards related operational policies (especially OP 4.01) in several significant ways:

1. There is no apparent provision for a screening and categorization process, thus there is no distinction which type and magnitude of project calls for which specific EIA approach. There is an Annex listing all types of planned projects requiring the EIA routine, but without any differentiation in depth or quality.

2. Alternative options are envisaged to be developed and discussed in the detailed design stage. This deviates from general international good practice, in which options are developed and discussed, also from the environmental perspective, in the feasibility study stage. The detailed design should then be based on the optimum solution regarding technical, financial, economic criteria, and also the environmental performance of each analyzed alternative.

3. The disclosure policy is in principle qualitatively well prepared and the instruments and methodologies comparable to Bank standards. However, dates, terms, milestones or time periods need to be defined for information, disclosure, consultation process etc.

The environmental expertise and nature use control department appears to fulfill basic staffing and skill requirements and has the administrative structure for effective environmental project supervision. Strengthening and training will be required to achieve World Bank standards and international good practice regarding project preparation and supervision.

Water Resources Committee (WRC): The WRC is organized along watersheds in Kazakhstan. The SW corridor project area is located in two basins, the Aral-Syrdaria Basin and the Ural-Caspian Basin.

For projects such as the SW corridor the WRC will get involved in the review of feasibility studies and designs. WRC will provide expertise regarding crossings of water courses, drainage and runoff management of road, the dimensioning and location of culverts and bridges and the preservation of the natural surface drainage system. The preservation of the natural surface drainage system is of high importance in the South of Kazakhstan, as the climate is characterized by dry conditions during most of the year, with extremely wet conditions for about 15-20 days

during spring, augmented by snowmelt and spring rains. This generates flash floods and surges during this period, which have to be considered for the designs of embankments, culverts, bridges, valley and basin crossings etc.

Detailed hydrographical and meteorological records are kept by "KazGidroMet" and published in annual periodicals and can be requested via the MOTC.

There are no buffer zones or special water protection zones or restrictions in use around road corridors. Water protection zones are under the regulation of Oblast / Rayon level and usually lie around river courses or lakes. For new alignments apparently also no special ground- or surface water protection zones exist, where an alignment could not be located. The main concern for the WRC is the preservation of unhindered surface water runoff conditions.

The WRC is perceived mainly as information source and as such is perceived to have adequate capacities. Strengthening will likely be required in sourcing, assembly and communication of environmentally relevant information to the permitting authority (e.g. EENRU).

Groundwater resources are managed by the "Committee for Hydrology and Subsoil Waters Use" under the Ministry for Energy and Mineral Resources.

Committee for Forestry and Hunting (CFH): Similarly to the WRC the CFH will, for the construction of a new road alignment, be kept informed by the project developer and provide expert opinions from early design stages on. It will review the feasibility studies including alternative options and all subsequent design documents.

The key focus of the CFH in road projects will be on soil conservation and erosion control, vegetation protection and preservation measures, post construction restoration, re-vegetation and re-cultivation, as well as grading and landscaping to create sustainable slope angles and topography where major earthworks have taken place. Specific attention in the region of the SW corridor relates to shelter belts along roads and around settlements, as well as government forest lands, e.g. the endemic Saksaul forests. State forests can be converted into traffic corridors with appropriate government decision, but careful erosion control, soil and vegetation preservation and recultivation measures after construction completion would be paramount. These mitigation measures remain the responsibility of the project developer. There is not land with a higher protection status, such as legally protected areas or national parks along the existing road alignment or in potential bypass areas of the SW road corridor.

CFH has local representatives in each Oblast, called Territorial Departments. They manage the conversion of land from State forests to traffic corridors, including valuation of the land, determination of compensation payments and measures for converted forests, the exact delineation of the area which may be cleared and the supervision of the clearance activities.

The CFH will have to be proactively integrated into the decision processes and strengthening might be appropriate for sourcing, assembly and communication of environmentally relevant information and formulating clear mitigation measures.

Agency on Land Resources (ALR): The ALR is responsible for: (i) land legislation, (ii) cadastre management, (iii) geodetic surveys, (iv) soil and geotechnical surveys, (v) monitoring and control of land use. Regarding new alignments, ALR is focusing on minimizing disruption and conflict with local owners and communities. If irrigated land has to be converted decisions for conversion and related compensation issues are usually taken at Oblast level, while the dedication of "normal" land to a transport corridor can be done at the Rayon level. Regarding the SW highway project, the widening of the road is occasionally envisaged, but without resettlement. The ROW forms a corridor large enough to accommodate both temporary and permanent additional land use without infringing on private land. When calculating compensation payments for expropriated land the GoK uses a pricing catalogue which is usually below market level.

The ALR also participates in land management, land use planning and zoning issues. The responsibility for land use planning and the dedication of thematic zones for particular use is the responsibility of the ALR's local representatives (Rayon / Oblast levels). The conversion of land from one type of use to another is (i) controlled chiefly by local governments, with (ii) the Ministry for Land Use having a coordinative and advisory role and (iii) other line Ministries giving their recommendations and approval, among them also the Ministry for Environmental Protection.

F. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists

Mr Norval Stanley Peabody (ECSSD)

Mr Wolfhart Pohl (ECSSD)

II. SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

Safeguard Policies Triggered	Yes	No	TBD
Environmental Assessment (OP/BP 4.01)	X		
<p>Generally a safeguards categorization of "B" is proposed for all existing road sections earmarked for rehabilitation / reconstruction. The rationale is that the major part of construction works will, despite the large scale construction works be confined to the existing ROW. The corridor of the ROW is generously dimensioned, thus no significant / major impact on local population's health, safety or quality of life is expected. This would justify the elaboration of a simplified environmental assessment (without an extensive analysis of alternatives) and the elaboration of EMPs and MPs for construction and operation phases. The "no project" alternative will be analyzed to demonstrate the positive environmental impacts the project is likely going to have.</p> <p>For the new road sections, mainly the envisaged bypasses, probably a "B+" would be appropriate from the environmental point of view. This would entail a full EIA, as well as EMP and MP during construction activities, but avoid the extended disclosure periods required for "A" projects. The rationale would be that no sensitive natural habitats, rivers, wetlands, forests or protected areas are affected and that the bulk of required land will be Government owned and is currently unoccupied.</p> <p>Bypasses are currently tentatively planned mostly in the vicinity of cities, where urban development has partially impacted the environmental quality and more urban expansion is</p>			

Safeguard Policies Triggered	Yes	No	TBD
planned in short to mid term. Also spatial demand will be minimal compared to the availability of unused space in SW Kazakhstan.			
The impact of the works on soils and vegetation is expected to be minimal, if managed diligently. Rehabilitated road sections shows natural re-vegetation only 2-3 years after works, despite the arid climatic conditions.			
Natural Habitats (OP/BP 4.04)		X	
Forests (OP/BP 4.36)		X	
Pest Management (OP 4.09)		X	
Physical Cultural Resources (OP/BP 4.11)		X	
Indigenous Peoples (OP/BP 4.10)		X	
Involuntary Resettlement (OP/BP 4.12)	X		
The project will require some land acquisition, primarily for by-passes and service centers, but it is not expected to require the relocation of people or evacuation of land that is used temporarily or illegally. The project does not envisage the removal of unauthorized structures from the right-of-way in carrying out the maintenance works. The client will prepare a Resettlement/Land Acquisition Policy Framework, acceptable to the Bank, prior to Appraisal, and then provide additional data regarding land requirements as they are identified during preparation of the final design.			
Safety of Dams (OP/BP 4.37)		X	
Projects on International Waterways (OP/BP 7.50)		X	
Projects in Disputed Areas (OP/BP 7.60)		X	

Environmental Category: B - Partial Assessment

III. SAFEGUARD PREPARATION PLAN

- A. Target date for the Quality Enhancement Review (QER), at which time the PAD-stage ISDS would be prepared: 11/10/2007
- B. For simple projects that will not require a QER, the target date for preparing the PAD-stage ISDS: N/A
- C. Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing¹ should be specified in the PAD-stage ISDS.
A detailed environmental impact assessment (EIA) with environmental management plans (EMP) corresponding to the preliminary design level was commissioned for all 3 sections by the MOTC in August 2007. The Consultancy contracts are expected to be signed in September 2007 and work start shortly afterwards.

¹ Reminder: The Bank's Disclosure Policy requires that safeguard-related documents be disclosed before appraisal (i) at the InfoShop and (ii) in-country, at publicly accessible locations and in a form and language that are accessible to potentially affected persons.

The Resettlement/Land Acquisition Policy Framework will be completed during the next Bank mission and additional site-specific land acquisition data and plans will be submitted to the Bank as they become available during implementation.

IV. APPROVALS

<i>Signed and submitted by:</i>	
Task Team Leader:	Mr Henry G. R. Kerali
<i>Approved by:</i>	
Regional Safeguards Coordinator:	Ms Agnes I. Kiss
Comments:	
Sector Manager:	Mr Motoo Konishi
Comments:	