



## 1. Project Data

<b>Project ID</b> P158298	<b>Project Name</b> Strengthening Critical Infrastructure		
<b>Country</b> Tajikistan	<b>Practice Area(Lead)</b> Urban, Resilience and Land		
<b>L/C/TF Number(s)</b> IDA-60890,IDA-D2050	<b>Closing Date (Original)</b> 31-Dec-2023	<b>Total Project Cost (USD)</b> 50,328,637.35	
<b>Bank Approval Date</b> 10-Jul-2017	<b>Closing Date (Actual)</b> 31-Mar-2024		
	<b>IBRD/IDA (USD)</b>	<b>Grants (USD)</b>	
Original Commitment	50,000,000.00	0.00	
Revised Commitment	50,000,000.00	0.00	
Actual	50,328,637.35	0.00	
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## 2. Project Objectives and Components

### a. Objectives

According to the Project Appraisal Document (PAD) (p.ii) and the Financing Agreement of August 15, 2017 (p. 5) the objective of the project was “to strengthen the Recipient's disaster risk management capacities, enhance the resilience of its critical infrastructure against natural hazards, and improve its capacity to respond to disasters”.

The objective will be parsed as follows:



- i. to strengthen the Recipient's disaster risk management capacities;
- ii. enhance the resilience of its critical infrastructure against natural hazards;
- iii. improve its capacity to respond to disasters.

The ICR noted that the third objective was linked to the CERC component.

**b. Were the project objectives/key associated outcome targets revised during implementation?**

No

**c. Will a split evaluation be undertaken?**

No

**d. Components**

The project included four components:

**Component 1: Strengthening Disaster Risk Management Capacity (appraisal estimate US\$4.0 million, actual US\$5.8 million):** This component was to finance the following sub-components:

Subcomponent 1.1. Modernizing the Crisis Management Centers and Systems for Improved Disaster Preparedness: This subcomponent was to finance: i) building or renovating a facility to host the national Crisis Management Center (CMC); ii) purchasing of required information and communication technology equipment to be installed within the national CMC; iii) purchasing of mobile command and communication vehicles for the improved crisis management systems at the regional/local levels; iv) preparing an operations manual for the CMCs and systems; and v) trainings for relevant staff and operators of the CMC and users of mobile command and communication vehicles.

Subcomponent 1.2. Seismic Hazard Assessment for Improved Disaster Risk Identification: This subcomponent was to finance the purchase of necessary equipment, such as seismic stations, seismic sensors, analytical software for the Institute for Geology Earthquake Engineering and Seismology (IoGEES) to conduct probabilistic seismic hazard assessment of the territory of Tajikistan and seismic micro zoning for Dushanbe and its surrounding area.

Subcomponent 1.3. Preparation of a Financial Protection Strategy for Mitigating Fiscal Shocks Caused by Natural Disasters: This subcomponent was to finance detailed fiscal risk diagnostics and assessments and preparation of a financial protection strategy covering ways for Tajikistan to mitigate fiscal shocks caused by disasters.

**Component 2: Making Critical Infrastructure Resilient against Natural Hazards (appraisal estimate US\$38.0 million, actual US\$42.28 million):** This component was to finance the following sub-components:

Subcomponent 2.1. Strengthening of Bridges: This subcomponent was to finance the reconstruction of bridges in the districts of GBAO (Gorno-Badakhshan Autonomous Oblast).

Subcomponent 2.2. Strengthening of Flood Protection and Riverbank Erosion–Protection Infrastructure: This subcomponent was to finance strengthening of selected flood protection infrastructure in the Khatlon Oblast. Also, capital works for flood protection were to include the reconstruction and strengthening of



damaged river embankments, flood protection dikes, and infrastructure for the prevention of riverbank erosion.

**Component 3: Contingent Emergency Response Component (appraisal estimate US\$6.0 million, actual zero):** This component was to enhance Tajikistan's capacity to respond to disasters. An emergency eligible for financing was to be an event that has caused, or was likely to imminently cause, a major adverse economic and/or social impact to the Borrower, associated with a disaster.

**Component 4: Project Management (appraisal estimate US\$2.0 million, actual US\$2.2 million):** This component was to finance support incremental operating costs for the implementing agencies, the Ministry of Finance (MoF), the Ministry of Transport (MoT), and Agency of Land Reclamation and Irrigation (ALRI) for implementing the project.

As per the Financing Agreement, each of the disbursement categories was not exclusively linked to a single project component, but rather covered activities across multiple components. For instance, Category 1 financed activities under Component 1 (referred in the Financing Agreement as Part A of the project), as well as the operating costs of the MoF PIU (which are part of Component 4). Categories 2 and 3 together financed activities under Component 2, along with the operating costs of the MoT PIG and ALRI PMU (which were also part of Component 4). Finally, Category 5 compensated for the activities implemented under the PPA, related to the preparation of all project components. During the project restructuring in October 2019 funds were reallocated between the disbursement categories and US\$6 million that had previously been allocated for CERC (Component 3) were reallocated to finance activities under Components 1, 2, and 4.

#### e. **Comments on Project Cost, Financing, Borrower Contribution, and Dates**

**Project Cost:** The project was estimated to cost US\$50.0 million. Actual cost was US\$50.32 million due to exchange rate fluctuations between SDR and US\$. The total project cost remained unchanged and was not revised.

**Financing:** The project was financed by an IDA credit in the amount of US\$25.0 million (of which US\$25.5 million was disbursed - due to exchange rate fluctuations) and an IDA grant in the amount of US\$25.0 million (of which US\$24.7 million was disbursed).

**Borrower Contribution:** It was not planned for the Borrower to make any contribution.

**Dates:** The project was restructured twice:

- On October 31, 2019, the project was restructured to reallocate funds to address financial gaps emerging under various sub-components, including: i) higher than initially anticipated National Crisis Management Center (NCCMC) costs, determined based on detailed designs with consideration of enhanced safety and increased floor area needs; ii) cost overruns for bridge construction based on the works' bidding outcomes and increased costs associated with technical supervision during construction; and iii) financing a new flood protection site in Vose district due to a priority request from the government, given the site's emergency condition and its importance for protecting adjacent economic and social assets.



- On December 12, 2023, the project was restructured to extend the project's closing date by three months from December 31, 2023, to March 31, 2024, to allow for the completion of project activities, which had been delayed due to unresponsive bids for the NCMC construction, a selected contractor's inability to finalize works as well as the first round of tendering cancelled for the Information Communication Technology (ICT) equipment and Mobile Command and Communication Vehicle (MCCV).

### 3. Relevance of Objectives

#### Rationale

**Country and sector context.** According to the PAD (para. 4) at the time of appraisal, Tajikistan was the most vulnerable country to climate change in Europe and Central Asia. Due to its special terrain, geological and hydrological features, Tajikistan was prone to many natural hazards, such as floods, earthquakes, landslides, mudflows, avalanches, droughts, and heavy snowfalls.

Climate change was expected to increase the frequency of these events. In the past, natural disasters, particularly floods, earthquakes, and landslides, remained a persistent obstacle to sustainable development. Already at the time of appraisal, Tajikistan's infrastructure was gradually deteriorating from insufficient maintenance and repeated exposure to natural hazards. Among many other needs, systematic investments in disaster risk reduction were necessary across various sectors in the country. The government had already been upgrading infrastructure such as irrigation, road networks, and energy infrastructure. Furthermore, the objective of the project was in line with the National Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change until 2030 which focuses on climate adaptation investments to enhance the resilience of the most vulnerable populations as well as to enhance the resilience of transport infrastructure against climate impacts and natural disasters. In addition, the project was also in line with the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy for 2019-2030 which aims to improve the country's disaster preparedness and response mechanism.

**Alignment with the Government Strategy.** The objective of the project supported Tajikistan's National Development Strategy (NDS) -2030, which, under pillar 4, emphasizes the importance of mitigating the impact of acute environmental risks and enhancing resilience and ability to prevent natural disasters. Also, the Mid-Term Program of the NDS 2021-2025 focuses on improving disaster preparedness through strengthening new and existing critical infrastructure to withstand natural disasters as well as building crisis management centers. Furthermore, the objective of the project was in line with the National Strategy for Adaptation to Climate Change until 2030 which focuses on climate adaptation investments to enhance the resilience of the most vulnerable populations as well as enhance the resilience of transport infrastructure against climate impacts and natural disasters. In addition, the project was also in line with the National Disaster Risk Reduction Strategy for 2019-2030 which aims to improve the country's disaster preparedness and response mechanism.

**Alignment with the World Bank Strategy.** The objective of the project was in line with the most recent World Bank Country Partnership Framework (FY2019-2023 – extended to FY24) which aimed to strengthen infrastructure in vulnerable communities and disaster preparedness. Furthermore, the objective of the project was aligned with the World Bank Climate Change Action Plan (2021-2025) which aims to support



green, resilient, and inclusive development as well as the World Bank Scorecard FY24-30 and its focus on improving climate adaptation and enhancing resilience to climate related risks.

Given the World Bank's experience in building resilience, the government requested the World Bank's assistance. The objective addressed a critical development problem and was pitched at the outcome level. Overall, the relevance of the objective was High.

## Rating

High

## 4. Achievement of Objectives (Efficacy)

### OBJECTIVE 1

#### Objective

To strengthen Tajikistan's disaster risk management capacities.

#### Rationale

**Theory of Change:** The project's theory of change stated that project inputs/activities such as constructing the National Crisis Management Center (NCCM), preparing an operational manual for the NCCM, conducting training on emergency management systems, procuring equipment as well as conducting probabilistic seismic hazard assessment of the country and seismic microzoning for Dushanbe and developing a financial protection strategy were to result in several outputs. These outputs were to include an operational manual for the NCCM being prepared, the NCCM being constructed and fully equipped, staff being trained on emergency systems. These outputs were to result in the outcome of Tajikistan's disaster risk management capacities being strengthened.

The theory of change was sound and did not have any logical gaps.

#### Outputs:

- The NCCM building was constructed, furnished, equipped with ICT equipment, and a mobile command and communication vehicle (MCCV) was purchased. The MCCV serves as the first locally based crisis management center. Furthermore, capacity trainings were conducted for 21 CoESCD staff and certificates of transfers and acceptance between the MoF PIU and CoESCD were signed and endorsed by all relevant parties. Therefore, the target of the crisis management centers and systems becoming operational was achieved.
- Seismic hazard maps were updated, and the understanding of seismic hazard was improved through the National Probabilistic Seismic Hazard Assessment (PSHA) and the Dushanbe microzoning.
- Operational procedures for crisis management center and systems were prepared, achieving the target of preparing such procedures.



- A Financial Protection Strategy (until 2037) was developed to facilitate response and recovery in the event of an emergency, as targeted. The strategy was officially endorsed through a government decree in October 2022. Key reform areas included: i) improve existing financial instruments and introducing new ones; ii) enhance disaster insurance; iii) provide incentives for disaster risk reduction investments; iv) strengthen the financing management capacity of government staff; v) improve capital investment planning and linkages between midterm and annual budgets; vi) streamline and expedite the process of developing budgets and capital investment plans; and v) enhance transparency, reporting and internal control over post-disaster spending.
- Essential hardware and analytical software for the Institute of Geology Earthquake Engineering and Seismology (IoGEES) was installed. This output did not have a target.

**Outcomes:**

Some of the outcomes as noted above included meeting the target of the crisis management centers and systems becoming operational, as well as endorsement of the Financial Protection Strategy through a government decree in October 2022. The ICR notes that having been just recently put into operation, the NCMC and MCCV have not yet been tested in real-life emergency; however, their operational capabilities were validated through a practical table-top emergency response drill conducted in March 2024.

Overall, the achievement of this objective is rated Substantial

**Rating**

Substantial

**OBJECTIVE 2**

**Objective**

To enhance the resilience of Tajikistan’s critical infrastructure against natural hazards.

**Rationale**

**Theory of Change:** The project’s theory of change stated that project inputs/activities such as reconstructing bridges, flood protection and riverbank erosion prevention infrastructure based on risk informed designs as well as installing and dispatching heavy machinery for emergency response and maintenance of infrastructure assets were to result in several outputs. These outputs were to include bridges, flood protection and riverbank prevention infrastructure being reconstructed, and designs informed by multi-hazard disaster and climate change risks, and heavy machinery for the Ministry of Transport (MoT) and Agency of Land Reclamation and Irrigation (ALRI) being installed and dispatched based on operational plan. These outputs were to result in the outcome of enhanced resilience of Tajikistan’s critical infrastructure against natural hazards.

The theory of change was sound and did not have any logical gaps.

**Outputs:**



- 17 bridges were reconstructed based on designs considering multi-hazard disaster and climate change risks, surpassing the target of 15 bridges.
- Heavy machinery for the MoT was installed and dispatched based on the operational plan, achieving the target of machinery being installed and dispatched. Also, heavy machinery for ALRI was installed and dispatched based on the operational plan, the target of machinery being installed and dispatched was achieved. This machinery included: three front loaders, two bulldozers, two-wheel excavators, one crawler excavator with hydraulic hammer, two crawler excavators, two motor graders, two dump trucks, two manipulators, one prime mover with trailer, one tandem drum vibratory roller, one mobile mini laboratory, one mobile hydraulic drilling rig, one crawler excavators, and one motor grader.
- Five target sites in the Kulyab, Vose, and Kabadiyan districts of the Khatlon province (along the most vulnerable river sections) were completed with designs informed by multi-hazard disaster and climate change risks. The target of target sites having more resilient flood protection and/or riverbank erosion prevention infrastructure through disaster risk-informed designing was achieved.

**Outcomes:**

- 660,515 people benefitted from reduced disaster risks through more resilient flood protection and riverbank erosion prevention infrastructure, exceeding the target of 556,900 people. The project's flood protection and/or riverbank erosion prevention infrastructure protected strategic assets such as Kulyab International Airport as well as an asphalt-concrete plant from being flooded. Also, 3,468 hectares of agricultural land, as well as other local infrastructure, were protected.

Outputs that were applicable to all objectives included:

- 100 percent of grievances raised by stakeholders were addressed and closed, exceeding the target of 95 percent.
- The project benefitted 764,415 beneficiaries, exceeding the target of 646,000 beneficiaries. Of those beneficiaries, 48.6 percent were female, not achieving the target of 51 percent.
- 747 jobs were created. For those jobs, 73.9 percent of people were hired locally, exceeding the target of 20 percent. Of those locally hired jobs, 12.3 percent were female, not achieving the target of 51 percent.

The project was able to reconstruct bridges, flood protection and riverbank prevention infrastructure. Furthermore, designs based on risk informed designs, and heavy machinery for the MoT and ALRI were installed and dispatched based on an operational plan. These achievements resulted in the outcome of enhancing the resilience of Tajikistan's critical infrastructure against natural hazards. Therefore, achievement of this objective is rated Substantial.

**Rating**  
Substantial

**OBJECTIVE 3**

**Objective**

To improve Tajikistan's capacity to respond to disasters.





### Rationale

**Theory of Change:** The project's theory of change stated that inputs/activities such as financing of an emergency that has caused, or was likely to imminently cause, a major adverse economic and/or social impact to the Borrower, associated with a disaster. This was to result in the outcome of Tajikistan's improved capacity to respond to disasters.

The theory of change was sound and did not have any logical gaps.

Since the Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC) was never activated, the project did not include any CERC related activities.

### Rating

Not Rated/Not Applicable

## OVERALL EFFICACY

### Rationale

Achievement of both objectives was Substantial resulting in an overall efficacy rating of Substantial.

### Overall Efficacy Rating

Substantial

## 5. Efficiency

### Economic efficiency:

The PAD (p. 17) conducted a benefit cost analysis assessing the rate of return on capital investments for Component 1, for improving CMCs and systems, and Component 2, for strengthening critical infrastructure for the transportation and flood protection sectors. The team developed a probabilistic model which assessed the project's economic performance, using relevant modeling techniques (such as DRM annual average loss calculations based on return period of hazards) and assessment of exposure, vulnerability, and Highway Development and Management 4) to evaluate the improvement of road network connectivity. The probabilistic modelling involved running thousands of iterations of a given model across all possible ranged of uncertain inputs and therefore accounted for informational gaps. Applying a discount rate of 5 percent, the analysis calculated a mean Net Present Value (NPV) of US\$102.1 million and a benefit cost ratio of 2.51. The mean Internal Rate of Return (IRR) was 10.5 percent.

The ICR (para 45) applied the same method as the PAD and used data available at project completion. The analysis calculated a mean NPV of US\$103.5 million and a mean IRR of 11.4 percent. These analyses indicate





that the project was a worthwhile investment. The results at completion are slightly higher since the project ended up reconstructing 17 bridges instead of 15 bridges as originally planned.

**Operational efficiency:**

The project’s implementation period was extended once by three months as a result of procurement issues and the need to rebid several contracts including NCMC, ICT, and MCCV (see section 10b for more details). Furthermore, a river-bank protection site in Shaartuz district had to be removed from the project since the costs were higher than originally estimated. However, it was replaced by a priority flood protection site in Kaftarkhona, Vose district.

Given the project’s economic as well as operational efficiency, the project’s overall efficiency is rated Substantial.

**Efficiency Rating**

Substantial

a. If available, enter the Economic Rate of Return (ERR) and/or Financial Rate of Return (FRR) at appraisal and the re-estimated value at evaluation:

	Rate Available?	Point value (%)	*Coverage/Scope (%)
Appraisal	✓	10.50	0 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable
ICR Estimate	✓	11.40	0 <input type="checkbox"/> Not Applicable

\* Refers to percent of total project cost for which ERR/FRR was calculated.

**6. Outcome**

The relevance of the objective was High. Efficacy and Efficiency were Substantial. The overall outcome rating is Satisfactory.

a. **Outcome Rating**  
Satisfactory

**7. Risk to Development Outcome**



The project's risks to development outcomes can be classified into the following categories:

**Government commitment:** Lack of government commitment is regarded a low risk, as the government continues to be committed to the project's objective as demonstrated through the implementation of a World Bank follow-on project, the Preparedness and Resilience to Disasters Project (PREPARED) which aims to further strengthen the government's DRM and climate change adaptation capacities, while continuing to support the reconstruction of critical infrastructure with a focus on resilience. Furthermore, according to the ICR (para. 78) CoESCD demonstrated its commitment to the development objective in a letter to the MoF (March 2024) in which it stated that it will be conducting annual practical emergency drills based on the NCMC operations manual to sustain emergency response skills of staff at NCMC and other relevant agencies.

**Technical:** There is a risk that the technical DRM capacity built under the project may not be maintained. While the project was able to build DRM capacity in the country, it will be critical to maintain this capacity and continuously provide training to current and future CoESCD staff. Also, according to the ICR (para. 78) interagency collaboration to optimize the utilization of NCMC as well as increase the use of the MCCV will be key.

**Financial:** There is a risk that there may not be sufficient financial and human resources for O&M activities. The sustainability of infrastructure constructed under the project will depend on the severity of future disasters as well as operation and maintenance (O&M) activities. Ensuring adequate financial and human resources for O&M activities will be critical for the sustainability of project assets. According to the ICR (para. 79) the Strategy for Financial Protection against Natural Disasters until 2023 could be a useful tool to ensure the availability of essential funds by ensuring that resources dedicated to O&M of project assets will not be touched in case of future emergencies.

## 8. Assessment of Bank Performance

### a. Quality-at-Entry

According to the ICR (para. 57) the World Bank team consulted with key stake holders during project preparation. The project design was also informed by in-depth analytical work such as natural hazard assessments to inform the design of bridges and flood protection infrastructure. Furthermore, a capacity and needs assessment was conducted of the CoESCD since it was the main coordinating agency for crisis management and DRM in the country. The project received a Project Preparation Advance (PPA) grant to conduct various activities such as feasibility studies and designs for flood protection and bridge rehabilitation, as well as to prepare social safeguard documents.

According to the PAD (para. 51), the World Bank team identified several risks to project implementation and rated the following as Substantial: i) political and governance risks due to the country's limited DRM capacity and the risks that the government would shift its resources, in case of another disaster in favor of immediate relief and response rather than continued support for project activities intended to support institutional development; ii) macroeconomic risks due to an ongoing volatility in the macroeconomic environment were likely to exert growing fiscal pressures and increase constraints on the government's



spending priorities; iii) sector strategies and policies risks due to an unclear division of responsibilities within the DRM sector; iv) institutional capacity risks due to the need to build additional capacity for project implementation in the three different implementing agencies; v) environmental and social risks related to possible delays in civil works or land acquisition carried out without following the Resettlement Action Plan; and vi) fiduciary risks since the project's complex design included three different implementing agencies. The World Bank team mitigated these risks by building capacity within the different implementing agencies in key areas such as procurement and financial management, allocating resources to the CERC in case of limited government resources being available as well as coordinating between the different entities involved in project implementation. Overall, the mitigation measures were adequate, and the project only required a three-months' extension of its implementation period due to procurement related issues.

The project's Results Framework had some shortcomings such as few PDO indicators being formulated on the output level rather than the outcome level or measuring the same aspect under PDO indicators 1 and 3 (see section 9a for more details).

The World Bank team consulted with key stake holders, conducted in-depth analysis in key areas as well as identified risks and developed adequate mitigation measures. There were minor shortcomings in the Results Framework. Overall, the Quality at Entry is rated as Satisfactory.

## **Quality-at-Entry Rating**

Satisfactory

### **b. Quality of supervision**

According to the World Bank/ICR team (November 21, 2024) the World Bank team conducted semi-annual supervision missions (a total of 14) as well as additional technical level visits conducted by various engineers and safeguards team members in between the official supervision missions, to help advance and support technical level topics. Furthermore, throughout the implementation, the team engaged with different stakeholders. The team submitted regular Implementation Status and Results (ISRs) reports identifying implementation bottlenecks and providing time-bound action plans that had been agreed on with the counterparts.

The ICR (para. 63) stated that the World Bank provided all three implementing agencies with extensive support in various areas including enhancing technical specifications for goods and consultant services, procurement packages and documents, evaluation of deliverables submitted by consultants, as well as providing on-site monitoring of works and services. However, the project would have benefitted from addressing the shortcomings in the Results Framework. Also, the project had four different Task Team Leaders (TTLs) over its life span resulting in frequent changes which might have affected implementation.

The World Bank team provided capacity building support to all of the implementing agencies and conducted regular supervision missions. However, the project would have benefitted from revising



shortcomings in the Results Framework and less frequent changes in TTLs. Overall, Bank Supervision is rated Satisfactory.

### **Quality of Supervision Rating**

Satisfactory

### **Overall Bank Performance Rating**

Satisfactory

## **9. M&E Design, Implementation, & Utilization**

### **a. M&E Design**

According to the ICR (para. 67) the project's Results Framework was developed in cooperation with the government. The project's theory of change and how key activities and outputs were to lead to intended outcomes was sound and reflected in the Results Framework. Furthermore, the Results Framework defined the frequency of data collection, which instruments were to be used and who was to be responsible for data collection.

However, the Results Framework had some minor shortcomings. PDO indicator 3 "bridges reconstructed based on designs considering multi-hazard disaster and climate change risks" was formulated on the output level and PDO indicator 2 "understanding of seismic hazard is improved" were formulated on the intermediate outcome level. Also, several output indicators measure the same results as PDO indicators 1 and 3.

According to the PAD (para. 47) the MoF PIU was to be responsible for monitoring and reporting of the indicators.

### **b. M&E Implementation**

According to the ICR (para. 68) the MoF PIU monitored and reported all indicators and ensured that the other two implementing agencies submitted their inputs. Also, the MoF PIU developed semi-annual project progress reports and submitted them on a timely manner to the World Bank. In addition, the ALRI and MOT submitted their own technical records including monthly supervision reports. The World Bank team provided training to the MoT and ALRI to strengthen their M&E capacity.

However, the project could have benefitted from revising the Results Framework during project implementation and making the PDO indicators more outcome oriented.

According to the World Bank team (November 21, 2024) the M&E data were found to be reliable and of good quality. Also, M&E functions and processes are being sustained following the project closing and



have been satisfactorily utilized and continued to be applied under the ongoing follow-on project PREPARED.

### **c. M&E Utilization**

According to the ICR (para. 69) the project's M&E data were used to assess implementation progress, identify bottlenecks and inform decision-making such as extending the project's implementation period by three months to finalize the installation, commissioning and capacity building activities related to the NCMC equipment.

While the M&E design had some minor shortcomings, it was generally sound and collected and monitored adequate data to track the project's implementation progress.

### **M&E Quality Rating**

Substantial

## **10. Other Issues**

### **a. Safeguards**

The project was classified as category B and triggered the World Bank's safeguard policies OP/BP 4.01 Environmental Assessment, OP/BP 4.12 Involuntary Resettlement, OP/BP 4.37 Safety of Dams, and OP/BP 7.50 Project on International Waterways. According to the ICR (para. 72) the project developed an Environmental Management Framework and Resettlement Policy Framework and later site-specific Environmental and Social Impact Assessments and Management Plans (ESMPs) during subprojects implementation. In addition, two site-specific Resettlement Action Plans were developed for the rehabilitation of 17 bridges. Compensations were paid to all individuals and households who were negatively affected by the project.

During the COVID-19 pandemic, the Implementing Agencies developed action plans to prevent the spreading of the virus. These action plans were included in bidding documents and contracts.

According to the ICR (para. 72) the project's Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) faced several implementation challenges including missing GRM logbooks and contact details at some construction sites. The World Bank addressed these issues by conducting regular site visits. By project closing, all 14 grievances were resolved.

The project's safeguard compliance was rated satisfactory throughout implementation.

### **b. Fiduciary Compliance**

#### **Financial Management:**



According to the ICR (para. 73) the project's Financial Management (FM) was rated Satisfactory throughout implementation. The Project Implementing Unit (PIU) at the MoF was responsible for the project's overall FM while the MoT was responsible for the FM of subcomponent 2.1 and ALRI was responsible for the FM of subcomponent 2.2. To comply with the project's effectiveness condition, the PIU at the MoF developed an FM Manual which defined all FM arrangements and controls in all three implementing agencies.

Quarterly reports were submitted in a timely manner to the World Bank. Furthermore, the project did not encounter any issues related to the disbursement of the loan/grant proceeds, and designated accounts were replenished in a timely manner. Finally, according to the World Bank team (November 21, 2024) the external auditor's opinions were unqualified.

**Procurement:**

Each implementing agency was responsible for the procurement of their activities. According to the ICR (para. 74) the MoF and ALRI had designated procurement specialists while the MoT PIG did not have one from April 2020 onwards since remaining procurement was limited. The World Bank team provided procurement training to all implementing agencies. For example, PIG staff was trained in processing of records in the Systematic Tracking of Exchanges Program (STEP).

The ICR (para. 74) stated that during ex-post reviews the World Bank team identified procurement issues related to the bidding processes and contract management. The implementing agencies were advised to improve due diligence on submitted bids, including assessing firm qualifications as well as compliance with bid validity periods. Furthermore, the World Bank recommended to complete all pending actions in STEP to facilitate adequate monitoring of agreed timelines.

According to the ICR (para.) 61, the project experienced procurement related implementation delays as the initial tendering process for the NCMC construction in spring 2020 was unsuccessful due to unresponsive bids. The rebid process in the summer of 2020 prolonged the evaluation approval process. While the contract was awarded and construction activities started in February 2021, the contractor was not able to comply with the construction schedule resulting in the cancellation of contract with penalties in spring 2022. To finish the incomplete work, bid documents had to be adjusted and the remaining works had to be retendered. In addition, the project also faced challenges in regard to the procurement of ICT equipment and MCCV with the first round of tendering being cancelled due to high bid prices and submission of non-conforming documentation by the bidders. These delays resulted in the need to extend the project's implementation period by three months.

Despite these procurement challenges, the project's procurement rating was Satisfactory throughout project implementation, indicating that the rating might not have been sufficiently critical.

**c. Unintended impacts (Positive or Negative)**

NA

**d. Other**



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### 11. Ratings

Ratings	ICR	IEG	Reason for Disagreements/Comment
Outcome	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Bank Performance	Satisfactory	Satisfactory	
Quality of M&E	Substantial	Substantial	
Quality of ICR	---	Substantial	

### 12. Lessons

The ICR (p. 21-22) included several lessons learned that were adapted by IEG:

- **Designing DRM projects around the key DRM pillars can allow for comprehensive strengthening against natural hazards.** This project design focused on disaster risk identification, preparedness and response as well as financial protection against disasters and improving the resilience of critical infrastructure allowing a simultaneous strengthening of the DRM pillars and therefore allowing for a comprehensive approach that strengthens the country’s overall DRM capacity.
- **Having financing resources available to allow for essential preparatory activities during project preparation can positively impact project implementation.** In this project, the Project Preparation Advance (PPA) financed the conducting of feasibility studies, designing bridge rehabilitation and river embankment reconstruction in detail, preparing Terms of Reference as well as environmental and social safeguard documents during project preparation allowing for a smooth implementation start.
- **Citizen engagement can ensure support from local communities and beneficiaries and positively impact the sustainability of project outcomes.** This project conducted outreach activities during project preparation and implementation to ensure the engagement of local communities in project related decision making. Also, the project was able to achieve high local labor force participation in the rehabilitation/construction of bridges and flood protection infrastructure, which also fostered local ownership.

### 13. Assessment Recommended?

No

### 14. Comments on Quality of ICR





The ICR provided an adequate overview of project preparation and implementation. The ICR included an adequate efficiency analysis and useful lessons learned that can be applied to future projects in this area. Also, the ICR was internally consistent. However, the ICR would have benefitted from being more concise. Overall, the quality of the ICR is rated Substantial.

**a. Quality of ICR Rating**  
Substantial