



Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary

Concept Stage

(ESRS Concept Stage)

Date Prepared/Updated: 08/16/2022 | Report No: ESRSC02934



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Region	Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any)
Kosovo		P179084	
Project Name	Kosovo Green Action		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Social Sustainability and Inclusion	Investment Project Financing		11/21/2022
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)		
Balkan Green Foundation (BGF)	Lëvizja FOL (FOL Movement), Open Data Kosovo (ODK), Balkan Green Foundation (BGF)		

Proposed Development Objective

The proposed development objective is to contribute to improving accountability of Kosovo public institutions in the implementation of the Green Agenda.

Financing (in USD Million)	Amount
Total Project Cost	0.50

B. Is the project being prepared in a Situation of Urgent Need of Assistance or Capacity Constraints, as per Bank IPF Policy, para. 12?

No

C. Summary Description of Proposed Project [including overview of Country, Sectoral & Institutional Contexts and Relationship to CPF]

Kosovo endorsed the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans at the Sofia Summit in November 2020. The Green Agenda foresees joint actions towards achieving sustainable socio-economic development and green recovery of the entire region in the post-pandemic period aligned with the EU Green Deal. The implementation plan for the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans is based on five pillars: (i) climate action, including decarbonization, energy and mobility; (ii) circular economy, addressing in particular waste, recycling, sustainable production and efficient use of resources; (iii) biodiversity; (iv) fighting air, water and soil pollution; and (v) sustainable food systems and rural areas.



Through the Sofia Declaration, the Government of Kosovo (Gok) also committed to monitor, promote and enforce compliance with environmental obligations and ensure effective mechanisms for public participation, access to information, access to justice in environmental matters and environmental reporting. While Kosovo has made some progress in the energy sector, notably with the increased investments in renewables (achieving its target share of energy from renewable sources, which rose to 25.7percent in gross final energy consumption in 2020), limited progress has been made in the areas of transport, environment, and climate change. The unreliable and health-hazardous energy supply, which mainly relies on coal, remains a concern. The bulk of power supply (880 MW) is produced by two highly polluting and aging lignite power plants, which, in addition to causing serious health and environmental adverse impacts, hinder country’s ability to abide to the Green Agenda and achieve its international obligations as a member of the Energy Community Treaty.

Moving toward more efficient and cleaner supply of energy, in conformity with EU environmental standards, is imperative for Kosovo. Administrative capacities of domestic institutions need to be reinforced in all sectors. Strategies, action plans, and policies in these sectors need to be more consistent among themselves and in line with the principles and objectives of the Green Agenda.

The project aims to support this mission by helping the Kosovo government and other key stakeholders to accelerate the implementation of the Green Agenda through activities that improve access to information, accountability, transparency, and good governance, empower youth, as well as boost climate actions. More specifically, it aims to i) develop government capacities to improve data-driven policy-making in line with the Green Agenda; ii) foster collaboration and dialogue between public institutions, Civil Society Organization (CSOs), media, and citizens on key Green Agenda issues; and iii) engage stakeholders through various mechanisms, including an interactive and data-driven digital platform on climate/energy related issues, for information, action, and interaction with government entities on climate and energy commitments (including social accountability).

The proposed project is consistent with the Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Kosovo for the period of 2017-2021 (next CPF is in draft stage). It contributes to the CPF Focus Area 3 – Promoting Reliable Energy and Stewardship of the Environment – which includes three objectives: (i) Creating the foundations for reliable, cleaner, and more efficient energy supply; (ii) Enhancing energy efficiency and renewable energy; and (iii) Improving management of natural resources and addressing environmental contamination. As part of these objectives, the CPF recognizes the World Bank’s pivotal role in supporting GoK to bolster its institutional and technical capacity to improve environmental management and advance the energy transition.

D. Environmental and Social Overview

D.1. Detailed project location(s) and salient physical characteristics relevant to the E&S assessment [geographic, environmental, social]

Kosovo endorsed the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans at the Sofia Summit in November 2020. The Green Agenda foresees joint actions towards achieving sustainable socio-economic development and green recovery of the entire region in the post-pandemic period aligned with the EU Green Deal. The implementation plan for the Green Agenda for the Western Balkans is based on five pillars: (i) climate action, including decarbonization, energy and mobility; (ii) circular economy, addressing in particular waste, recycling, sustainable production and efficient use of resources; (iii) biodiversity; (iv) fighting air, water and soil pollution; and (v) sustainable food systems and rural areas.



Through the Sofia Declaration, the Government of Kosovo (GoK) also committed to monitor, promote and enforce compliance with environmental obligations and ensure effective mechanisms for public participation, access to information, access to justice in environmental matters and environmental reporting. While Kosovo has made some progress in the energy sector, notably with the increased investments in renewables (achieving its target share of energy from renewable sources, which rose to 25.7% in gross final energy consumption in 2020), limited progress has been made in the areas of transport, environment, and climate change. The unreliable and health-hazardous energy supply, which mainly relies on coal, remains a concern. The bulk of power supply (880 MW) is produced by two highly polluting and aging lignite power plants, which, in addition to causing serious health and environmental adverse impacts, hinder the country's ability to abide to the Green Agenda and achieve its international obligations as a member of the Energy Community Treaty.

Moving toward more efficient and cleaner supply of energy, in conformity with EU environmental standards, is imperative for Kosovo. Administrative capacities of domestic institutions need to be reinforced in all sectors. Strategies, action plans, and policies in these sectors need to be more consistent among themselves and in line with the principles and objectives of the Green Agenda.

The project aims to support this mission by helping the Kosovo government and other key stakeholders to accelerate the implementation of the Green Agenda through activities that improve access to information, accountability, transparency, and good governance, empower youth, as well as boost climate actions. More specifically, it aims to i) develop government capacities to improve data-driven policy-making in line with the Green Agenda; ii) foster collaboration and dialogue between public institutions, Civil Society Organizations (CSOs), media, and citizens on key Green Agenda issues; and iii) engage stakeholders through various mechanisms, including an interactive and data-driven digital platform on climate/energy related issues, for information, action, and interaction with government entities on climate and energy commitments (including social accountability).

The proposed project is consistent with the Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for Kosovo for the period of 2017-2021 (next CPF is in draft stage). It contributes to the CPF Focus Area 3 – Promoting Reliable Energy and Stewardship of the Environment – which includes three objectives: (i) Creating the foundations for reliable, cleaner, and more efficient energy supply; (ii) Enhancing energy efficiency and renewable energy; and (iii) Improving management of natural resources and addressing environmental contamination. As part of these objectives, the CPF recognizes the World Bank's pivotal role in supporting GoK to bolster its institutional and technical capacity to improve environmental management and advance the energy transition.

D. 2. Borrower's Institutional Capacity

The implementing consortium comprises of three CSOs with areas of expertise that perfectly aligns with the planned activities. The lead recipient of the GPSA grant and the implementing CSO, the Balkan Green Foundation (BGF), has extensive experience in advocating for and promoting sustainable development in Kosovo and the Western Balkans. BGF places a strong focus on advocating for solutions that promote decarbonization, energy efficiency and sustainability, which are in line with Kosovo's agenda for EU integration. The project will be implemented in partnership with Open Data Kosovo (ODK), a civic-tech organization, and Lëvizja FOL (FOL Movement), a social accountability organization – both based in Kosovo. ODK works to increase civic engagement through technology, opening government data, and capacity building. FOL is one of the oldest organizations in Kosovo supporting and promoting active citizenry, as well as enhancing transparency and accountability of public institutions.



The project will apply option B of the GPSA partnership model (GPSA Operations Manual), which means that both the Recipient and its two associated CSOs - Partner 1: Lëvizja FOL (FOL Movement) and Partner 2: Open Data Kosovo (ODK) – will manage funds and take fiduciary responsibility (FM and Procurement) and by extension, will also be responsible for E&S management. The three implementing CSOs do not have previous experience implementing World Bank projects and have not worked directly with the Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). However, the implementing CSOs have capacities and previous experience applying IFC's Environmental and Social Performance Standards through implementation of projects funded by GIZ (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit), Environmental and Social Policy with the projects funded by the European Union Office in Kosovo, and Environmental and Social Risk Assessment with USAID, etc. In addition, all three CSOs have specific environmental and social management rules and procedures in their corporate policy statute statements. The consortium is committed to proactively manage both environmental and social risks and impacts. A consortium of CSO will appoint a focal person to oversee social and environmental issues and mitigate potential social and environmental risks in line with the ESF. With the support of the World Bank E&S team, which will provide training and capacity building support on ESF during project preparation, the Recipient will have sufficient knowledge and capacity to manage the project's low E&S risks.

II. SCREENING OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL (ES) RISKS AND IMPACTS

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Low

Environmental Risk Rating

Low

The project activities will accelerate implementation of the Green Agenda in Kosovo through actions that support social accountability efforts and Civic Tech. The activities will aim at increasing public awareness on environmental and climate change issues through trainings, public debates, "Green talks", TV debates, podcasts etc. Thus, the Environmental risk is assessed to be Low, as these activities will not generate any adverse impacts on or risks to the environment. The youngsters participating in datathons and green debates will be awarded for the most creative data use ideas and technical solutions to advance the Green Agenda. Two winning teams will be awarded with installation of solar panels in their schools. Low, short-term, local, and reversible environmental impacts are expected to occur from these small scale investments, such as increased noise, dust, and pollution during a brief installment period. These minor impacts can be easily mitigated with the implementation of measures set out in the Borrower Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP).

Social Risk Rating

Low

The project is largely expected to have positive impacts on increasing public's awareness, engagement and capacity to hold public institutions accountable about environmental and climate change issues. Youth and other community members will benefit from participation in trainings, debates, and other social accountability activities. Possible social risks and impacts are mainly associated with labor and working conditions and occupational health and safety (OHS), community health and safety, and stakeholder engagement. These potential social risks and impacts include: a) impacts on the health, safety, and well-being of direct and contracted workers including exposure to COVID-19 and OHS risks associated with installation of solar panels; b) community health and safety risks may incur as part of the project's public events due to exposure to communicable diseases such as COVID-19 and community risks arising from installation works of solar panels (e.g. noise, dust, pollution, etc.); and c) possible exclusion of some groups as a



result of inadequate implementation of stakeholder engagement and information disclosure processes. These social risks associated with project interventions are assessed to be low, and expected to be easily mitigated with the implementation of the measures set out in the ESCP and SEP.

B. Environment and Social Standards (ESSs) that Apply to the Activities Being Considered

B.1. General Assessment

ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Overview of the relevance of the Standard for the Project:

The project is expected to entail some minor social and environmental risks as covered by the ESSs. Social risks and impacts might mainly be associated with labor and working conditions and OHS, community health and safety related to installation of solar panels, and inadequate stakeholder engagement. Additionally, low, short-term, local, and reversible environmental impacts can incur as a result of the installation of the two solar panels, such as noise, dust, pollution, health and safety. Mitigation of the risks will be guided by a generic EMP checklist to be prepared prior to procurement of civil works and the contractor will be required to prepare the specific EMP checklist. Considering their minor significance, no further assessment of possible E&S risks resulting from the project are considered necessary. The project will monitor and mitigate the identified minor E&S risks based on commitments outlined in the Borrower ESCP and SEP. Special attention will be given to ensure the adequate screening and managing of adverse E&S impacts that might fall upon vulnerable groups, particularly in relation to identifying the barriers contributing to their exclusion from project activities and providing the tools to overcome them. A consortium of CSO appoints a focal person to oversee social and environmental issues and mitigate potential social and environmental risks in line with the ESF.. Additionally, WB Environmental and Social specialists will provide support to the consortium on managing and reporting social and environmental risks in line with the ESF.

Areas where “Use of Borrower Framework” is being considered:

Implementation of the project will not rely on the Recipient’s E&S framework, in part or as a whole. The project is low risk with minimum environmental and social impacts.

ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

The project’s social accountability activities integrate comprehensive engagement with various stakeholders, including government officials, CSO and media representatives, youth, and vulnerable groups. In other words, the project results cannot be achieved without effective and inclusive engagement of relevant stakeholders and the population at large.

However, without adequate planning of stakeholder engagement activities, there is a possibility of exclusion from project activities and discrimination of certain individuals and/or groups based on gender, disability, literacy levels, and other forms of vulnerability. Specific attention will be given to promote and provide means for effective and inclusive engagement of marginalized and vulnerable communities, such as youth, women, ethnic minorities, people with disabilities, etc. This includes culturally appropriate communication in relevant local language(s). The project will prepare a SEP to define appropriate methods for ensuring accessible information and engagement with the relevant stakeholder groups, particularly those at higher risk of being excluded. That said, the SEP will involve a detailed identification and analysis of key stakeholders who will be informed and consulted about the project, including



individuals, groups, or communities that are likely to be affected by the project (project-affected parties) and may have an interest in the project (other interested parties).

Throughout project implementation, the consortium will provide updated information on project activities through their official websites, social media channels, government sources, and other relevant communication channels (e.g. public consultations, printed materials, etc.). The consortium will also establish and ensure the effective implementation of a project-specific Grievance Mechanisms (e.g. via e-mail, phone line, in-person etc.). In addition, the project will inform and seek feedback on project implementation progress at least bi-annually from its key stakeholders, including the Ministry of Economy (ME), the Ministry of Environment, Spatial Planning and Infrastructure (MMPHI), local governments, CSOs, media officials, and the general public. These feedback mechanisms will be included in the SEP.

B.2. Specific Risks and Impacts

A brief description of the potential environmental and social risks and impacts relevant to the Project.

ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions

The project might support the engagement of a small number of direct (e.g. project staff) and contracted workers (e.g. experts for training delivery, workers for installing solar pannels, etc.). There are minor OHS risks associated with the installation of the solar pannels (to be installed in one school). Other OHS risks might include impacts on the health, safety, and well-being of direct and contracted workers from engagement in public events and meetings, including exposure to COVID-19. Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA)/Sexual Harassment (SH) risks under the project are not anticipated. Nevertheless, given the underreported nature of such risks, the Recipient will ensure the implementation of adequate mitigation measures as needed to assure compliance with the ESF standards as part of the project ESCP.

The consortium HR policies are aligned with national labor laws, which are overall consistent with ESS2. The main identified legal and implementation gaps between Kosovo’s national system and ESS2 include i) the lack of requirement to establish a grievance mechanism (GM) for project workers (establishment of a functional and accessible worker GM is not mandatory under national legislation); ii) the reporting systems for occupational accidents and occupational diseases do not work in practice; and iii) lack of specific OSH technical standards, codes of practice, or guidelines (OHS standards are only generally covered). Since the identified risks to labor and working conditions are small, they will be managed through including ESS2 requirements in the ESCP by requesting that: (1) BGF strictly follows the Bank’s procurement guidelines on the employment of consultants; (2) GM and ESHS aspects are incorporated in the specifications of procurement documents and contracts to ensure compliance with the national labor laws and ESS2, satisfactory to the Bank; (3) BGF establishes a workers’ GM for PIU consultants and verifies that all other contracted consultants (such as IT consultants) have a workers’ GM in place prior to establishing contractual relationship; and (4) measures be put in place to manage any SEA/SH risks (see ESS 4).

ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

This standard is not relevant for the suggested project interventions.



ESS4 Community Health and Safety

Provided that the only activities implemented at the community level are meetings and trainings, and the project does not involve any physical works, only minor community health and safety risks are identified in relation to the installation of solar panels and organization of public events/meetings. The installation of solar panels may cause temporary risks, such as increase in noise, dust, and pollution that will be mitigated through the EMP checklist to be prepared by contractor. Public events/meetings may increase the exposure, infection, and transmission of the COVID-19 virus and other communicable diseases among project beneficiaries and workers. The project does not include activities that are anticipated to increase the low SEA/SH risks.

Adequate mitigation measures will be implemented to ensure the prevention and mitigation of the potential community health and safety risks, including informing affected communities on solar panel construction activities and associated risks, monitoring dust, noise, and other air pollution emissions against control targets, putting up fencing and warning signs on work areas, implementing a reporting system for accidents, etc. BGF will also put measures in place to prevent or minimize the spread of the infectious disease/COVID-19 at public events organized by the project, such as ensuring adequate supply and use of appropriate PPE and hygienic precautions (particularly face masks, gloves, and sanitizers), ensuring regular health screening of project workers, limiting the number of people or adjusting the crowd density at any time by controlled access during public consultations, maintaining social distance, etc. Despite the low anticipated SEA/SH risks, the project will proactively implement SEA/SH prevention and mitigation measures such as ensuring that all workers adhere to a formal Code of Conduct, establishing and implementing grievance procedures, and providing training and awareness sessions to workers and affected communities as needed.

ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

This standard is not relevant for the suggested project interventions, as the project does not involve land acquisition, restrictions on land use and involuntary resettlement.

ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

This standard is not relevant for the suggested project interventions.

ESS7 Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities

There are no known distinct social and cultural groups as covered by ESS7 residing in Kosovo. Thus, this standard is not applicable.

ESS8 Cultural Heritage

This standard is not relevant for the suggested project interventions.



ESS9 Financial Intermediaries

This standard is not relevant for the suggested project interventions.

B.3 Other Relevant Project Risks

No other relevant risks can be identified at this stage.

C. Legal Operational Policies that Apply

OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways No

OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas No

III. WORLD BANK ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL DUE DILIGENCE

A. Is a common approach being considered? No

Financing Partners

N/A

B. Proposed Measures, Actions and Timing (Borrower’s commitments)

Actions to be completed prior to Bank Board Approval:

Preparation of an Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).

Training and capacity building support will be provided to the consortium on identifying, managing, and reporting social and environmental risks in line with the ESF.

Prepare, disclose, adopt, and implement a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) focusing particularly on ensuring accessibility and inclusion of vulnerable groups, consistent with ESS10 and in line with WHO provisions “Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) readiness and response to the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)” (January 26, 2020).

Possible issues to be addressed in the Borrower Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP):

-Each implementing CSO appoints a focal person to oversee social and environmental issues and mitigate potential social and environmental risks in line with the ESF.

-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, ensuring that BGF strictly follows the Bank’s procurement guidelines on the employment of consultants, incorporating GM and ESHS aspects into specifications of the procurement documents and contracts, implementing adequate occupational health and safety measures (including emergency preparedness and response measures), and establishing and maintaining GM.

-BGF shall develop and maintain a project-specific grievance mechanism as well as a workers’ grievance mechanism for PIU consultants and assign focal person to adequately address these grievances. BGF shall also verify that all other contracted consultants (such as IT consultants) have workers’ GM in place prior to their engagement.



- BGF shall implement adequate occupational health and safety measures (including emergency preparedness and response measures) in line with ESS2 and WHO guidelines on COVID19.
- The relevant aspects of ESHS will be incorporated into specifications of the procurement documents and contract with contractor for works for installation of solar panels. Thereafter ensure that the contractors comply with the ESHS specifications.
- The consortium shall implement relevant SEA/SH prevention and mitigation measures, including ensuring that the project’s grievance mechanism is adequately equipped to receive, register, and facilitate the resolution of SEA/SH complaints.
- Prepare, disclose, adopt, and implement a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) focusing particularly on ensuring accessibility and inclusion of vulnerable groups, consistent with ESS10 and in line with WHO provisions “Risk communication and community engagement (RCCE) readiness and response to the 2019 novel coronavirus (2019-nCoV)” (January 26, 2020).
- Accessible grievance arrangements shall be made publicly available to receive and facilitate resolution of concerns and grievances in relation to the project, consistent with ESS10.

IV. CONTACT POINTS

World Bank

Contact:	Ann-Sofie Jespersen	Title:	Senior Social Development Specialist
Telephone No:	+1-202-473-0143	Email:	ajespersen1@worldbank.org
Contact:	Ifeta Smajic	Title:	Social Development Specialist
Telephone No:	+1-202-473-1235	Email:	ismajic@worldbank.org

Borrower/Client/Recipient

Borrower: Balkan Green Foundation (BGF)

Implementing Agency(ies)

Implementing Agency: Lëvizja FOL (FOL Movement)

Implementing Agency: Open Data Kosovo (ODK)

Implementing Agency: Balkan Green Foundation (BGF)

V. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT



The World Bank
1818 H Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20433
Telephone: (202) 473-1000
Web: <http://www.worldbank.org/projects>

VI. APPROVAL

Task Team Leader(s): Ann-Sofie Jespersen, Ifeta Smajic

Practice Manager (ENR/Social) Anne Olufunke Asaolu Recommended on 27-Jul-2022 at 11:09:40 GMT-04:00