



Additional Financing Appraisal Environmental and
Social Review Summary
Appraisal Stage
(AF ESRS Appraisal Stage)

Date Prepared/Updated: 11/09/2023 | Report No: ESRSAFA640



I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Region	Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)
West Bank and Gaza	MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA		
Project ID	Project Name		
P181573	Afii West Bank And Gaza Spj Covid-19 Emergency Response		
Parent Project ID (if any)	Parent Project Name		
P174078	West Bank Emergency Social Protection COVID-19 Response Project		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Social Protection & Jobs	Investment Project Financing	11/15/2023	12/8/2023
Estimated Decision Review Date	Total Project Cost		
11/14/2023	0		

Public Disclosure

Proposed Development Objective

To provide cash and/or in-kind emergency support and short-term employment opportunities to vulnerable populations in West Bank and Gaza affected by emergency shocks including COVID-19 and in case of an eligible crisis or emergency, respond to it promptly and effectively.

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

Yes

C. Summary Description of Proposed Project Activities

The project aims to respond to the immediate needs arising from the COVID-19 pandemic by providing temporary emergency cash transfers to vulnerable and poor households and contributing to reducing the deficit in health and social services through temporary job creation.

D. Environmental and Social Overview



D.1 Overview of Environmental and Social Project Settings

The Additional Financing II (AFII) to the parent project is a scale-up and restructuring of the parent project.

AFII will be implemented across the Gaza Strip. The project will provide in-kind (food)/cash support to address the grave humanitarian crisis and needs as a result of the War in Gaza. Briefly, the Gaza Strip, particularly the North, has been subjected to relentless bombardment by Israeli forces for over 4 weeks. This has led to massive and widespread destruction of necessary infrastructure and a breakdown of basic services. According to recent reports, almost 11000 people have been killed, majority women and children. About 1.5 million people in Gaza have been internally displaced and 45% of Gaza's housing units are reportedly destroyed or damaged. The humanitarian needs in Gaza are extremely high: the UN estimates that US\$303.8 million is required for the food security of 2.34 million Gazans between October and December 2023 alone.

Project activities of relevance to aspects of the Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) includes provision of in-kind (food) and cash support (Component 1). At this stage, the specific locations where support will be provided have not been identified and this will be determined once there is further information about the facilities/World Food Program (WFP) contracted shops that remain undamaged and able to provide support.

WFP which will be contracted by the MoF to deliver the in-kind and/or cash support to the affected population in Gaza with different environmental conditions through its identified distribution points in the Gaza Strip.

The E&S documents for the parent and the AFI project will be updated for the AF II to reflect the additional scope of this AF i.e. related to the provision of in-kind/cash emergency support to Gaza. This support will be provided under the cash transfer component of the parent project. Finally, the AFII activities will be included under the cash transfer component.

D.2 Overview of Borrower's Institutional Capacity for Managing Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

MoF is currently implementing the World Bank-funded West Bank Emergency Social Protection Covid-19 Response Project (P174078), the parent project, and its first Additional Financing (AFI). MoF will also implement the current project - Additional Financing II (AFII). For the Parent Project, the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) at the MoF is coordinating project implementation with the technical implementing entities - Ministry of Social Development (MoSD), Ministry of Labor (MoL) and the Palestinian Fund for employment and social protection (PFESP).

The PCU at MoF has developed adequate and dedicated capacity for Environmental and Social (E&S) risk management. An Environmental and Social Officer (ESO) and Health and Safety Specialist (HSS) were engaged in December 2020 and continue to support the PCU for E&S planning, preparation, implementation, and monitoring. According to the ISR of May 2023, the quality of the E&S progress report submitted by the PCU has improved and provides all necessary details. The overall E&S progress of the project is rated satisfactory.



WFP, which will be contracted by the MoF to deliver the support under AFII, is the primary UN agency responsible for delivering emergency social protection interventions. As a United Nations agency, the WFP has integrated safeguards in its work at the policy, project management and operational levels. However, the contract between the MoF and the WFP will be implemented under the World Bank’s ESF and address the project E&S risks and impacts accordingly. Furthermore, WFP also has experience of Bank project's in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) region including recently an operation in Lebanon.

The WFP has Environmental Health and Safety (EHS) and social protection specialists who provide support at the regional level. In addition, for AFII, WFP will assign Environmental, Social, Health and Safety (ESHS) specialists based in Gaza (once the situation on the ground allows) to ensure implementation and monitoring of E&S requirements in accordance with the project’s Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP). Considering the unprecedented challenges in Gaza, the Bank’s in-country E&S team will also provide ‘Environmental and Social Hands-on Expanded Implementation Support’ (HEIS), in accordance with the Bank’s October 2023 Directive/Procedure for Investment Project Financing, and capacity building sessions for IA project E&S personnel to further strengthen compliance with the ESF.

Finally, for the parent project/AFI there is an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF)- including Community Health and Safety Management measures -; Labor Management Procedures (LMP); and a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (LMP). These instruments will be updated and used for AFII. Finally, an Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) will be prepared for AFII and implemented and will include commitments between the Bank, MoF and WFP for project implementation in accordance with the ESF.

II. SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL (ES) RISKS AND IMPACTS

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Substantial

A.1 Environmental Risk Rating

Low

The Project AFII aims to provide cash transfers and/or in-kind emergency support under component 1 to respond to the urgent need for social assistance due to the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza Strip. The project will utilize the WFP’s extensive network of shops for the delivery of social assistance. The project will neither support the procurement of any equipment nor rehabilitation or construction activities or civil works, therefore, the interventions under this project will not result in any negative environmental impacts. Attention to community health and safety in relevance to food safety and risk of communal diseases is addressed under ESS4.

A.2 Social Risk Rating

Substantial

AFII will have positive impacts as it will help address serious humanitarian needs in Gaza. However, certain risks have been identified that will need to be mitigated during implementation and these include: (i) inequitable access to project benefits – while social exclusion is not anticipated as a significant issue currently when the entire population of Gaza is vulnerable and struggling for basic necessities including food, once the war ends inequitable access of comparatively marginalized groups (e.g. women-headed households, persons with disabilities, the elderly, children



without parents, the poor etc.) to project benefits (in-kind support) is anticipated as a risk due to poor targeting, 'elite capture' and lack of proper information dissemination and disclosure and stakeholder engagement (see ESS1); (ii) community health and safety risks due to potential exposure of members of household, particularly the more vulnerable such as the elderly, youth, children, to accidents/incidents or violence due to poor crowd management at in-kind/cash support distribution points/WFP shops, and potential risks of sexual exploitation and abuse, sexual harassment and/or gender-based violence (SEA/SH/GBV) for women (especially women heads of households) and girls (see ESS4); and (iii) risks related to labor and working conditions and SEA/SH/GBV for direct and contracted workers (e.g. at WFP distribution points/shops, workers of NGOs contracted by WFP) (see ESS2). Social risks will be addressed and mitigated both through the project design (particularly the risks of exclusion and elite capture) and measures included in the project's E&S instruments (e.g. updated LMP, SEP and Community Health and Safety Management measures) to address and manage social risks and impacts.

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

B.1 Relevance of Environmental and Social Standards

ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Relevant

The Project's overall environmental and social risk is rated substantial considering the nature of the activities and the capacity of the implementing partner to implement on the ground.

The interventions supported under the AF II will provide in-kind and cash support to poor and vulnerable households affected by the ongoing humanitarian crisis in Gaza. The project will neither procure equipment, nor support rehabilitation or construction activities or civil works, and therefore, will not result in any negative environmental risks or impacts. As there are no activities with a physical footprint identified, nor are there activities that could lead to specific actions that could have associated environmental impacts.

Social risks of exclusion and elite capture are going to be addressed through project design measures that will be finalized by implementation. For targeting, WFP will be expected to utilize its own systems and coordination among humanitarian and UN agencies to optimize the scarce resources for highest possible coverage and avoid multiple food security support benefits concentrated in the same households. In order to strengthen monitoring, transparency and citizen engagement, Third Party Monitoring (TPM) agents are being engaged. The TPM terms of reference (ToR) provide an independent review of project implementation and verification of project results and adherence to all Environmental & Social requirements committed to in the ESCP and all ESHS instruments, including through, inter alia: periodic site visits, assessment of local context and conditions, interviews, awareness raising, training and preparation of reports. In addition, WFP systems appropriate to the conflict situation, including for targeting of, distribution to, and feedback back from beneficiaries will be included in the POM and used. The risks of exclusion of comparatively more marginalize groups will also be addressed through proper implementation of the updated SEP that has been prepared for AFII. The SEP also includes details of the WFP GM system that is functioning for other WFP projects and will be used for AFII. This GM already includes features to address complaints related to SEA/SH/GBV, from beneficiaries and workers, and has a working arrangement with a local partner for referrals. Finally, the WFP and PCU ESO's capacity to address environmental and social risks, including for handling of grievances, will be enhanced throughout the life of the project through regular capacity building.

Public Disclosure



MoF will update the ESMF of the parent project and the first AF in line with the requirements of AFII, and use this updated document as the ESMF for this. Updates include, among other features, monitoring requirements, and updating the community health and safety plan to include crowd management measures. The ESMF will be updated, consulted on, cleared by the Bank, and disclosed within 1 month of project effectiveness.

In view of the scale of emergency humanitarian needs in Gaza, the Bank team will also provide 'Environmental and Social Hands-on Expanded Implementation Support' (HEIS), in accordance with the Bank's October 2023 Directive/Procedure for Investment Project Financing.

The Parent Project/AF I ESCP has been updated for AFII and includes (among other aspects) the E&S institutional requirements in WFP, third party monitoring requirements, schedule for updating ESF instruments needed during implementation, and capacity building needs during implementation. The updated ESCP will be made part of the legal agreement between the Bank and The Palestine Liberation Organization (for the benefit of the Palestinian Authority) and will guide the arrangements for ESF implementation between the MoF and the WFP. The updated ESCP will be finalized, cleared by the Bank, and disclosed by project appraisal.

ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions

Relevant

Categories of workers involved in the project include: i. direct workers including MOF/PCU staff (e.g. the ESO and H&SO) and WFP staff assigned to the project; and ii. contracted workers including assigned staff and consultants of NGOs (e.g. Global Communities) implementing the emergency cash or in-kind support, shopkeepers of WFP authorised shops. The project will not involve community or primary supply workers.

Potential labor risks are related to occupational health and safety (OHS), working terms and conditions, and SEA/SH risks for workers. These risks will be assessed and managed in accordance with the parent project LMP that will be updated to be used for AF II. The parent project LMP covers an assessment of potential labor-related risks, an overview of labor regulations, policies, and procedures, an assessment of and a plan to prevent SEA/SH proportionate to the level of risk, contract terms and conditions of employment, working age regulations; measures to prevent and address harassment, provisions for non-discrimination and equal opportunity in the workplace, OHS for workers, details of the workers' GM; and other requirements of ESS2. Any new labor risks/issues related to AFII will be addressed in the updated LMP. There are currently no risks of child and/or forced labor under the project.

Direct workers GM established under the parent and the first AF project shall continue to be applicable for the AF II and shall be maintained throughout the implementation of the project. The WFP already has, and shall use the same GM for their workers under AFII to cover project activities and this will be described in the AF II LMP and will be consistent with requirements under relevant national law and ESS2. The workers' GM also addresses potential complaints related to SEA/SH and has requisite features such as ability to accept and respond to anonymous complaints and measures to ensure anonymity of complainants, referral mechanisms, and availability of trained personnel to accept and handle such complaints. WFP already includes CoC with measures to prevent SEA/SH in contracts with workers/contracted organizations and these CoCs will also be used for workers engaged for AFII. All AFII workers will sign the CoC and will be provided awareness and training about the measures/requirements of the CoC.

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Finally, in addition to the project workers identified above, some employees of MoF may also work in connection (full-time or part-time) with the project without being formally transferred to the project. ESS2 will not apply to such workers, and they will remain subject to the terms and conditions of their employment with the concerned agency. However, the provisions of ESS2 related to protection in the workforce (i.e. regarding child labor, minimum age, and forced labor) and OHS will apply to such agency employees.

ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

Relevant

While the Parent Project and the AFI had activities assessed to have risks and impacts relevant to ESS3, the AFII activities are not expected to consume natural resources or generate wastes or pollutants.

ESS4 Community Health and Safety

Relevant

The main community health and safety risks identified under the AFII are related to potential exposure of beneficiaries, especially the more vulnerable such as the elderly, young children, persons with disabilities (particularly women and girls) etc., to accidents/incidents or violence during situations of poor crowd management at in-kind/cash support distribution points/WFP shops; security related risks if distribution points are targeted during a break in ceasefire; life and fire safety risks at appointed facilities; and potential risks of SEA/SH/GBV for women (especially women heads of households) and girls by shopkeepers/workers at distribution points.

Measures to address life and fire safety and some features of community health and safety are already included in the parent project ESMF and will be implemented as required for AFII. In addition, crowd management measures will be included in the community health and safety measures in the ESMF when this is updated for AFII.

To address the risk of SEA/SH/GBV various measures will be implemented including: CoCs for WFP workers, including those working at shops. WFP already uses CoCs in their contracts with shops/local partners and these will be used for AFII and application monitored; workers will be provided awareness raising and training on the CoC and made aware of relevant accountability measures; the WFP GM system already has features to address SEA/SH/GBV features, such as referral mechanisms, includes confidential reporting and ethical documentation of GBV/ SEA/SH cases etc., community members/beneficiaries will be made aware of the GM and how to access and use it in a manner that is accessible for all, including vulnerable groups. The GM will be monitored regularly; and, personnel responsible for accepting SEA/SH/GBV related complaints in the GM system will be provided training/capacity building, as required, to ensure effectiveness of the system. Details of the SEA/SH/GBV measures will be included in the GBV Action Plan that will be prepared during implementation.

In terms of food safety, the contractual agreement with W between MoF and the WFP shall include food safety standards.

ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

Not Currently Relevant

No land acquisition and or resettlement under the project.

ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

Not Currently Relevant

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No construction activities are expected in this project that could affect protected areas, flora or fauna.

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

Not Currently Relevant

No population meeting the definition of ESS7 have been identified in the project area.

ESS8 Cultural Heritage

Not Currently Relevant

No tangible or untangle cultural heritage will be impacted by the project activities.

ESS9 Financial Intermediaries

Not Currently Relevant

There are no financial intermediaries that are part of the project.

ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

Relevant

The project’s affected parties under Sub-Component 1.1 include: beneficiaries of the in-kind/cash support and the poor in the WFP distribution list/database.

Parties interested in the project include (but are not limited to): household members of those benefiting from cash or in-kind transfers; the project implementing agency, WFP; government agencies such as MoF and MoSD; UN agencies such as UNRWA, UNFPA; the private sector including shops that cooperate with WFP (around 200 shops across Gaza) and potentially new identified shops and supermarkets that will be acting as in-kind distribution points; international humanitarian agencies and NGOs such as Global Communities and ACTED; Community Based Organizations (CBOs) working on women, children and disability issues and youth organizations/networks such as Sharek; and, the media.

Vulnerable or marginalized groups impacted by the project include (but are not limited to): poor households and households vulnerable to poverty; unemployed and poor community members who lost their source of living due to the conflict (i.e. displaced persons, refugees, Bedouin communities); people injured in the conflict and/or who lost their breadwinner due to the current conflict including women, youth, children, elderly, people with pre-existing medical conditions and disabled; and, people living in remote and rural locations, and people living in Access Reduced Areas (ARAs)

The SEP prepared for the parent and the first AF project has been updated in line with the requirements of ESS10 and consulted on and will be used as the SEP for AFII.

The AF II SEP includes measures for stakeholder consultation, information dissemination and disclosure, and grievance redress. The SEP also includes a comprehensive identification of various categories of stakeholders and a methodology for ongoing information sharing and disclosure and consultation with all stakeholders, including marginalized groups, to ensure that all stakeholders are engaged throughout the life of the project. The SEP also provides details of the project GM which also includes measures to address any SEA/SH/GBV related complaints, including survivors’ referral mechanisms.

Public Disclosure



The SEP was consulted virtually on November 07, 2023 and details of the consultation have been included in the document. Participants included representatives of: several NGOs and CBOs working with women (e.g. SAWA), youth and children (e.g. War Child), INGOs (e.g. MAP, ACTED, ANERA and Care International), and UN and government agencies (e.g., MoF and UNFPA). , ANERA, Over 22 participants joined the discussion and a complete list is included in the SEP. Participants highlighted several issues such as regarding selection criteria for beneficiaries; mechanisms for engaging beneficiaries; integration of the instruments for monitoring and outreach in the project design. Participants inquired about the databases maintained by the Ministry of Labor (MoL) and the Ministry of Social Development (MoSD) for identifying vulnerable individuals and discussed the challenges associated with conducting field assessments for potential beneficiaries under the current situation. Participants also raised concerns of potential exclusion of individuals based on geographic locations, particularly in Northern and Southern parts of Gaza given the current conflict in addition to social tension that may occur during the distribution of food parcels. Participants expressed their interest in participating in follow-up engagement meetings to stay updated on project development progress. Participants were informed that their suggestions would be considered as appropriate and the emphasis of the project is to provide urgent humanitarian assistance to Gaza. Participants were also assured that consultation will continue throughout project implementation, including in Gaza as soon as the situation allows.

The SEP will be reviewed and cleared by the Bank and will be disclosed in-country (on the WFP and MoF websites) and on the Bank system by project appraisal. The SEP will also be available in Arabic.

The SEP is a 'living' document and hence, can be updated periodically during program implementation. The ESCP includes the condition for updating the SEP, as required, during program implementation.

Public Disclosure

B.2 Legal Operational Policies that Apply

OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways	No
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OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas	No
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B.3 Other Salient Features

Use of Borrower Framework	No
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Use of Borrower Framework is not being considered

Use of Common Approach	No
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N/A

C. Overview of Required Environmental and Social Risk Management Activities

C.1 What Borrower environmental and social analyses, instruments, plans and/or frameworks are planned or required during implementation?



1. Updated ESMF, including Community Health and Safety and Crowd Control Measures
2. Updated LMP

III. CONTACT POINTS

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Public Disclosure