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Report No: PAD3426

#### INTERNATIONAL DEVELOPMENT ASSOCIATION

# PROJECT APPRAISAL DOCUMENT ON A

PROPOSED GRANT
IN THE AMOUNT OF SDR 32.6 MILLION
(US\$45 MILLION EQUIVALENT)

OF WHICH SDR 13.0 MILLION (US\$18 MILLION EQUIVALENT)
FROM THE SUB-WINDOW FOR REFUGEES AND HOST COMMUNITIES

#### AND A

PROPOSED GRANT IN THE AMOUNT OF US\$7 MILLION FROM THE SAHEL ADAPTIVE SOCIAL PROTECTION TRUST FUND

TO THE

ISLAMIC REPUBLIC OF MAURITANIA

FOR THE

SOCIAL SAFETY NET SYSTEM PROJECT II

February 14, 2020

# Social Protection and Jobs Global Practice Africa Region

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# **CURRENCY EQUIVALENTS**

Exchange Rate Effective December 31, 2019

Currency Unit = MRU Mauritanian Ouguiya

MRU 36.61 = US\$1

SDR 0.723 = US\$1

FISCAL YEAR January 1 - December 31

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#### ABBREVIATIONS AND ACRONYMS

ACP-EU African, Caribbean and Pacific-European Union

AFD French Development Agency (Agence Française de Développement)

AfDB African Development Bank

ANAIR National Agency to Support and Re-integrate Refugees (Agence Nationale d'Appui

et d'Insertion des Réfugiés)

ANRPTS National Agency for Identification and Population Registration (Agence Nationale

du Registre des Populations et des Titres Sécurisés)

ARC African Risk Capacity
ASP Adaptive Social Protection

CAC Citizen Service Center (Centre d'Accueil des Citoyens)

CCT Conditional Cash Transfer

CERC Contingent Emergency Response Component

CIMAC Internal Procurement Commission (Commission Interne des Marchés de l'Autorité

Contractante)

CNCMP National Commission for Public Procurement Control (Commission Nationale de

Contrôle des Marchés Publics)

CNCR National Consultative Commission on Refugees (Commission Nationale

Consultative sur les Réfugiés)

CPF Country Partnership Framework

CP-SNPS National Social Protection Strategy Steering Committee (Comité de Pilotage de la

Stratégie Nationale de Protection Sociale)

CSA Food Security Office (Commissariat à la Sécurité Alimentaire)

CT-SNPS National Social Protection Strategy Technical Committee (Comité Technique de la

Stratégie Nationale de Protection Sociale)

DA Designated Account

DFID Department for International Development

DFIL Disbursement and Financial Information Letter

DRM Disaster Risk Management ECD Early Childhood Development

EOI Expression of Interest

EPCV Poverty and Living Standards Measurement Survey (Enquête sur la Pauvreté et les

Conditions de Vie)

ESCP Environmental and Social Commitment Plan

ESS Environmental and Social Framework ESS Environmental and Social Standards

EWS Early Warning System FBS Fixed Budget Selection

FCV Fragility Conflict and Violence
FGM/E Female Genital Mutilation/Excision
FSMS Food Security Monitoring Survey

FY Fiscal Year

GBV Gender-based Violence
GDP Gross Domestic Product
GIL Gender Innovation Lab

GIZ German Agency for International Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für

Internationale Zusammenarbeit)

GOM Government of Mauritania
GPN General Procurement Notice

HCI Human Capital Index

ICB International Competitive Bidding
IDA International Development Association

IFR Interim Financial Report

ILO International Labor Organization
IMF International Monetary Fund
IPF Investment Project Financing
IRR Internal Rate of Return

LCS Least Cost Selection

LMP Labor Management Procedures M&E Monitoring and Evaluation

MASEF Ministry of Social Affairs, Childhood and Family (Ministère des Affaires Sociales, de

*l'Enfance et de la Famille*)

MDTF Multi-Donor Trust Fund

MEI Ministry of Economy and Industry (Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Industrie)

MIS Management Information System

MoH Ministry of Health (Ministère de la Santé)

MoU Memorandum of Understanding

MRU Mauritanian Ouguiya

NCB National Competitive Bidding
NGO Nongovernmental Organization

NNI National Identity Number (Numéro National d'Identité)

NPF New Procurement Framework

NPV Net Present Value

OAU Organization of African Unity (*Organisation de l'Unité Africaine*)
OSA Food Security Observatory (*Observatoire de la Sécurité Alimentaire*)

PA Project Account

PASyFiS Safety Net System Project (*Projet d'Appui au Système de Filets Sociaux*)

PDO Project Development Objective
PIE Project Implementing Entity

PFE Essential Family Practices (*Pratiques Familiales Essentielles*)

PMT Proxy Means Test

PNDS National Health Development Plan (Plan National de Développement Sanitaire)

PP Procurement Plan

PPSD Project Procurement Strategy for Development

PRAPS Regional Sahelian Pastoralism Support Project (*Projet Régional d'Appui au* 

Pastoralisme au Sahel)

QBS Quality Based Selection
QCBS Quality Cost-Based Selection

RFP Request for Proposal

RGPH National Population Census (Recensement Général de la Population et de

l'Habitat)

RSW Regional Sub-Window for Refugees and Host Communities

SASPP Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program

SCAPP National Poverty Reduction Strategy (Stratégie de la Croissance Accélérée et de la

Prospérité Partagée)

SDR Special Drawing Rights

SEIDP Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure Plan

SNIG National Gender Strategy (Stratégie Nationale d'Intégration du Genre)

SNPS National Social Protection Strategy (Stratégie Nationale de Protection Sociale)

SoE Statement of Expenditures

SP Social Protection

SPL Social Protection and Labor SPN Specific Procurement Notice

SSN Social Safety Nets
TA Technical Assistance
TOR Terms of Reference
UN United Nations

UNDB United Nations Development Business
UNHAS United Nations Humanitarian Air Service

UNHCR United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees

UNICEF United Nations Children's Fund

VFM Value for Money WFP World Food Program

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#### **DATASHEET**

BASIC INFORMATION					
Country(ies) Project Name					
Mauritania	Social Safety Net System Pr	oject II			
Project ID	Financing Instrument	Environmental and Social Risk Classification			
P171125	Investment Project Financing Substantial				
Financing & Implementa	tion Modalities				
[ ] Multiphase Programm	natic Approach (MPA)	[√] Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC)			
[ ] Series of Projects (SOI	P)	[ ] Fragile State(s)			
[ ] Disbursement-linked	ndicators (DLIs)	[ ] Small State(s)			
[ ] Financial Intermediari	es (FI)	[√] Fragile within a non-fragile Country			
[ ] Project-Based Guaran	tee	[ ] Conflict			
[ ] Deferred Drawdown		[ ] Responding to Natural or Man-made Disaster			
[ ] Alternate Procuremen	nt Arrangements (APA)				
Expected Approval Date					
09-Mar-2020	30-Sep-2025				
Bank/IFC Collaboration					
No					

# **Proposed Development Objective(s)**

The Project Development Objective is to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the nationwide adaptive social safety net system and its coverage of poor and vulnerable households with targeted social transfers, including in refugee and host communities.

Components		
Component Name		Cost (US\$, millions)
Component 1: Updating and	enhancing the Social Registry	7.30
Component 2: Enhancing the	socio-economic inclusion of poor households	51.20
Component 3: Strengthening climate-shocks	the shock response system for households vulnerable to	11.10
Component 4: Project Coord	ination and Management	2.40
Organizations		
Borrower:	Islamic Republic of Mauritania	
Implementing Agency:	Taazour General Delegation	
PROJECT FINANCING DATA (	(US\$, Millions)	
SUMMARY		
Total Project Cost		72.0
Total Financing		72.0
of which IBRD/IDA		45.0
Financing Gap		0.0
DETAILS		
World Bank Group Financing	3	
International Developmen	nt Association (IDA)	45.0
IDA Grant		45.0
Non-World Bank Group Fina	ncing	
Counterpart Funding		20.0
Borrower/Recipient		20.0
Trust Funds		7.0
SAHEL ADAPTIVE SOCIAL	PROTECTION PROGRAM	7.0

# **IDA Resources (in US\$, Millions)**

	Credit Amount	<b>Grant Amount</b>	<b>Guarantee Amount</b>	Total Amount
Mauritania	0.00	45.00	0.00	45.00
National PBA	0.00	27.00	0.00	27.00
Refugee	0.00	18.00	0.00	18.00
Total	0.00	45.00	0.00	45.00

# **Expected Disbursements (in US\$, Millions)**

WB Fiscal Year	2020	2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Annual	0.62	6.65	12.07	11.68	9.40	4.58
Cumulative	0.62	7.27	19.34	31.02	40.42	45.00

## **INSTITUTIONAL DATA**

## **Practice Area (Lead)**

Social Protection & Jobs

## **Contributing Practice Areas**

Fragile, Conflict & Violence, Gender, Poverty and Equity, Urban, Resilience and Land

# **Climate Change and Disaster Screening**

This operation has been screened for short and long-term climate change and disaster risks

# SYSTEMATIC OPERATIONS RISK-RATING TOOL (SORT)

Risk Category	Rating
1. Political and Governance	Substantial
2. Macroeconomic	Substantial
3. Sector Strategies and Policies	Moderate
4. Technical Design of Project or Program	Substantial
5. Institutional Capacity for Implementation and Sustainability	Substantial

Environmental and Social Standards Relevance Given its Context at the Time of Appraisal					
E & S Standards	Relevance				
Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts	Relevant				
Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure	Relevant				
Labor and Working Conditions	Relevant				
Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management	Not Currently Relevant				
Community Health and Safety	Relevant				
Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement	Relevant				
Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources	Not Currently Relevant				
Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities	Not Currently Relevant				
Cultural Heritage	Not Currently Relevant				
Financial Intermediaries	Not Currently Relevant				

**NOTE**: For further information regarding the World Bank's due diligence assessment of the Project's potential environmental and social risks and impacts, please refer to the Project's Appraisal Environmental and Social Review Summary (ESRS).

#### **Legal Covenants**

#### Sections and Description

No later than four (4) months after the Effective Date or any other later date agreed upon in writing with the Association, the PIE shall recruit for the Project: (i) a procurement specialist, (ii) a financial and accounting officer, (iii) an internal auditor, and (iv) a social and gender specialist; all with terms of reference, qualifications and experience acceptable to the Association.

#### Sections and Description

No later than four (4) months after the Effective Date or any other later date agreed upon in writing with the Association, the PIE shall recruit for the Project an external auditor in accordance with the Procurement Regulations.

#### Sections and Description

No later than three (3) months after the Effective Date or at a later date agreed upon in writing with the

Association, the Recipient shall open a separate treasury account or Bank account (Project Account B) and shall maintain the Project Account B open for a period of not less than eight (8) months after the Closing Date, for the exclusive purpose of depositing funds provided by the Recipient for the financing of the Project ("Counterpart Funding"), in an amount not to exceed twenty (20) million United States dollars (US\$20,000,000).

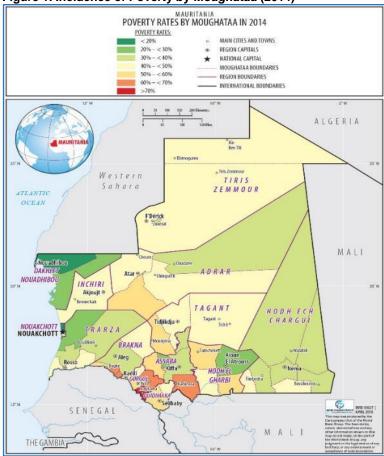
Conditions					
Type Effectiveness	Description The Association is satisfied that the Recipient has an adequate refugee protection framework				
Type Effectiveness	Description  The SASPP Grant Agreement has been executed and delivered and all conditions precedent to its effectiveness or to the right of the Recipient to make withdrawals under it (other than the effectiveness of the Financing Agreement) have been fulfilled				
Type Effectiveness	Description The Subsidiary Agreement has been duly authorized or ratified and executed by the Recipient and the Project Implementing Entity and is legally binding upon the Recipient and the Project Implementing Entity in accordance with its terms				
Type Effectiveness	Description The Recipient has: (i) established the Project Steering and Monitoring Committee; and (ii) appointed the National Project Coordinator, with terms of reference, qualifications and experience satisfactory to the Association; both conditions in accordance with Section I.A. of Schedule 2 to the Financing Agreement.				
Type Effectiveness	Description The Project Manuals have been adopted in form and substance satisfactory to the Association.				

#### I. STRATEGIC CONTEXT

#### **A. Country Context**

- 1. **Mauritania is a vast arid country situated in between North and Sub-Saharan Africa.** Of the country's nearly one million square kilometers of land, only 0.5 percent is arable. Its four million inhabitants, in 2019, are concentrated in Nouakchott (the capital), in the coastal provinces and in the provinces lining the Senegal River.
- 2. The country's impressive natural resource based-economic growth over the past decade has enabled it to graduate into the ranks of lower middle-income countries. Primary economic activities traditionally centered around the production of rice, vegetables and livestock in the south of the country and they remain the poor's main livelihood sources. In addition, in recent years, Mauritania has also successfully tapped mineral resources (iron, copper, gold, oil and gas) as well as fishing reserves. The commodity supercycle allowed for significant Government investments in infrastructure and enabled the country to register one of the best growth performances in the region. As a result, gross domestic product (GDP) per capita increased from US\$700 to US\$1,218 between 2007 and 2018.

Figure 1. Incidence of Poverty by Moughataa (2014)



- Source: National Statistics Office (2014)
- While poverty has declined in some regions, the overall poverty rate remains high in Mauritania, with 31 percent of the population living below the national poverty line (2014). Until the early 2000s, the average annual decline in the poverty rate was around one percentage point. Between 2008 and 2014, poverty reduction accelerated to an average annual rate of almost two percentage points. While the predominantly rural regions of Hodh Chargui, Gorgol, Brakna, Adrar and Tagant registered most progress, the highest poverty rates remain amongst rural households engaged in rainfed agriculture and livestock (Guidimakha, Tagant, Brakna, and Assaba). In the mostly urban coastal provinces, poverty rates are generally lower than elsewhere but are decreasing more slowly, and in Nouakchott, poverty rates remained largely unchanged.
- 4. In a country so heavily dependent on its primary sector, the impact of environmental degradation and climate change on economic development and on the livelihoods of the poor could be catastrophic. Mauritania is caught

between an expanding desert and an eroding coastline. Encroaching desertification, rising temperatures,

increasing water scarcity, more frequent and intense droughts and flash flooding, soil erosion and decreased arable land quality, all threaten the poor's livelihood and food security. Conflicts between pastoralists and farmers, notably in oases, over diminishing natural resources threaten social stability and economic empowerment in rural areas. Rising seawater temperatures, ocean acidification, and over exploitation are depleting valuable fish stocks and depriving coastal populations of vital sources of nutrition and revenue. Annual mean temperatures have increased by approximately 3.1°C across the country since the 1950s. By 2040, mean annual temperature is projected to increase by 0.5 to 2°C.

- 5. Mauritania has been a bulwark against regional instability, but, in an unstable region, spillovers from transnational conflicts are high. Mauritania shares a long border with Algeria and Mali and suffered numerous terrorist attacks during 2005–2011, which shut down a small, but promising desert tourism industry. Taking a hard line on terrorism, the Government has been able to reduce incidents on its territory and maintain political stability in an otherwise volatile region. Yet, continued conflict in Mali has many negative spillovers, including large numbers of refugees, trade disruptions, and illegal trafficking.
- By October 2019, Mauritania hosted around 56,000 Malian refugees in and around Mbera Camp in the Hodh Chargui region and close to 3,000 urban refugees and asylum-seekers (UNHCR 20191). With the Mbera camp, the Bassikounou moughataa<sup>2</sup> has seen its population double. Humanitarian actors, led by UNHCR and the World Food Program (WFP), have traditionally provided the bulk of assistance to refugees, and to some extent, host communities in Mauritania. To date, this has mitigated the impact of the demographic shock on service delivery. However, as humanitarian support declines, access to services will become a challenge. Also, economic opportunities are scarce in this region and competition has increased for sources of energy and for water and pastures for livestock, the main economic sector for both refugees and host communities. Conscious of the likely prolonged nature of forced displacement in the country, the Government of Mauritania (GoM) has developed a Refugee and Host Community Policy Development Letter which lays out strategic directions to ensure the protection of refugees while promoting their increased selfreliance and the resilience of host communities. The World Bank Board approved Mauritania's eligibility for the IDA18 Regional Sub-Window for Refugees and Host Communities (RSW) in November 2018 (see annex 4 for more details). In December 2019, the new Government reaffirmed its engagement to the global pact for refugees and has committed to adopt a law for asylum seekers, to allow refugees to be properly registered in national systems starting with the civil registry, to align access to health services for refugees with national citizens, and to offer the refugees the same access to the job market as national citizens. The World Bank, in consultation with the UNHCR, confirms the continued adequacy of the protection framework.

#### **B. Sectoral and Institutional Context**

- 7. **Mauritania ranks poorly in terms of human development outcomes.** It ranked 150 out of 157 countries in the recent 2018 World Bank Human Capital Index (HCI). Mauritania's score of 0.35 effectively means that a child born today will be an adult 35 percent as productive as somebody who would have benefited from full education and health. Education results are low: even though the average 18-year old is expected to achieve 6.3 years of schooling, this number goes down to 3.4 when adjusted for quality.
- 8. The 2013 National Social Protection Strategy (*Stratégie Nationale de Protection Sociale,* SNPS) lays out the country's vision on social protection (SP). This strategy is centered around five core objectives: (a) contributing to the fight against food insecurity; (b) lowering barriers to access health and education services; (c) reinforcing social security and promoting access to employment; (d) improving living standards through

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> http://reporting.unhcr.org/sites/default/files/UNHCR%20Mauritania%20Operational%20Update%20-%2015OCT19.pdf

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> Administrative divisions include the wilaya (region), moughataa (district), and commune (municipality).

the provision of basic social services; and (e) developing social assistance programs, which target vulnerable groups. It also discusses measures to address climate and disaster risks, including cash transfers during the lean season. A committee, consisting of government representatives, bilateral and multilateral development partners, and nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), was established in 2014 to supervise progress on the implementation of the SNPS.

- 9. **One of the core elements of the SP system is the Social Registry**. Launched in 2016, the Social Registry was first hosted by the Ministry of Economy and Industry (*Ministère de l'Économie et de l'Industrie*, MEI) before moving to the *Taazour* General Delegation in early 2020. It seeks to support the identification of potential beneficiaries and targeting of social programs<sup>3</sup>. In addition to national budget funding, it receives World Bank's technical and financial support.
- 10. The National Social Transfer Program, *Tekavoul*, is a flagship SP program for Mauritania. It is conditional cash transfer (CCT) program, targeting households in extreme poverty. The program five-year cycle consists of quarterly cash transfers conditioned on beneficiaries' participation in social promotion activities designed to promote knowledge of essential family practices (*Pratiques Familiales Essentielles*, PFE) and investment in early childhood development (ECD). The program<sup>4</sup> currently supports 30,000 beneficiary households, selected from the Social Registry, with payments of MRU 6,000 annually (approximately US\$160). The program has helped set-up a payment platform, a management information system and a monitoring and evaluation system which will benefit the proposed project.
- 11. Another large social program is the *Emel* shop program, implemented by the Food Security Office (*Commissariat à la Sécurité Alimentaire, CSA*). It was created in 2012 to help poor households cope with declining cereal production and rising wheat prices. *Emel* stores sell food at subsidized prices and their number has grown steadily (from 1,200 to 1,800 stores between 2012 and 2019). However, the efficiency of the program could be improved by targeting the poorest households and lowering operational costs.
- 12. The National Poverty Reduction Strategy (*Stratégie de la Croissance Accélérée et de la Prospérité Partagée*, SCAPP) 2016 -2030 introduced an explicit objective to establish a shock response<sup>5</sup> system. The vision for this system is to provide regular institutionalized Government support in the planning, coordination, and monitoring of the shock response. This initiative is organized under the oversight of the Prime Minister, but involves the Ministry of Finance, four line ministries, as well as other actors (donors, NGOs, UN agencies). As one element of the shock response, in 2017, Mauritania launched a short-term cash-based safety net program, *Elmaouna* to support the most vulnerable households affected by drought during the lean season.
- of the highest registration rates in the region, but the last mile challenge is severe. The unregistered are poor and vulnerable groups, which are both physically and socially isolated. The barriers they face include the costs and limited availability of transportation to commune centers, where individuals can enroll at Citizen Service Centers (Centres d'Accueil des Citoyens CACs), and the lack of supporting documents such as birth and marriage certificates necessary to register. Administrative and judicial processes to obtain birth and marriage certificates are complex and cumbersome. The Government has thus expressed an interest in exploring ways

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The Social Registry web site includes more details and key documents: http://www.rs.gov.mr/

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>4</sup> The Tekavoul website provides more information: http://www.tekavoul.gov.mr/

<sup>-</sup>

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>5</sup> Mauritania is subject to regular climate shocks such as droughts and floods, which cause spikes in food and nutrition insecurity. Its current response to shocks mainly comprises ad hoc interventions, such as a livestock assistance program in 2018. There is little connection between early warning and response, poor coordination, fragmented and ad hoc interventions, and unclear institutional roles and responsibilities.

to solve some of these challenges.

#### C. Relevance to Higher Level Objectives

- 14. The project is closely aligned with the Mauritania Country Partnership Framework (CPF) (FY18 FY23<sup>6</sup>). The CPF second pillar focuses on building human capital for inclusive growth and Objective 2.1 of the CPF is to increase coverage of the social safety net (SSN) system. The proposed project will both increase the total number of beneficiaries, incorporating additional vulnerable groups (such as refugees), and expand the geographic coverage of existing SP programs (in terms of the number of *moughataas* covered). The cash transfers and accompanying measures supported through the proposed project will also enable beneficiary households to invest in their own education (Objective 2.2 of the CPF) and health (Objective 2.4). In addition, the project aligns with the World Bank's spatial approach to development in Mauritania, in its two focus regions, the so-called "Triangle of Hope" (Gorgol, Assaba, Guidimakha) and the Hodh Chargui region. The proposed project is a flagship program of the Sahel Alliance<sup>7</sup> in Mauritania.
- 15. The project is also closely aligned with the high-level policy objectives of the Government to reduce poverty and vulnerability, set out in SCAPP 2016-2030, specifically the pillar on "Developing human capital and access to basic social services". In September 2019, the new Prime Minister reiterated the Government commitment to the SSN system, with the Social Registry providing the foundation for targeting and a planned expansion of Tekavoul to all 100,000 households in extreme poverty with an increase in the transfer amount.
- 16. The project is also aligned with the World Bank Social Protection and Labor (SPL) Strategy for Africa (2012-2022), the Strategy for Africa (Africa's Future and the World Bank' Support To It, 2011-2021)<sup>8</sup> and the 2019 Africa Human Capital Plan (Powering Africa's Potential Through Its People). It supports the overarching goal of the SPL strategy to help improve resilience, equity, and opportunity for people in both low-and middle-income countries. Resilience will be promoted through protecting assets when shocks occur; equity by setting up channels for the redistribution of national wealth to the poorest; and opportunity by supporting women's and men's productive inclusion as well as investments in the human capital of children. The project follows the strategic direction of moving from fragmented approaches to more harmonized systems for SP, with the Social Registry as a key public good.
- 17. The project is aligned with objectives of the IDA18 sub-window for refugees and host communities, including (a) mitigating the shocks caused by an inflow of refugees and creating social and economic development opportunities for refugees and host communities; (b) facilitating sustainable solutions to protracted refugee situations including through the sustainable socio-economic inclusion of refugees in the host country; and (c) strengthening preparedness for increased or potential new refugee flows.
- 18. Finally, the project will contribute to the World Bank twin goals of ending poverty and boosting shared prosperity. The project will boost shared prosperity by increasing Mauritania's social policy focus on the poorest and investing in the most vulnerable to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty.

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>6</sup> Report 125012-MR

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>7</sup> Launched in 2017, the Sahel Alliance aims to increase financial and technical support to the G5-Sahel countries—Mauritania, Chad, Burkina Faso, Niger, and Mali—over the next five years. Three alliance members (United Kingdom, France, and Germany) are supporting the World Bank Sahel Adaptive Social Protection Program (SASPP) through the regional Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) multi-donor trust fund (MDTF) administrated by the World Bank.

<sup>8</sup> As reiterated in the Africa Regional Update 2019 (Eradicating Poverty and Boosting Shared Prosperity in Africa).

#### II. PROJECT DESCRIPTION

#### A. Project Development Objective

#### **PDO Statement**

The Project Development Objective (PDO) is to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the nationwide adaptive social safety net system and its coverage of poor and vulnerable households with targeted social transfers, including in refugee and host communities.

**PDO Level Indicators** 

#### Progress towards meeting the PDO would likely be measured through the following key results indicators:

Outcome 1. Increased effectiveness and efficiency of the nationwide adaptive social safety net system

- Programs using the Social Registry to select their beneficiaries (number)
- Social safety net programs beneficiary households avoiding negative coping strategies (national/refugee)

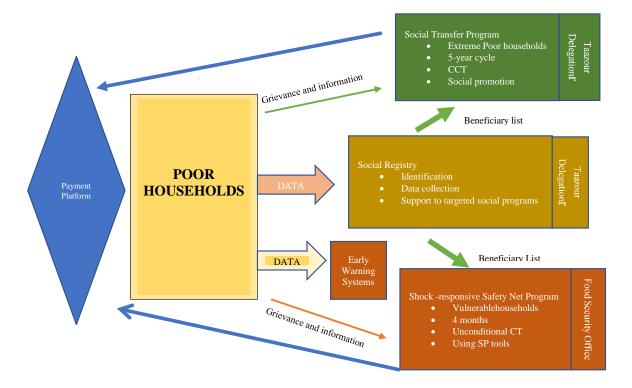
Outcome 2. Increased coverage of poor and vulnerable households with targeted social transfers, including in refugee and host communities.

Beneficiaries of social safety net programs (number, female, refugee)

#### **B. Project Components**

19. The project will support the strengthening and extension of the SSN system in Mauritania to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty. It will build on the outcomes of the ongoing Mauritania Social Safety Net System Project (P150430) which began implementation in September 2015 and has put in place: (a) the Social Registry, which provides an effective and transparent mechanism to target poor and vulnerable households; (b) the National Social Transfer Program, *Tekavoul*, which currently supports 30,000 households in extreme poverty through cash transfers and social promotion activities; and (c) the shock-responsive SSN Program, *Elmaouna*, which reaches 3,000 food-insecure households annually during the lean season. The SSN system main key instruments are summarized in figure 2.

Figure 2: Social Safety Net System



- 20. The proposed project is framed around four components. Component 1 will aim to improve the efficiency of the Government's social programs by updating and enhancing the Social Registry and promoting its usage. This component will be implemented by the *Taazour* General Delegation, which oversees the Social Registry. Component 2 will focus on enhancing the socio-economic inclusion of poor households by strengthening and extending the Social Transfer Program, *Tekavoul*, supporting an adequate re-certification and exit strategy for former *Tekavoul* beneficiaries and facilitating their inclusion in the Civil Registry. This component will also be implemented by the *Taazour* General Delegation. Component 3 will strengthen the shock-responsive system for households vulnerable to climate shocks by further developing the early warning system (EWS), the *Elmaouna* program and the shock response financing strategy and providing a Contingency Emergency Response Component (CERC). This component will be implemented by the CSA and *Taazour*. Component 4 will support the coordination and management of the project and will be implemented by the *Taazour* General Delegation. Implementation was satisfactory in the ongoing project.
- 21. The proposed project will allow for the inclusion of poor and vulnerable households in the refugee and host communities of the Hodh Chargui region within the SSN system, including the Social Registry, *Tekavoul*, and *Elmaouna* programs.

Component 1: Updating and enhancing the Social Registry (US\$7.3 million with US\$4.0 million from national IDA18, US\$0.9 million from IDA18 RSW, US\$0.9 million from ASP MDTF and US\$1.5 million from government)

22. **This component will be implemented by the** *Taazour* **General Delegation.** It supports a full update of the Social Registry and inclusion of eligible refugee households (Sub-component 1.1) and its usage for operational and strategic purposes (Sub-component 1.2).

#### Sub-component 1.1: Updating and expanding the Social Registry (US\$6.9 million)

- The objective of this sub-component is to update the Social Registry throughout Mauritania, 23. including the end-to-end process (quota methodology, community targeting mechanism, data collection, and verification stage). An ongoing update of the Social Registry is critical because the programs which rely on it need up-to-date information, both on the demographic status of households (migration, births, deaths, divorce) and on the evolution of their socioeconomic status (education, income generation, assets, access to services, and so on). The update frequency is a trade-off between implementation costs and value of updated data for programs using the registry.
- 24. The objective agreed with the Government is to complete a full update every three years. The update will proceed by region, starting where the first households were registered (Gorgol region). Given this cycle, about 67,000 households would be registered per year. Quotas will be recalculated based on the 2020 Poverty and Living Standards Measurement household Survey (Enquête sur la Pauvreté et les Conditions de Vie, EPCV) information. The updated methodology will reflect the main improvements achieved during the first phase (locality based, participative process, grievance mechanism, and so on).

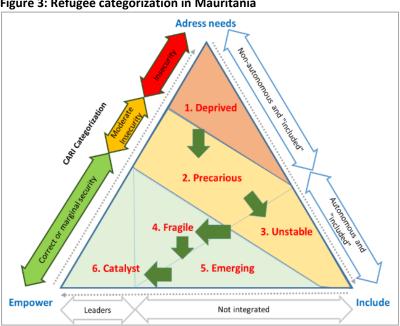


Figure 3: Refugee categorization in Mauritania

Source: UNHCR

25. Households from Hodh Chargui, including those in the Mbera Refugee Camp that are considered poor, will be included the Social Registry. This inclusion will be a positive step towards better coordination between humanitarian actors and the Government and between emergency and development support. The methodology to identify poor refugee households for inclusion in the Social Registry will be based on the profiling work carried out in 2018 by the UNHCR and WFP. It identified six different household categories: (a) deprived; (b) precarious; (c) unstable; (d) fragile (e) emerging; and (f) catalyst (see figure 3). Each category gradually receives (or will

receive) differentiated assistance based on its needs. This profiling work was carried out with the participation of camp and Government authorities. Based on preliminary data analysis, categories 1, 2 and 3 ("deprived", "precarious", and "unstable") which include approximately 7,500 households will enter the Social Registry.

26. This sub-component will finance: (a) the costs related to the community targeting (Social Registry enrolment officers and related logistics and material); (b) the socio-economic data collection costs for up to 350,000 households (70,000 households per year); and (c) the costs related to quality insurance (grievance mechanism, toll-free number, spot-check surveys, process evaluation, and so on).

#### Sub-component 1.2: Promoting the use of the Social Registry (U\$0.4 million)

- 27. The objective of this sub-component is to enhance the Social Registry use both at operational level (program targeting) and strategic level (forward planning). To this end, three activities are being proposed: (a) the pilot and possibly scaled-up introduction of a household Social Registry identification card; (b) the strengthening of communication and outreach; and (c) studies, training and related capacity-building for the promotion of the Social Registry for planning.
- 28. The introduction of a household Social Registry card responds to a request from several actors (such as the CSA, WFP or health partners). Such a card could, for example, give households in the Social Registry priority to *Emel* shops or to universal health coverage interventions. The design of the Social Registry card and the terms of use will be defined over the course of 2020 through a participatory dialogue with relevant stakeholders. A pilot that introduces Social Registry household cards will be undertaken thereafter in one *moughataa*. Based on the pilot's results, the Government may decide to scale-up the distribution of household Social Registry cards nationwide.
- 29. The proposed project will also support the Social Registry Directorate to scale-up its communication and outreach, while strengthening data protection. Few line ministries currently use the Social Registry (most users are linked to projects supported by the World Bank)<sup>9</sup>. In addition, knowledge about the objectives, modalities and strengths of the Social Registry is limited, within the government and among partners. These gaps will be addressed by intensifying the Social Registry's communication and outreach efforts. User agreements will specify authorized uses of the data and protection of personal data.
- 30. The project will also encourage the use of the Social Registry as a tool for program coordination. The objective of this activity is to increase the SCAPP Directorate, Taazour and sectorial ministries' ownership of the Social Registry, by fostering its use for integrated service provision to poor and vulnerable households, and for better planning of investments according to needs.
- 31. This sub-component will finance the costs associated with: (a) the pilot Social Registry card and its evaluation, potential scale-up to 200,000 households; (b) the development of the outreach strategy and related tools and communication campaign; and (c) workshops, analytical and coordination capacity building.

Component 2: Enhancing the socio-economic inclusion of poor households (US\$51.2 million: US\$22.4 million from national IDA18, US\$12.1 million from IDA18 RSW, and US\$16.7 million from government)

32. This component aims to tackle several constraints that hamper the socio-economic inclusion of the poorest households. More specifically, its objectives are to: (a) support the scale-up of the conditional cash transfer *Tekavoul* program to reach a total of 45,000 households in extreme poverty (Subcomponent 2.1); (b) re-certify and develop an economic inclusion scheme for households exiting the *Tekavoul* program (Subcomponent 2.2); and (c) support a pilot for households' Civil Registry enrollment (Subcomponent 2.3). The *Taazour* General Delegation will be responsible for the component's implementation.

Sub-component 2.1: Scale-up the *Tekavoul* program (US\$47.6 million)

33. The proposed project will expand the number of beneficiaries of the *Tekavoul* program from 30,000 to 45,000 households. Transfers will continue to be paid to the household member with primary responsibility for the children's health, nutrition and education, in most cases, the household children's mother. With this extension, the caseload represents 45 percent of the governmental objectives of covering the 100,000 poorest

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>9</sup> In September 2019, the Prime Minister announced that all social programs will eventually have to use the Social Registry for their targeting. In the medium term, the Government may issue a decree to encourage usage of the Social Registry by government departments.

households. Per the government priority to extend coverage, the payment amount supported by the project will remain the same as in the ongoing Safety Net System Project (*Project d'Appui au Système de Filets Sociaux*, PASyFiS, P150430) (MRU 1,500 per quarter, which equates to approximately US\$160 per year). Whenever the Government decides to increase the transfer amount, it will complement the amount supported by the project (the beneficiary will receive a single payment, independent of the financing source).

- 34. The *Tekavoul* program will expand into the Hodh Chargui region with resources from the RSW to support the integration of eligible households among Malian refugees and host communities. This coverage extension will represent the majority of the 15,000 additional households supported by this project. The selection of beneficiaries from host communities around the Mbera camp and other communities in the region will follow the national methodology. Given that Malian refugees in Category 1 have a profile similar to Mauritanian households in extreme poverty, Malian refugee households in the Mbera camp and in surrounding host communities in this category will be eligible for *Tekavoul* (expected number of 5,000 households, see figure 3).
- 35. This subcomponent will finance the costs of the cash transfers, payment fees and operating costs for the social promotion for 45,000 households. Social promotion activities include animators, communication materials and related logistics.

#### Sub-component 2.2: Re-certification and development of an exit strategy for Tekavoul (US\$2.8 million)

- 36. The project will support the design of a re-certification strategy. The first beneficiaries of *Tekavoul* were enrolled in the program in December 2016 and will therefore complete the five-year program cycle by the end of 2021. Households which are still classified as poor or extreme poor (PMT score below that associated with the poverty line or still in the Social Registry) will be re-enrolled for a new five-year cycle of support, and those that are found to be no longer eligible should exit the program.
- 37. Households which exit the *Tekavoul* program will receive an economic inclusion package. The economic inclusion package will consist of: (a) training on life skills and information to help households plan their exit, building on the last sessions of the social promotion and for a duration of six months after the last transfer; and (b) referral of specific household members to existing economic inclusion programs available in their *moughataa*. These programs may include savings associations, income-generation, training, microcredit, and youth employment such as the one under development in the upcoming Youth Employability project (P162916) <sup>10</sup>. In the early months of the proposed project, a comprehensive exit operational process will be developed. Between ten and 20 percent of households are expected to exit the program; that estimate will be updated based on the updated poverty numbers and the results of the impact evaluation under way. As this activity is specific to households, which complete the *Tekavoul* five-year cycle, beneficiaries among refugees and host communities will not benefit from it.
- 38. **This sub-component will finance the development of materials** to include economic inclusion in the social promotion curriculum, the complementary mentoring package to accompany the households for six months after *Tekavoul* transfers end, and a referral system and partnerships with ongoing programs.

#### Sub-component 2.3: Facilitating civil registration (US\$0.8 million)

39. The proposed project could explore ways to facilitate registration of *Tekavoul* beneficiaries in the **Civil Registry.** Preliminary evidence hints at high rates of *Tekavoul* beneficiaries without a National Identity Number (*Numéro National d'Identité*, NNI). The NNI is necessary for school enrollment (even if often waived at the primary level) and exam registration, access to financial services, and a host of other public services.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>10</sup> A mapping of these programs is under way as part of the preparation of the Youth Employability Project.

Several options were identified based on the recommendations of the Civil Registry Technical Note (World Bank, 2019<sup>11</sup>) resulting from the experience of the United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), National Agency for Identification and Population Registration (*Agence Nationale du Registre des Populations et des Titres Sécurisés*, ANRPTS), and NGOs in solving some of the key bottlenecks to access civil identification.

- 40. The sub-component will support a pilot multi-dimensional and collaborative intervention in one moughataa to build lessons learned. This intervention may include activities tackling demand-side barriers such as lack of knowledge about ID benefits (such as access to school), cost and time barriers to access CACs or khadis (judges); as well as supply-side barriers such as civil registration clerks' lack of knowledge about the law's requirements, lack of resources for mobile units, access to internet, availability of khadis, among others. The operational approach will be based on a collaborative agreement between the main actors involved in the area, including the ANRPTS, Taazour, Ministry of Social Affairs, Childhood and Family (Ministère des Affaires Sociales et l'Enfance et de la Famille, MASEF), Ministry of Health (Ministère de la Santé, MoH), Ministry of Justice, and UNICEF which will provide technical assistance (TA)<sup>12</sup>.
- 41. The detail of the activities supported by this sub-component will be discussed in 2020 during a participative process led by the Directorate of Policy and Strategy in MEI. The sub-component could finance the costs related to the mobile units (car, material, furniture), top-up cash transfers to defray the cost associated with the registration (such as transport and administrative fees), communication tools, evaluation and lessons learned study, and a participative workshop to disseminate and discuss lessons learned.

Component 3: Strengthening the shock response system for households vulnerable to climate-shocks (US\$11.1 million: US\$5.0 million from IDA18 RSW and US\$6.1 million from ASP MDTF)

42. This component aims to strengthen the design and implementation of a Government-led shock response system focused on supporting vulnerable households to cope with climate shocks causing food and nutritional insecurity. This component will be mainly implemented by the CSA. More specifically, the objectives of this component are: (a) to enhance the EWS and the shock response coordination framework (Subcomponent 3.1); (b) to support the implementation of shock-responsive safety net programs (Subcomponent 3.2); (c) to design a financing strategy to respond to climate-related shocks (Sub-component 3.3); and (d) to support a CERC for situations of urgent need of assistance (Sub-component 3.4). All Component 3 activities are contributing to establish ASP in Mauritania (see box 1) by fostering an integrated approach for the Government to respond efficiently to shocks.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>11</sup> Background paper for the Mauritania Social Inclusion and Access to the Poor Study (P161068) carried out jointly by the World Bank and the GoM in 2017-2018.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>12</sup> In partnership with the UNHCR, the ANRPTS operates a specific mechanism to register and provide ID documents to Malian refugees in the Mbera camp.

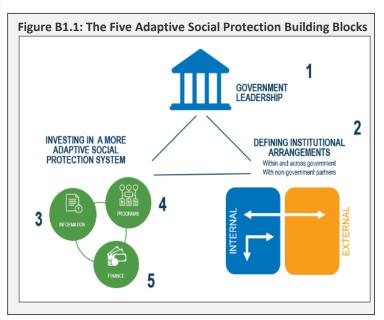
#### Box 1: Adaptive Social Protection (ASP) in Mauritania

The World Bank's global ASP agenda is motivated by a vision for social protection that is better able to assist vulnerable households manage the impacts of covariate shocks. The Sahel ASP Program (SASPP) is at the forefront of implementing this global agenda, experimenting with the Governments of six Sahelian countries that are highly exposed

and vulnerable to the impacts of shocks, including drought and conflict, each exacerbated by climate change. The conceptual framework of ASP around five building blocks is summarized in figure B1.1: (a) government leadership; (b) institutional arrangements; (c) data and information; (d) programs and delivery system, and (e) financing.

ASP in Mauritania mainly focuses on building an effective shock response system. Mauritanian households risk food insecurity and poverty due to shocks stemming from climate change and disasters. Until now, Mauritania has addressed shocks mainly through ad hoc ex post interventions, which may have not benefitted the most vulnerable.

The strategic vision of ASP in Mauritania is to shift from the usual dichotomy between humanitarian and development interventions to a more systemic and integrated approach, using social



protection tools and systems to support timely, effective, and efficient shock responses. This vision corresponds to concrete investment in the humanitarian-development nexus, in line with the "New Way of Working" <sup>13</sup>.

Mauritania is in the process of strengthening the building blocks—with an early warning system, a response plan, a financing mechanism, a targeting mechanism, and shock-responsive safety net programs. In January 2019, the World Bank and the WFP country representatives in Mauritania signed a four-year Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) (2019-2022) to formalize their strategic collaboration to support the GoM's strategy on ASP.

# Sub-component 3.1: Enhancing the early warning system and the shock response coordination (US\$1.5 million)

- 43. Through the following three activities, the proposed project will continue to strengthen the capacity of the Food Security Observatory (Observatoire de la Sécurité Alimentaire OSA) (one of the CSA Directorates) in its mandate to run the EWS for climate-related hazards:
- a. Support for primary data collection and data analysis: The proposed project will support the Food Security Monitoring Survey (FSMS) data collection twice a year at the district level (rather than the present regional level), and the development of a food insecurity prediction model.
- b. Development of a communication platform for better dissemination: The project will strengthen OSA capacity through communication tools such as OSA web site and intranet, map unit, information bulletins, etc.
- c. Strengthening of OSA's technical capacities: The project will also support capacity building for the OSA by bringing in additional technical expertise.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>13</sup> See https://www.agendaforhumanity.org/initiatives/5358

44. The proposed project will also support the establishment of the shock response coordination framework. Since 2016, the World Bank and WFP have jointly supported a policy dialogue with the Government on the shock response agenda. As a result, in 2018, the Government decided to develop a roadmap to provide a common institutional framework to plan, coordinate, and monitor a permanent shock response system. This framework will be inclusive through an ongoing dialogue between the Government and relevant stakeholders. The project will support: (a) the roadmap and milestones defined by the Government (that is, setting up a joint committee, preparing draft decrees and regulation, validating the proposed framework, developing standardized operating procedures, and so on); and (b) the operationalization of the shock response permanent framework through capacity building (national and international technical staff allocated to support the Permanent Secretary, coordination and monitoring costs, learning exchange and workshops, material, and so on).

# Sub-component 3.2: Supporting the implementation of shock-responsive safety net programs (US\$8.9 million)

- 45. The proposed project will support the implementation of shock-responsive safety net programs through three activities (a) support the implementation of *Elmaouna* program; (b) pilot an extension of the *Tekavoul* program in case of shocks; and (c) support the development of the common payment platform for shock-response.
- 46. The first activity of this component will support the implementation of the shock-responsive safety net program *Elmaouna*. The *Elmaouna* program will be implemented during each lean season of the five years of the proposed project to support households affected by climate-related shocks (mainly drought but response to rapid-onset shocks such as floods would also be piloted). If the Bassikounou *moughataa* is affected, *Elmaouna* will integrate eligible refugee households, in close coordination with WFP and UNHCR to ensure consistency between the CSA interventions and those managed by the WFP and UNHCR in the camp. The proposed project will also strengthen the Management Information System (MIS) already established by the ongoing project and the grievance mechanism.
- 47. The second activity of this sub-component will be to implement a pilot to expand *Tekavoul* program when a shock occurs. *Tekavoul* would respond to shocks by expanding vertically (temporary transfer increase) and horizontally (increase in number of beneficiaries selected from the Social Registry) in areas where *Elmaouna* does not operate. This activity will be launched in 2021 as a pilot and will be implemented during at least three years. This activity will enable the GoM to assess cost effectiveness and efficiency of the two options for shock-responsive cash transfers and build lessons learnt for shock response.
- 48. The project will enable to support an average of 8,000 vulnerable households per year for the first three years of the project, either through the *Elmaouna* program or through the *Tekavoul* expansion option (with a proposed respective ratio of 75/25). During the first three years of the project, these cash transfers will be directly financed by the project. Starting from the fourth year, once the Common Financial Vehicle is established, *Elmaouna* and *Tekavoul* shock response could be financed through the Common Financial Vehicle, if this vehicle has been funded (see Sub-component 3.3).
- 49. The third activity of this component will aim to foster the use of the common payment platform by actors involved in the shock response. *Tekavoul* has established a permanent nationwide electronic payment platform<sup>14</sup> that could be used by any other social program wishing to deliver cash to individuals in Mauritania. *Elmaouna* has successfully used this platform since 2017 and WFP tested it in 2018. The project

<sup>14</sup> The payment platform consists of contracts with financial companies (mainly commercial banks) that provide cash transfers through portable devices and smart cards directly to villages (with a maximum distance of 5 kilometers from a beneficiary home).

will support the development of the appropriate tools (such as an application for a tablet or phone to supervise the payment) and finance the fees related to the use of the payment platform by any actor who wants to deliver cash transfers during the shock response (with a specific focus on NGOs and UN agencies).

Sub-component 3.3: Designing a financing strategy to respond to shocks leading to food and nutrition insecurity (US\$0.7 million).

50. This subcomponent will support two activities: (a) the design of a financing strategy to respond to shocks leading to food and nutritional insecurity and (b) the establishment of a Common Financial Vehicle to respond to those shocks. In early 2018, the Africa Disaster Risk Financing Program<sup>15</sup> carried out and presented a disaster risk financing diagnostic to the Government. Following the diagnostic, on request of the Government, the World Bank team prepared a policy note, which lays out key elements for the development of a financing strategy related to shocks affecting food and nutrition security (box 2).

#### Box 2: Shock response financing strategy policy note summary

Historically, the GoM's response to food insecurity has been reactive, which sometimes led to substantial budget shocks. Following the 2012 food insecurity crisis, the Government reallocated a total of MRU 3.3 billion (US\$111 million in 2012) or 10 percent of the budget through the *Emel* program, which led to a four percent GDP budget deficit.

Establishing a strategy for financing the risk of cyclical food insecurity would enable the GoM to better plan and financially manage the shocks induced by drought episodes, which cause substantial increase in rural food insecurity. The strategic financial approach will provide ex ante mechanisms and resources to maximize the Government's response to the drought-affected population. Ex ante planning and a financial strategy adapted and flexible to potential future impacts will allow (a) to reduce expenditures in the medium and long term by protecting livelihoods and building resilience; (b) to strengthen fiscal stability and public financial management (FM); and (c) to create the institutional framework for both greater coordination among response actors and better monitoring of expenditures.

Such a financial protection strategy requires strengthening or adopting complementary risk financing instruments. Operationalizing a Common Financial Vehicle would streamline the different sources of financing and the related interventions. To complement the retention capacity of such a vehicle, risk-transfer instruments and mechanisms, such as the sovereign insurance from the African Risk Capacity (ARC) Insurance Company Limited, can play a key role to ensure a sustainable financial response to food insecurity. Optimizing each instrument under a single financial protection strategy will consolidate the Government's capacity to finance frequent events with relatively low impacts, as well as less frequent events causing a major food crisis.

- 51. The proposed project will support the Government in designing a financing strategy related to shocks affecting food and nutrition security. This activity will start with an 18-month participatory process involving the main governmental stakeholders and the relevant partners, to guarantee alignment with other donors' efforts in particular, (a) the African Development Bank which leads the implementation of the African Disaster Risk Financing Program in Mauritania; and (b) the WFP which is the Government's main partner in financing food and nutrition security in the country. The adoption of this strategy will be a prerequisite for the establishment of a financial vehicle.
- 52. The project will also support the Government in designing and formalizing the operational rules for the common financial vehicle. The financial vehicle would cover shocks associated with climate-related events. Its operational rules will clarify triggers for the activation of the vehicle, eligible expenditures, roles and responsibilities of each stakeholder, definition of a Board for overseeing the activities of the vehicle as well as rules for acquiring risk transfer instruments and accessing public budget allocations.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>15</sup> A collaboration between the African, Caribbean and Pacific – European Union (ACP-EU) program and the World Bank.

53. The project will follow a phased approach towards the implementation of the financial vehicle. In the first two years of the proposed project, the focus will be on developing the legal, financial and institutional frameworks and systems for the vehicle based on a detailed technical analysis and assessment of the required institutional capacity. At the beginning of the third year, it is expected that the vehicle will be established. The government will then need to mobilize resources to capitalize and replenish the fund, particularly from its own annual budget and with the support of donors that may invest in the response to shocks.

#### Sub-component 3.4: Contingent Emergency Response Component (US\$0 million)

- 54. This CERC is included under the project in accordance with OP/BP 10.00 (Investment Project Financing, IPF), paragraphs 12 and 13, for situations of urgent need of assistance. This will allow for rapid reallocation of project proceeds in the event of a natural or man-made disaster or crisis that has caused or is likely to imminently cause a major adverse economic and/or social impact. To trigger this component, the Government needs to declare an emergency or provide a statement of fact justifying the request for the activation of the use of emergency funding. To allocate funds to this component, the Government may request the World Bank to reallocate project funds to support response and reconstruction.
- 55. If the World Bank Group agrees with the determination of the disaster and associated response needs, this component would draw uncommitted resources from other expenditure categories and/or allow the Government to request the World Bank to re-categorize and reallocate financing from other project components to cover emergency response and recovery costs. This component could also be used to channel additional funds should they become available as a result of an emergency. IDA18 RSW funds can only be mobilized for the CERC if these funds support activities dedicated to refugees and host communities.
- 56. Disbursements would be made against a positive list of critical goods or the procurement of works and consultant services required to support the immediate response and recovery needs. A specific Emergency Response Operations Manual will apply to this component, detailing FM, procurement, environmental and social standards, and any other necessary implementation arrangements. The development and the approval of this manual by the Government will be an effectiveness condition.

<u>Component 4: Project Coordination and Management (US\$2.4 million: US\$0.6 million from national IDA18 and US\$1.8 million from government)</u>

57. **This component will support activities related to the management of the project.** To this end, it will support a project fiduciary coordination team, located within the *Taazour* General Delegation. The team will ensure that the proposed project is fully operational and efficiently implemented in compliance with the Financing Agreement, Project Appraisal Document, and the implementation manuals (Administrative, Procurement and Accounting, Social Registry, *Tekavoul* and *Elmaouna* programs and the Common Financial Vehicle Manuals).

#### 58. **Specifically, this component will support:**

- a. Core administrative project staff, including a Project Coordinator, fiduciary specialists (procurement and FM), and a social and gender specialist who will be located in the *Taazour* General Delegation and support all project activities<sup>16</sup>. Key staff contracted by the *Tadamoun* Agency under the on-going project, will be reconducted, conditional on a positive performance evaluation.
- b. The focal point for the four projects financed by the RSW to ensure dialogue with other actors working with refugees and host populations (see annex 1 and 4).
- c. Equipment and operating costs directly linked to the daily management of the project (utilities and supplies, communications, equipment maintenance costs, and so on).

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>16</sup> Technical staff for the Social Registry, *Tekavoul* and *Elmaouna* are supported under Components 1, 2 and 3 respectively.

- d. Regular internal and external audits (focusing on financial and procurement aspects).
- e. Trainings, study tours, sensitization on SP issues to broader audiences nationally.
- f. Costs associated with project reporting, including a mid-term review involving stakeholders and civil society.
- g. Costs associated with carrying out the activities included in the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).

#### **Project Costs and Financing**

The project will use a standard IPF instrument with US\$27 million from national IDA and US\$18 million provided by the IDA18 RSW which is co-financing three other projects in Mauritania. An additional US\$7 million will be provided from the regional SASPP Trust Fund thanks to a contribution from the German Agency for International Cooperation (*Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit*, GIZ). Finally, as reflected in the project request, the Mauritanian Government will provide the equivalent of US\$20 million (US\$4 million per year). Table 1 below summarizes the budget breakdown per financing source.

Table 1: Project budget breakdown (US\$ million)

Components	IDA18 Nation al	IDA18 RSW	SASPP MDTF	Govern- ment	TOTAL
1: _Updating and enhancing the Social Registry	4	0.9	0.9	1.5	7.3
2: _Enhancing the socio-economic inclusion of poor households	22.4	12.1		16.7	51.2
3: _Strengthening the shock response system for households vulnerable to climate-shocks		5	6.1		11.1
4: Project coordination and management	0.6			1.8	2.4
TOTAL	27	18	7	20	72

#### C. Project Beneficiaries

- 60. **Implementation areas will differ depending on the activities**. The Social Registry will be deployed and updated throughout the whole Mauritanian territory. The safety net program *Tekavoul* will be implemented in 15 districts (the eight where the program started with support from the ongoing project and the seven districts of Hodh Chargui). The shock-responsive cash transfers will support poor and vulnerable households in areas identified each year by the EWS.
- 61. **Direct beneficiaries of the project will include**: (a) 45,000 households in extreme poverty<sup>17</sup> (about 297,000 individuals) beneficiaries of the *Tekavoul* program selected from the Social Registry; (b) a cumulated number of 24,000 poor and vulnerable households (about 158,400 individuals) beneficiaries of the shock-responsive cash transfers identified from the Social Registry; and (d) *Taazour*, CSA, and municipalities' staff (up to 80) who will participate in specific trainings and study tours financed by the project.
- 62. **Indirect beneficiaries of the project will include:** (a) the 200,000 households registered in the Social Registry that will benefit from social programs; (b) the users of the Social Registry; and (c) local communities benefitting from economic spillovers of cash transfers.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>17</sup> This represents 7.2 percent of the total population and approximately 45 percent the population in extreme poverty according to the 2014 EPCV (extreme poverty rate was 16.6 percent)

63. The IDA18 RSW resources will foster a key synergy across World Bank programs, namely the inclusion of the poorest/most vulnerable refugee and host communities' households in targeted interventions to address extreme poverty and promote access to services. The RSW allocation will support the integration of refugee and host communities in the governmental safety net system. In Mauritania, three other projects will be co-financed by the IDA18 RSW: the Water and Sanitation Project (P167328), the Productive and Resilient Intermediate Cities Project (P169332), and the Health System Additional Financing (P170585). The overall objective is to improve the delivery of basic social services and infrastructure for refugees and host communities in targeted areas (see annex 4). The proposed project will contribute to and benefit from the on-going ASP thematic work stream on refugees which seeks to collect best practices for SPJ refugee-inclusive projects.

#### **D. Results Chain**

A theory of change guides the project's outputs and outcomes toward the realization of both the PDO and high-level and long-term objectives related to poverty reduction, increased resilience and human capital development in Mauritania. The theory of change identifies the elements necessary for a more effective and efficient nationwide ASP system with higher coverage of poor and vulnerable households (figure 4) as follows: (a) enhanced efficiency and effectiveness of safety net programs through stronger communication and outreach including an updated social registry, effective targeting and payment systems and better coordination for shock response; (b) increased inclusion of extreme poor households in safety nets that address structural roots of poverty and of vulnerable households in shock-responsive safety nets.

**Components Outcome Indicators Objectives Outcomes** Number of programs using Update and To increase the the Social Registry to select enhancement of the **Enhanced efficiency** their beneficiaries effectiveness and **Social Registry** and effectiveness of efficiency of the social programs nationwide adaptive social safety net system and its Socio-economic SSN programs beneficiary inclusion of households households avoiding negative coverage of poor and coping strategies in extreme poverty Increased inclusion of vulnerable extreme poor households with households in safety targeted social nets that address structural roots of transfers, including in poverty and of Shock response system refugee and host vulnerable households Number of beneficiaries of for climate-related food communities. in shock-responsive social safety net programs insecurity safety nets

Figure 4: Project's Theory of Change

#### E. Rationale for World Bank Involvement and Role of Partners

65. The World Bank has been providing significant support to the SSN system in Mauritania since 2015. The SSN in Mauritania has been pivoting from categorical, in-kind fragmented interventions to a poverty-targeted cash-based system over the course of the past five years. Building on lessons learnt from the ongoing

project, the proposed project will support further consolidation of the system and stronger coordination.

- advantage. Over the past decade in Africa, the World Bank has developed an unparalleled knowledge base on the development of SSN systems, the design of regular and adaptive cash transfer programs, and more recently on the provision of benefits to refugees. Internally, the team can draw from global expertise on delivery systems (through the Social Protection and Jobs Delivery Systems Global Solutions Group) and forced displacement/ refugees (through the Fragility, Conflict, Violence [FCV] group in the World Bank). Within the Sahel, the World Bank has garnered a significant knowledge base through the SASPP.
- 67. The World Bank's SASPP is supporting transformative dialogue amongst Governments and partners to establish a systemic approach for effective climate shocks response. Since 2015, the SASPP, funded by the Department for International Development (DFID), the French Development Agency (*Agence Française de Développement* AFD), and GIZ, has provided additional resources for a comprehensive package of knowledge activities, TA, and capacity building that were geared toward exploring synergies between climate change management, disaster risk management (DRM), and SP and have informed the design of the proposed project.
- 68. The proposed project will deepen strategic and operational partnerships built while implementing the ongoing project: (a) based on their 2019-2022 MoU, the World Bank and WFP will continue to implement annual joint action plans to support the Government on ASP and shock response; (b) UNICEF will continue to play a key role in supporting the social promotion activities implemented by *Tekavoul*, and will bring their experience on civil registry enrollment facilitation; (c) the UNHCR will be a key partner for all the interventions related to refugee and host communities; and (d) coordination with the AfDB around the financing of the shock response will support the Government in building an integrated shock response financing strategy.

#### F. Lessons Learned and Reflected in the Project Design

- 69. The proposed project builds on lessons learned during the implementation of the ongoing PASyFiS (P150430) and from recent international experience. The project design incorporates the wide array of lessons learned through systematic testing, implementation, pilot activities, system assessments, and process evaluations.
- 70. Effective poverty reduction in Mauritania requires a diverse set of interventions. Poverty is multi-dimensional with very low access to human capital and basic services in the locations where the poorest live. To address structural poverty and help address its root causes, a variety of activities are needed to effectively meet the needs of the poorest and most vulnerable populations. Research has found that cash transfers have a greater overall impact when they are accompanied by complementary measures (for example, training programs, health and nutrition interventions, quality schools, and so on). In addition to providing resources to meet immediate needs and address demand-side constraints to households' investment in their human capital, the World Bank is also supporting projects in health and education, access to water and local development which will strengthen the supply of these key services.
- 71. **The SSN sector needs to operate as a system**. Even though the Government started a process of consolidation and coordination with support from the World Bank, efficiency and effectiveness gains are still under-realized, notably with respect to the use of the Social Registry as a planning tool and the coordination between humanitarian, DRM and social assistance interventions. The incipient management information tools allow for a proper monitoring and evaluation (M&E) of programs and beneficiaries and can strengthen evidence-based decision-making. To improve the efficiency and effectiveness of the sector, the project would continue to foster more harmonized SP systems by: (a) improving vertical and horizontal coordination; (b) enhancing adequate delivery systems for SP programs (Social Registry, MIS, targeting system, payment system, among others); and (c) by building administrative and operational capacity for program

implementation.

- 72. **Building capacity to implement social protection interventions requires institutional strengthening.** The project aims to support government SP policies and programs. Since the GoM's technical and financial capacity for the implementation of these policies and programs is still limited, the proposed project will provide institutional and financial support to *Taazour* and the CSA to increase their technical capacity at the central and decentralized levels.
- 73. A sustainable climate shock response strategy is key to maintaining recent poverty reduction gains. The ability to rapidly scale up cash transfers is essential to effectively prevent negative outcomes on household consumption in the event of a disaster and to protect livelihoods and assets. The ongoing project laid the groundwork for using existing safety net programs, mechanisms, and procedures to provide emergency cash transfers in the event of a shock. The implementation of *Elmaouna* provided a lot of lessons on how to identify, register, and transfer money to vulnerable households affected by a shock.
- 74. Existing gender imbalances in Mauritania should be considered when targeting social services, productive and human capital development activities. Socio-economic data show that women are significantly disadvantaged in Mauritania<sup>18</sup>. To address this gap, the project delivers cash transfers to the main children caregivers (mostly women), which potentially provides them with more agency to decide on household expenses and alleviate their household's poverty and more social standing within their households and communities, and releases some of the stress linked to poverty. A 2018 evaluation of the *Elmaouna* program shows that more than 90 percent of the cash transfers managed by women go to expenses for improved meals and children's health and education. Specific local gender gaps in access to health and education, jobs and assets, and voice will inform the design of specific project activities, considering overlapping gaps such as those linked to refugee status.

#### III. IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

#### A. Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

- 75. The overall implementation arrangement for the proposed project will build on the structure put in place for the ongoing project:
  - a. The National Social Protection Strategy Steering Committee (Comité de Pilotage de la Stratégie Nationale de Protection Sociale CP-SNPS) is co-chaired by the Principal Secretaries (Secrétaires Généraux) of the MASEF and MEI. The committee is multi-sectoral and includes, among others, representatives from other ministries involved in SP as well as the CSA, the Taazour General Delegation, civil society representatives, and donors. It provides strategic guidance for the SNPS.
  - b. The National Social Protection Strategy Technical Committee (*Comité Technique de la Stratégie Nationale de Protection Sociale* CT-SNPS) provides technical support to the CP-SNPS.
  - c. The PASyFiS steering and monitoring committee will be presided by *Taazour* General Secretary. It includes one representative of all the actors involved in the implementation of the project. Civil society and beneficiary representatives will also be included in the steering committee for this project. It will hold quarterly meetings during the five years of the proposed project, to validate the project manuals, annual work plans and budget, and closely monitor project implementation.
- 76. The main implementing agency will be the *Taazour* General Delegation<sup>19</sup>. The *Taazour* General

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<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>18</sup> See annex 3.

<sup>19</sup> The Taazour General delegation was created by Presidential Decree 385-2019 as a public agency for National Solidarity and Fight

delegation is inheriting the structure and teams of the *Tadamoun* Agency which has demonstrated a satisfactory capacity to implement fiduciary responsibilities linked to the ongoing PASyFiS and to implement the *Tekavoul* program. It will continue to have the overall fiduciary responsibility for the implementation of the proposed project. The *Taazour* General Delegation will host a dedicated project coordinator, fiduciary specialists (procurement, accounting and audit), and a social and gender specialist to support all project activities. The fiduciary team in *Tadamoun/Taazour* for the ongoing project will remain responsible for implementing fiduciary activities for the proposed project. As the Social Registry Directorate has been moved from the MEI to the *Taazour* General Delegation early 2020, *Taazour* will be responsible for the implementation of Components 1, 2 and 4 of the proposed project. The CSA will implement Component 3. It has demonstrated the capacity to implement the shock-responsive program *Elmaouna* over the course of the ongoing PASyFiS.

#### **B. Results Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements**

- 77. The PDO-level and intermediate results indicators would be monitored using the following sources and methodologies: (i) data collected through MISs supported by the project (registry, payment systems); (ii) regular administrative data collection processes; (iii) beneficiary surveys (spot checks) supported by the project and conducted by outsourced external firm(s); (iv) process evaluations of the Social Registry, the cash transfers and the human development (social promotion) interventions supported by the project; (v) an additional round of the cash transfer impact evaluation conducted by outsourced external firms; (vi) other M&E studies conducted by the Client; and (vii) progress reports to be prepared by the project implementation team (especially the M&E specialist).
- 78. The *Taazour* team would be responsible for gathering the relevant reports and information from CSA representatives and other relevant parties involved in project implementation to monitor the PDO and results, and for communicating with the World Bank according to the frequency of reports to be described in the project's Results Framework. The proposed project will also support continued capacity-building for *Taazour* General Delegation and CSA to better track implementation, monitor safety net interventions, and evaluate policy and programs based on the systematic and organized feedback from beneficiaries, impact evaluations and the analysis of MIS data.
- 79. **Digital innovations will be leveraged to support the monitoring and evaluation of the project during implementation**. In particular, the Geo-Enabling initiative for Monitoring and Supervision (GEMS) under the Kobo Toolbox Platform piloted under the on-going project will continue to be leveraged for this project. The GEMS will enable *Taazour* to collect and structure digital data that automatically feeds into a centralized M&E system. The platform will be customized to capture relevant indicators, photos, audio, videos; time and date stamps; and GPS coordinates that allow for automated geo-mapping of the project during implementation. This platform is already used in other Sahel countries and is being deployed to the other developing partners members of the Sahel Alliance. Using these tools systematically allows remote supervision, frequent environmental and social monitoring, and coordination across projects and partners working in the same area.

#### C. Sustainability

80. The sustainability of the activities supported by the project can be assessed through three

Against Exclusion. Its objectives are *inter alia* to: (a) define national social protection, solidarity and social cohesion policies; (b) to coordinate the implementation of the national SP policy with poor and vulnerable populations; and (c) ensure universal access to basic services for these populations.

**perspectives**: (a) political ownership, assessing the support at policy level; (b) financing sustainability, assessing the resources available and the fiscal perspective; and (c) institutional sustainability, assessing the strength of the institutional framework.

- 81. **Political ownership.** The GoM has strong ownership of the project objectives. Senior Government officials<sup>20</sup> regularly highlight the SSN system and its mains instruments as a critical element in the fight against poverty. By supporting the social safety net system as a flagship program and funding it, the GoM demonstrates its commitment to both diversify and modernize the economy and protect the poor during the transition. This project builds on the ongoing one to progressively support the shift in social compact. The design of the system's social accountability mechanisms may also support that shift in Mauritania.
- 82. **Financial sustainability.** The cash transfer program for households in extreme poverty is financially sustainable. Mauritania has the capacity to generate additional resources to sustain and expand the program by making better use of existing resources and securing additional funding. The cost of the transfer program to 100,000 households (including 15 percent administrative cost) is low (around 0.37 percent of GDP with the current cash transfer amount and 0.88 percent of GDP when the government increases the transfer to MRU 3,600 per quarter). This is affordable when compared to the average social assistance spending in the world (1.5 percent of GDP), in Africa (1.3 percent of GDP), and lower-middle-income countries (1.2 percent of GDP). The development of key permanent delivery systems to implement SSN programs improves the cost-efficiency of interventions and reduces operational costs. Maximizing the efficiency and effectiveness of SSN programs is paramount given the tight fiscal environment and competing demands. In other middle-income countries (Brazil, Mexico, South Africa, Romania, and Turkey) such savings have amounted to up to almost half of the operational cost of existing programs. Finally, the establishment of a common financial vehicle as a permanent instrument to support shock response will also enhance sustainability.
- 83. **Institutional sustainability.** Strong institutions are critical to implementing programs on a large scale in a transparent and professional manner, ensuring coordination and efficiency in their delivery, and ensuring sustained political commitment. Laws, policies, and strategies are increasingly being deployed to anchor social safety nets in Mauritania (a) a National Social Protection Policy was approved in 2013; (b) a decree to institute the Social Registry was published in March 2016; (c) the 2016-30 SCAPP provides a vision for social safety nets and ASP; and (d) in 2018, the Government started a process to institutionalize a permanent shock-responsive framework. Oversight, coordination, and management of the most crucial building block, the Social Registry, is with a high-level General Delegation with a cross-sectoral mandate.

#### IV. PROJECT APPRAISAL SUMMARY

#### A. Technical, Economic and Financial Analysis

84. The proposed project has several elements, which are expected to impact beneficiary outcomes positively. These include: (a) the widespread promotion of the Social Registry amongst other development partners, including donors and NGOs; (b) the increase in *Tekavoul* beneficiary households from the existing 30,000 to approximately 45,000 households, including amongst refugees and host communities; (c) an economic inclusion package for those exiting the *Tekavoul* program; and (d) the upgrading of the EWS and continuation and expansion of the shock response cash transfers to an average 8,000 households annually.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>20</sup> Presidential speech at the independence ceremony on November 28, 2018 and Prime Minister's general policy speech to the General Assembly on September 5, 2019.

- 85. The proposed project will have critical indirect and direct impacts on welfare and poverty. The updating and enhancing of the Social Registry will have important indirect impacts, in terms of improving the propensity of the poorest households to receive support from government programs (including those financed through this project), as well as from other development and humanitarian partners. The cash transfers and economic inclusion package provided through the *Tekavoul* program will have a direct welfare impact for beneficiary households, but also important spillover effects for all communities (see annex 2). Meanwhile, the support provided for shock response will avert long-lasting impacts of temporary shocks on poor households, including the need to resort to negative coping strategies (such as selling productive assets, or withdrawing children from the education system) and potentially on the country through sustainable financing.
- 86. The *Tekavoul* program is currently undergoing a rigorous impact evaluation to assess the impacts of the following: (a) *Tekavoul* on household living conditions, health, nutrition and children's education; (b) social promotion activities on the adoption of new behaviors in terms of hygiene, nutrition and parenting practices; (c) *Tekavoul*'s combination of cash transfers with accompanying measures; and (d) variants of the productive support package (with or without psycho-social support, as well as with or without the cash grant). Midline results from this impact evaluation will be available in June 2020. The proposed project will then incorporate findings from the impact evaluation to refine the implementation of *Tekavoul*. It will continue to support the impact evaluation and a follow-up survey will be conducted in 2022/2023 to measure longer-term impacts of *Tekavoul*.
- 87. For the purpose of the economic and financial analysis, the costs and stream of benefits for each intervention are estimated separately. For the *Tekavoul* program, beyond the impacts on poverty (which are apparent when using the international poverty line), are important impacts on food security, human capital development, productive investments, as well as other spillover effects on local economies, which will be assessed in the impact evaluation. The transfer amount is relatively small as the GoM focused on expanding coverage first. Based on the experience with similar programs, these will in turn result in prolonged increases in household consumption for the extreme poor, which are estimated at six percent. Under this scenario, the internal rate of return (IRR) outweighs the discount rate. For the economic inclusion package, an assumption has been made that beneficiaries will experience a four percent increase in earnings (in line with international evidence). The IRR exceeds the discount rate in this scenario. For the EWS and *Elmaouna*, the gains are in terms of the avoidance of future household welfare losses. Under the assumption that every dollar invested in these programs, five will be averted in losses, the IRRs for these programs also significantly exceed the discount rate (table 2).

**Table 2. Summary of Projected Costs and Benefits** 

Costs in US\$ million	Tekavoul	Economic inclusion package	Shock-responsive safety nets
Total costs	47.60	2.82	9.28
Total Benefits	358.08	22.03	38.88
Net Present Value	34.48	2.31	20.20
Discount Rate	10%	10%	10%
Benefit to cost ratio	2.0	2.1	3.4
IRR	16%	16%	79%

#### **B. Fiduciary**

#### (i) Financial Management

- 88. The Financial aspects of the project will be managed by the *Taazour* General Delegation which absorbed the team and infrastructure of the Tadamoun Agency in December 2019. An assessment of the *Tadamoun* Agency's dedicated FM team for the proposed project was carried out in September 2019. The assessment entailed a review of its capacity and its ability to record, control, and manage all the project resources and produce timely, understandable, relevant, and reliable information for the key stakeholders including the Government and the World Bank.
- 89. The objective of the assessment was to determine whether the *Tadamoun* Agency's dedicated team had acceptable FM arrangements in place. The FM assessment was carried out in accordance with the Financial Management Practices Manual issued by the Financial Management Board on March 1, 2010 and retrofitted on February 4, 2015. These arrangements would ensure that the implementing entity: (a) uses project funds only for the intended purposes in an efficient and economical way; (b) prepares accurate and reliable accounts as well as timely periodic financial reports; (c) safeguards assets of the project, and (d) has acceptable auditing arrangements.
- 90. This proposed project will be managed through the existing FM arrangements in place for the ongoing safety net project under the responsibility of *Taazour* General Delegation (which absorbed the *Tadamoun* Agency). These arrangements include: (a) a FM team fully dedicated to the project activities and familiar with World Bank procedures and cash transfer interventions; this FM team comprising a financial and accounting officer, an administrative assistant and an accounting assistant remains adequate for the second phase project; (b) a multi-project accounting software, which will easily integrate the project's accounts; (c) an internal auditor; (d) an administrative and financial management manual in place.
- 91. The overall financial management performance of the ongoing safety net project has been rated as satisfactory for the following reasons: (a) the quarterly interim financial reports (IFRs) are submitted on time and their quality is satisfactory; (b) the external auditors have issued an unqualified opinion (clear opinion) on the 2018 financial statements of the PASyFiS project; (c) the internal control is satisfactory; and (d) the accounting system in place is adequate.
- 92. **Conclusion of the FM assessment**: The assessment concludes that the financial management arrangements in *Taazour* General Delegation would satisfy the World Bank's minimum requirements under Bank Policy and Directive on IPF effective in 2017. The overall FM risk for the project is rated as moderate.

#### (ii) Procurement

- 93. Procurement procedures for the Mauritania Social Safety Nets II project will be carried out in accordance with the World Bank procurement regulations. The Borrower will carry out procurement under the proposed project in accordance with the World Bank's 'Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers' (Procurement Regulations) dated July 2016 and revised in November 2017 and August 2018 under the New Procurement Framework (NPF), and the 'Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants', dated July 1, 2016, and other provisions stipulated in the Financing Agreement.
- 94. The procurement arrangements for the project will be managed by the *Taazour* General Delegation. The *Taazour* procurement commission will be responsible for contract awards. No procurement should be done at provincial/ *moughataa* level (except purchases considered as operating costs and not subject to the procurement plan [PP]).

- 95. **Project Procurement Strategy for Development (PPSD) and PP.** According to the requirement of the procurement regulations, the Recipient has developed a PPSD, based on which the PP for the first 18 months has also been prepared. The PP sets out the selection methods to be followed by the Recipient during the project implementation in the procurement of goods, works, and consulting services. The PP includes cost estimates, time schedules, the World Bank's review requirements, and brief description of the activities/contracts. The PP will be updated at least every 12 months, or as required to reflect the actual project implementation needs, but each update shall require World Bank no-objection. All PPs will be publicly disclosed in accordance with World Bank Group disclosure policy.
- 96. **The Procurement capacity is considered moderately satisfactory**. The *Tekavoul* program team and the *Tadamoun* Procurement Commission have carried out procurement activities for the ongoing project (P150430). While working on these projects in the past five years, the team has revealed capacity gaps. The scale-up of project activities may stretch the capacity of the current team to handle procurement in an adequate manner. Furthermore, this new project will be subject to the Procurement Regulations while the former one was under the Guidelines regime. Therefore, the *Taazour* General Delegation shall be strengthened with the recruitment of an experienced procurement specialist acceptable to the World Bank, no later than four months after project effectiveness. The specialist will ensure adequate knowledge transfer to the existing team, which should be reconducted after a performance evaluation.
- 97. The ongoing project has an administrative manual describing procurement procedures. This manual should be updated to take into account: (a) the World Bank's New Procurement Regulations 2016, (b) the new institutional framework resulting from the 2017 public procurement reform; (c) the creation of an Internal Procurement Commission (Commission Interne des Marchés de l'Autorité Contractante, CIMAC) at Taazour level for the processing of bids below the threshold of the procurement commission; (d) the obligation to involve value for money (VFM) in the procurement processes of activities financed by the project; and (e) the insertion of a clause on dual reviews. The updated manual should define the composition and modalities of CIMAC meetings and decision-making. The revised procedures manual, including a procurement section, shall be prepared and validated before project effectiveness.
- 98. **The procurement risk is moderate**. This rating is based on the capacity of the existing procurement team, including capacity-building needs and the fact that it has limited experience with the World Bank new Procurement Regulations. The proposed mitigation measures include: the recruitment of an experienced procurement specialist; the creation of a CIMAC in *Taazour*; training of the new Coordinator, procurement staff, and members of the *Taazour* CIMAC on the New Procurement Policy for Investment Projects; and the update of the project's administrative, financial and procurement procedures manual.

#### C. Legal Operational Policies

	Triggered?
Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	No
Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60	No

#### D. Environmental and Social

99. The summary of Environment and Social Standards (ESSs) that are relevant to this project is as follows:

- 100. **ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts.** The project will not support any rehabilitation/renovation of infrastructure. There will therefore be no adverse risks and impacts from works on the environment. Since the project does not have activities that will generate any adverse impacts or risks on human population and environment, the project is classified as low risk from environmental perspective and as defined under the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). The screening has concluded that the client does not need to prepare an environmental management plan to mitigate potential environmental impacts arising out of proposed project.
- 101. From a social perspective, the project is expected to have a positive social impacts on the poorest households and refugee communities. However, the challenge of protecting and empowering refugees and improving the resilience of host populations could trigger social risks during implementation such as the exclusion and discrimination of certain categories, like vulnerable refugees, weak communication, low integration of certain actors (civil society, local authorities, press), labor conditions, GBV/SEA. Host populations are also affected by difficult living conditions due to the pressure of refugees and their livestock on the natural resources of the host area (water, grazing, wood), which may exaxerbate conflicts. As the major project activities will concern cash transfers, social inclusion will be well defined.
- 102. **ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure.** The project will support citizen engagement through the development and implementation of an inclusive and participatory communications strategy supported through the Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure Plan (SEIDP). This document is part of the Recipient's ESCP with a focus on measures addressing governance risks linked to national implementing agencies' integration of the refugees, especially for vulnerable peoples, working conditions, health, GBV, and security of persons involved in the implementation of the project activities in the project area. Citizen engagement indicators have been included in the results matrix. Citizen engagement is being facilitated by the clear identification of beneficiaries during preparation and implementation. Throughout the project, women and men will be consulted, and opportunities will be provided to collaborate with the project and participate in the sustainability of the investments.
- 103. **ESS2 Labor and working conditions:** The project could involve direct workers (some 10 technical consultants) and civil servants. For the direct workers, the Labor Management Procedures (LMP) will provide measures to address the terms and conditions of employment, nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for employment, worker's organizations, restrictions on child and forced labor, and occupational health and safety requirements. The civil servants would be governed by the civil service code, which forbids child and forced labor; the LMP may include Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) measures in case they are not in the civil servants' existing contracts. The LMP will also include measures to ensure GBV/SEA risks are addressed. The country already has national laws and regulations related to labor. However, following project effectiveness, an operational GRM will be formally established based on the existing one to ensure that the working conditions comply with these laws and regulations and also with the World Bank standards. Complaints received and resolved will be reviewed during the implementation support missions.
- 104. **ESS5 Land acquisition, Restrictions on Land use and Involuntary Resettlement.** The project will screen out any possible need of land acquisition or potential restriction of access. If, for any reason, land acquisition is required then the relevance of this Standard will be reviewed accordingly.
- 105. To address these risk issues, the projet prepared and disclosed on January 7,2020: (a) a draft ESCP with measures for addressing the environmental, social and labor risks identified in the project; b) a draft Social Management Plan, which will address all the identified social risks and impacts, including contextual risks, conflict, refugees, GBV/SEA and vulnerable groups; (c) a draft SEIDP; and (d) draft LMP.

- 106. **Citizen engagement.** The proposed project will continue to support an information and grievance redress system to respond to complaints and ensure social accountability at the national level. *Tekavoul* and the Social Registry have established a grievance mechanism including toll-free phone numbers. The project will support the extension of the grievance mechanism to potential refugee beneficiaries and nonbeneficiaries through similar communication tools as the ones in use (information sessions, leaflets in the main refugee languages, toll-free number and so on). Furthermore, to broaden the understanding and ownership of SP issues in Mauritania, the proposed project would organize training sessions to strengthen civil society expertise in SP. This activity will be implemented in partnership with the International Labor Organization (ILO), UNICEF and WFP.
- Gender and gender-based violence (GBV). The proposed project will contribute to address genderrelated challenges in Mauritania and enhance knowledge on different gender dimensions of poverty and access to social and human development services as they intersect with displacement status. This is directly related to the Gender cross-cutting priority of the 2018-2023 CPF for Mauritania. The main gender gap the proposed project seeks to address is poverty, and to some extent gaps in access to human capital and financial services, and agency within restrictive social norms (see annex 3). The proposed project will continue to predominantly issue payment cards to mothers. Social promotion sessions include discussions on children's rights, which will cover protection from domestic and sexual violence. The session's content will also be reviewed to integrate more specific GBV awareness and prevention information. The proposed project continues to benefit from the support of the Africa Gender Innovation Lab (GIL) in the implementation of a pilot gender training activity, that seeks to limit the risks of conflict between husband and wife, which could arise from shifts in the dynamics of managing household finances. GIL is testing different variants of the intervention and evaluating their impact, which will inform the potential scale-up of this pilot activity under the proposed project. Baseline data collection is to be completed by April 2020 under the ongoing project. At least one round of follow-up data collection will be funded under the proposed project. The results framework of the project includes sex-disaggregated indicators when possible and will set different targets for female sub-groups (specifically on refugees). Data collection mechanisms will ensure the adequate level of disaggregation and the implementing agencies will use the sex-disaggregated data to inform project implementation and ensure that the project addresses constraints facing women, girls, boys and men in accessing project services and benefits. The GRM mechanisms to address queries, resolve problems in implementation, and address complaints from beneficiaries and non-beneficiaries will be gender-sensitive (location, types of mechanisms, confidentiality, gender of frontline staff, separate treatment of GBV/SEA complaints).
- 108. **Climate co-benefits.** The project's potential climate co-benefits would mostly consist of adaptation benefits under Component 3 and will be reassessed after Board approval.

### V. GRIEVANCE REDRESS SERVICES

109. Communities and individuals who believe that they are adversely affected by a World Bank (WB) supported project may submit complaints to existing project-level grievance redress mechanisms or the WB's Grievance Redress Service (GRS). The GRS ensures that complaints received are promptly reviewed in order to address project-related concerns. Project affected communities and individuals may submit their complaint to the WB's independent Inspection Panel which determines whether harm occurred, or could occur, as a result of WB non-compliance with its policies and procedures. Complaints may be submitted at any time after concerns have been brought directly to the World Bank's attention, and Bank Management

has been given an opportunity to respond. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank's corporate Grievance Redress Service (GRS), please visit <a href="http://www.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/products-and-services/grievance-redress-service">http://www.worldbank.org/en/projects-operations/products-and-services/grievance-redress-service</a>. For information on how to submit complaints to the World Bank Inspection Panel, please visit www.inspectionpanel.org.

110. **Project-level grievance mechanisms.** The ongoing project is financing the development and management of an information and grievance system to respond to complaints and ensure social accountability at the national level. Protocols are in place to address a broad range of items (from information requests, questions of inclusion or exclusion, requests for correction of incorrect data, complaints on stakeholders, and so on). So far, toll-free phone numbers for *Tekavoul* and for the Social Registry) are in place. The proposed project will continue supporting *Tekavoul*'s GRM and strengthening the Social Registry's GRM. The functionality and the efficiency of the existing GRM will be assessed to ensure that it can respond to the interventions' scale-up. The project will recruit sufficient social mobilization staff (experts and facilitators), strengthen the human and logistical resources of GRM team, and optimize the deadlines for grievance redress actions.

#### VI. KEY RISKS

- 111. The overall risk for the proposed Mauritania Social Safety Net Project II is rated as substantial. The major anticipated risks of specific relevance to the project and the proposed mitigation measures are described below.
- 112. The political and governance policy risk is deemed substantial. The influence of political elites and the lingering perception of governance challenges pose a high risk for inclusive growth and social cohesion. Ethnic stratification and the rapidly growing cohort of youths with no proper job prospects have continued to fuel resentment and undermine the achievement of development goals. Fragility in neighboring states adds to the risk of spillover effects in the form of terrorism, criminal activity, inflows of refugees and internal displacement. This said, however, Mauritania has experienced uninterrupted political stability over the last decade and taken a firm stance against radicalization on both political and financial fronts.
- 113. The macroeconomic risk is deemed substantial. Despite the Government's prudent budget policies and the gradual recovery of global commodity prices, the country's economy remains vulnerable to external shocks. Although the current account deficit has dropped, it is still substantial and poses a challenge to external financing mobilization and debt sustainability. This may cause difficulties for the government to mobilize counterpart funding for the project. In addition to budget support, the three-year program concluded with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) is providing financing to sustain macroeconomic stability and reforms aimed at diversification.
- 114. The risk related to institutional capacity for implementation is substantial. During the ongoing PASyFiS, the World Bank team provided extensive and continuous technical support to strengthen institutional capacity. Overall the *Tadamoun* Agency, CSA and Social Registry Directorate demonstrated satisfactory capacity. However, as the safety net system expands and becomes more integrated under the newly created *Taazour* General Delegation, a strong package of TA will be necessary over the course of the proposed project. The ownership of the ASP shock responsive system is still relatively low (in stark contrast to the Government ownership of the *Tekavoul* program and the Social Registry, which is strong) and its implementation will require strong leadership and coordination. The proposed package includes a strong

capacity-building to the CSA and OSA and builds on well-functioning project coordination mechanisms, set-up for the on-going project.

- 115. The technical design risk is substantial. While Components 1 and 2 mostly build on lessons learned from the ongoing project, Component 3 is innovative in the Mauritanian context and will require a large amount of coordination both between governmental agencies and with donors and UN agencies. The design of the common financial vehicle for the shock response is also new in Mauritania.
- 116. The environmental and social risk is substantial. The rating is based on potential social risks that could arise from project implementation activities, such as: (a) the exclusion and discrimination of certain categories of people, such as vulnerable refugees, including in the access to cash transfers; (b) weak communication; (c) low integration of some stakeholders (civil society, municipal authorities, press); (d) labor conditions; and (e) GBV and SEA. While these issues could occur, they are not expected to happen on a large scale, nor are they expected to be significant because of the design of the project. The project has been specifically designed to be inclusive of vulnerable groups, including the refugees.
- 117. Others Risks related to the refugees and host communities' engagement are substantial. Providing social protection to refugee communities is a new area of engagement for the World Bank Group, in which there is limited knowledge and significant sensitivities. However, the Government's overall acceptance of refugees and its general willingness to support their actual inclusion provides a supportive environment for the World Bank's engagement. Key risks include: (a) social and protection risks; (b) security risks; and (c) implementation challenges.
- a. Social and Protection risks. The World Bank, in consultation with the UNHCR, confirms the continued adequacy of the protection framework. While the GoM has not practiced refoulement since 2016, the strict adherence to social norms or security considerations could result in cases of refoulement in the future. The World Bank Group will continue to monitor the developments and remain in close contact with both the Government and the UNHCR to assess the level of this risk and to discuss appropriate mitigation measures, such as the asylum law adoption that would formalize refugee protection in Mauritania.
- b. Security risks. Increased security threats in Mauritania itself, along the Southern border with Mali (Hodh El Gharbi and Hodh Charghi), would impact the ability of GoM to maintain peace and stability in the area. As of 2019, security is not an obstacle for the Government to operate in the region
- c. Implementation challenges. The World Bank Group has very little reach and experience working in the south-eastern part of Mauritania. The location of the refugees and by extension of host communities in this remote and hard-to-reach area will provide a challenging environment for the project team(s) to prepare, implement and supervise impactful operations. However, as of 2019, the World Bank teams are able to supervise operations in refugee and host communities' areas using UN security procedures, infrastructure and logistics.

## VII. RESULTS FRAMEWORK AND MONITORING

## **Results Framework**

COUNTRY: Mauritania Social Safety Net System Project II

# **Project Development Objectives(s)**

The Project Development Objective is to increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the nationwide adaptive social safety net system and its coverage of poor and vulnerable households with targeted social transfers, including in refugee and host communities.

# **Project Development Objective Indicators**

<b>Indicator Name</b>	DLI	Baseline		Intermediate Targets				
			1	2	3	4		
Increased effectiveness and efficiency of the nationwide adaptive social safety net system								
Programs using the Social Registry to select their beneficiaries (Number)		7.00	8.00	10.00	12.00	14.00	15.00	
SSN programs' beneficiary households avoiding negative coping strategies (national/refugees) (Text)		N/A	N/A	60%	65%	70%	70%	
Increased coverage of poor an	d vuln	erable hhs with targeted S	ST, including in refugee ar	nd host comm				
Beneficiaries of social safety net programs (CRI, Number)		186,000.00	224,400.00	268,800.00	313,200.00	313,200.00	313,200.00	
Beneficiaries of social safety net programs - Female (CRI, Number)		93,000.00	112,200.00	134,400.00	156,600.00	156,000.00	156,600.00	

Indicator Name	DLI	Baseline		End Target			
			1	2	3	4	
Beneficiaries of social safety net programs - Refugees (Number)		0.00	0.00	19,500.00	19,500.00	19,500.00	19,500.00

# **Intermediate Results Indicators by Components**

Indicator Name DLI Baseline					<b>End Target</b>		
			1	2	3	4	
Component 1: Updating and er	hanc	ing the Social Registry					
Households with complete information in Social Registry (Number)		150,000.00	180,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00	200,000.00
Households with complete information in the Social Registry - Refugee (Number)		0.00	4,000.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,500.00	7,500.00
Households with updated information in the Social registry (less than 3 years) (Percentage)		50.00	60.00	70.00	80.00	90.00	90.00
Cases from the Social Registry grievance redress mechanism resolved in a timely manner (Percentage)		70.00	70.00	75.00	75.00	80.00	80.00
Spot-check surveys carried-out and disclosed by the Social Registry (Number)		0.00	6.00	12.00	18.00	24.00	30.00
Community members reporting positive feedback on household registration outcome for the Social Registry		0.00	70.00	75.00	80.00	80.00	80.00

<b>Indicator Name</b>	DLI	Baseline	Intermediate Targets				<b>End Target</b>
			1	2	3	4	
(Percentage)							
Component 2: Enhancing the s	ocio-e	conomic inclusion o	f poor households				
Households benefiting from the national safety net program Tekavoul (Number)		31,000.00	35,000.00	40,000.00	45,000.00	45,000.00	45,000.00
Households benefiting from the national safety net program Tekavoul - Refugees and hosts (Number)		0.00	4,000.00	9,000.00	14,000.00	14,000.00	14,000.00
Share of beneficiaries receiving payments on time (Percentage)		98.00	98.00	98.00	98.00	98.00	98.00
Cases from the Tekavoul grievance redress mechanism resolved in a timely manner (Percentage)		70.00	70.00	75.00	75.00	80.00	80.00
Pilot activity to enhance civil registration among vulnerable population (Yes/No)		No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes
Component 3: Strengthening t	he sho	ck responsive syste	m for households vulner	able to climate-shocks			
Households benefiting from shock-responsive safety net programs supported by the project (cumulative) (Number)		0.00	8,000.00	16,000.00	24,000.00	24,000.00	24,000.00
Households benefiting from shock-responsive safety net programs supported by the project (cumulative) - Refugees and hosts (Number)		0.00	5,000.00	10,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00	15,000.00
Early warning system improved with the support of the project		No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes

Indicator Name	DLI	Baseline		Intermediate Targets					
			1						
(Yes/No)									
The common financial vehicle has been established (Yes/No)		No	No	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes		

	Monitoring & Evaluation Plan: PDO Indicators							
Indicator Name	Definition/Description	Frequency	Datasource	Methodology for Data Collection	Responsibility for Data Collection			
Programs using the Social Registry to select their beneficiaries	Number of user agreements signed by the Social Registry	Semester	Project Semester report	Supervision	Social Registry Directorate			
SSN programs' beneficiary households avoiding negative coping strategies (national/refugees)	This indicators tracks the percentage of households benefiting from the shock-response program which avoid negative coping strategies as a result of the program. Negative Coping strategies refer to those included in the Coping Strategy Index (CSI): reduce number of meals eaten in a day, consume seed stock held for next season, and so on.	Annually	Elmaouna annual capitalization report Spot checks reports	Household survey	Food Security Office			

Beneficiaries of social safety net programs		Semester	Programs MIS	Request based on the programs MIS - assumptions: (i) 6 individuals per household and (ii) 70% of Elmaouna beneficiaries are also benefitting from Tekavoul and should not be counted twice.	Monitoring and evaluation team
Beneficiaries of social safety net programs - Female		Semester	Programs MIS	Request based on the programs MIS	Monitoring and evaluation team
Beneficiaries of social safety net programs - Refugees	Number of indivuduals supported by safety net programs supported by the project (with a ratio of 4 individuals per refugee households)	Semester	Programs MIS	Request based on the programs MIS	Monitoring and evaluation team

Monitoring & Evaluation Plan: Intermediate Results Indicators						
Indicator Name	Definition/Description	Frequency	Datasource	Methodology for Data Collection	Responsibility for Data Collection	
Households with complete information in Social Registry	Number of households registred within the Social Registry database and for which the socio-economic data has been collected and recorded.	Semester	Social Registry Database	Specific IT request on the Social Registry Database	Social Registry Directorate	

Households with complete information in the Social Registry - Refugee	Number of refugee households registred within the Social Registry database and for which the socio- economic data has been collected and recorded.	Semester	Social Registry MIS	Specific request on the Social Registry database	Social Registry Directorate
Households with updated information in the Social registry (less than 3 years)	Percentage of households included in the Social Register database for which socio-economic data was collected within the previous three years.	Semester	Social Registry MIS	Request on the Social Registry database	Social Registry Directorate
Cases from the Social Registry grievance redress mechanism resolved in a timely manner	Percentage of complaints or requests for information received by the Social Registry that have been resolved within 60 days.	Semester	Social Registry MIS	MIS extraction	Social Registry Directorate
Spot-check surveys carried-out and disclosed by the Social Registry	Number of spot checks on the Social Registry carried out by an external firm and/or the Social Registry during the duration of the project and which have been the subject of a report and feedback to the teams.	Semester	Project semester resports	Supervision	Social Registry Directorate
Community members reporting positive feedback on household registration outcome for the Social Registry	Percentage of individuals answering "yes, I fully agree" or "yes, I rather agree" to the question "do you agree that the households included in the social Registry are the poorest of your community	Semester	Quaterly Community Spot-check surveys	Average of the two last spot checks	External cabinet and Social Registry directorate

	?" during spotchecks.				
Households benefiting from the national safety net program Tekavoul	Number of HH enrolled in the Tekavoul program and benefiting from the cash transfer and the social promotion activities (financed by the project)	Semester	Tekavoul MIS	Request based on the program's MIS	Tekavoul coordination
Households benefiting from the national safety net program Tekavoul - Refugees and hosts	Same description of the parent indicator but related to refugee and host community (Hodh Chargui)	Semester	Tekavoul MIS	Request based on the program's MIS	Tekavoul coordination
Share of beneficiaries receiving payments on time	Percentage of Tekavoul beneficiaries receiving quarterly cash transfer during the appropriate period or with less than one week of delay.	Semester	Tekavoul MIS	Request based on the program's MIS	IT and monitoring and evaluation team
Cases from the Tekavoul grievance redress mechanism resolved in a timely manner	Percentage of complaints or requests for information received by Tekavoul that have been resolved within 45 days.	Semester	Tekavoul MIS	Request based on the program's MIS	IT and monitoring and evaluation team
Pilot activity to enhance civil registration among vulnerable population	The Pilot activity to enhance civil registration among vulnerable population has been launched in at least one moughataa.	Semester	Project reports	Supervision	Tekavoul coordination
Households benefiting from shock- responsive safety net programs supported by the project (cumulative)	Cumulative number of households benefiting from shock-responsive safety net programs supported by the project, either by Elmaouna,	Semester	Programs MIS and semester reports	Request based on the program's MIS and supervision	Monitoring and evaluation team

	by expansion of Tekavoul or by another organization using the payment platform.				
Households benefiting from shock- responsive safety net programs supported by the project (cumulative) - Refugees and hosts	Same description as the parent indicator but related to refugee and host community (Hodh Chargui Region)	Semester	Programs MIS and semester reports	Request based on the program's MIS and supervision	Monitoring and evaluation team
Early warning system improved with the support of the project	The EWS will be considered as improved if at least two of the following criteria have been met: (i) better disaggregation of information, (ii) more timely and accurate forecasts (iii) better information dissemination.	Semester	Project reports	Supervision	Food Security Office
The common financial vehicle has been established	The common financial vehicle is established by the government and has an operational manual which describes the rules to disburse.	Semester	Project reports and operatio nal manual	Supervision	Project Coordination

## **ANNEX 1: Implementation Arrangements and Support Plan**

COUNTRY: Mauritania
Mauritania Social Safety Net System Project II (PAsyFiS II)

### **Project Institutional Arrangements**

- 1. **Overall arrangements.** The implementation arrangements for the proposed project will build on the ongoing PASyFiS arrangements. They will involve: (a) the CP-SNPS and its Technical Committee (CT-SNPS), responsible for providing strategic guidance; (b) the Project Steering and Monitoring Committee, responsible for the steering, validation, and monitoring of project activities; (c) the *Taazour* General Delegation as the main implementing agency and in charge of fiduciary management under the supervision of a Project Coordinator.
- 2. **Strategic guidance.** The CP-SNPS was established by decree on January 8, 2014. It is co-presided by the Principal Secretaries (*Secrétaires Généraux*) of the MASEF and MEI, who have the joint stewardship of the sector. The committee is multi-sectoral and includes, among others, representatives from other ministries involved in SP as well as the CSA, the *Taazour* General Delegation, civil society representatives and donors. The CP-SNPS is a high-level committee in charge of approving technical documents and tools for SSNs, mobilizing resources for the implementation of the SNPS, ensuring the coordination and the collaboration between all actors involved in the implementation of the SNPS, and supporting sectoral actors in their contributions to social protection. The CP-SNPS has established the CT-SNPS, a small group of technical experts which provides technical guidance to the CP-SNPS. Its tasks include the preparation of road maps with policy options, reforms, and activities for SNPS implementation; the elaboration of technical tools for the SNPS implementation; the design of financing mechanisms for the sector; the coordination of activities; the supervision of evaluation studies; and the coordination of the sector's actors.
- 3. **Project Steering and Monitoring Committee.** For the ongoing PASyFiS, a Project Steering and Monitoring Committee was established under the presidency of MEI's General Secretary. The Steering and Monitoring committee will continue to hold quarterly meetings during the five years of the proposed project, but the chair will be moved under the *Taazour* General Secretary. Among others, it will validate the project manuals and its annual work plans and budget, and closely monitor the implementation of the project. It will include one representative of all the ministries and agencies involved in the project as well as two civil society representatives (of which, one should be a women's association) and beneficiary representatives. It will regularly report to the CP-SNPS on progress in implementation and will seek its guidance on core strategic decisions.
- 4. **Implementation of the project.** The *Taazour* General Delegation has overall responsibility for the proposed project's implementation. The *Taazour* General Delegation was created in 2019 under the Presidency based on the structure of the *Tadamoun* Agency which was the implementing Agency for the ongoing safety net project (P150430). The *Taazour* General Delegation will be responsible for the overall implementation and fiduciary management of the project and will house a dedicated Project Coordinator and fiduciary specialists (procurement, accounting, audit and gender and social specialists) to support all project activities. The staff and operating costs financed by the project will be fully dedicated to the project activities. Staff hired under the ongoing project and whose position will be maintained under this new project will be reappointed subject to a positive evaluation of individual performance and the non-objection of the World Bank. The *Taazour* General Delegation will manage the project's bank accounts and all related fiduciary aspects. Technically, the activities of Component 1 and Component 2 will be led by the *Taazour* General

Delegation; (through the Social Registry and Tekavoul departments) and those of Component 3 will be mainly led by the CSA. *Taazour* will update the implementing agreement with the CSA to define the objectives and the rules of the collaboration.

- 5. **Local level.** At the local level, the project will benefit from support from the administrative structure (wilayas [regions], moughataas [districts], arrondissements, and communes) and existing representatives from sectoral ministries. It will rely on existing coordination mechanisms (Comités Régionaux et Communaux de Développement). It will also rely on civil society institutions, religious groups, community organizations, and local representatives.
- 6. **Refugee and host community focal points.** Two refugee and host community focal points based in Hodh Chargui will be recruited to ensure permanent presence of the projects with RSW-funded components in this area and dialogue with the UNHCR, WFP and other actors working with refugees and host populations. The focal points will have the responsibility to update the four projects' coordination teams on the refugees and host communities' situation and to identify any critical point related to the implementation of the projects in the related areas. The focal point based in Nema will be financed under the Productive and Resilient Intermediate Cities project (P169332). The focal point based in Bassikounou will be financed under this proposed Safety net project (P171125) and will be under the responsibility of *Taazour*.
- 7. **Fiduciary manual.** An Administrative, Procurement and Accounting Manual, covering all aspects of project fiduciary implementation will be prepared based on the ongoing project manual. It will support the government agencies involved in the implementation of the proposed project to strengthen their implementation capacity, as well as fiduciary functions, and to adjust their Administrative, Procurement and Accounting Manual to ensure World Bank procedures are respected. Similarly, the proposed project will follow the procedures established by the MEI for financial arrangements and flows.

**Financial Management and Disbursements arrangements** 

### **Internal Control and Internal Auditing arrangements**

- 8. **Internal control arrangements.** The existing manual of administrative and financial procedures will be updated to include all specificities of the project.
- 9. **Internal auditing arrangements.** The internal auditor in place will continue to carry out ex-post reviews of this project.

### **External Auditing arrangements**

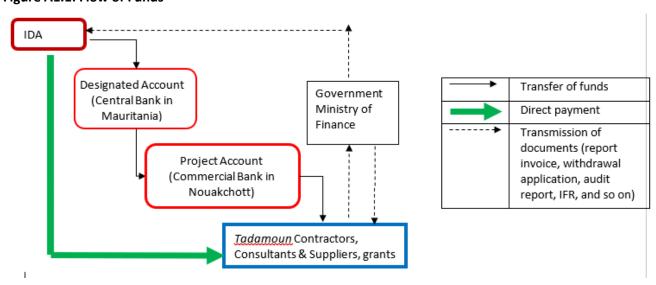
- 10. The Disbursement and Financial Information Letter (DFIL) will require the submission of Audited Financial Statements for the project to IDA within six months after the end of each fiscal year. The audit report should reflect all the activities of the project. An external auditor with qualifications satisfactory to the World Bank will be appointed to conduct annual audits of the project financial statements in accordance with audit terms of reference agreed with IDA. In accordance with World Bank policy on access to information, the borrower is required to make its audited financial statements publicly available in a manner acceptable to IDA. Following the World Bank's formal receipt of these statements from the Recipient, the World Bank also makes them available to the public.
- 11. **Accounting arrangements.** The current accounting standards in use in Mauritania are acceptable for the World Bank. They are used for all on-going World Bank-financed project in Mauritania and will be applicable for this second phase project as well. The existing accounting software in place will be customized to integrate this new project's accounts.

- 12. **Financial reporting arrangements.** The *Taazour* FM team will prepare quarterly IFRs for the project in form and content satisfactory to the World Bank. These IFRs will be submitted to the World Bank within 45 days after the end of each calendar quarter to which they relate. The FM team will prepare the project's financial statements in compliance with current accounting standards in use in Mauritania and with World Bank requirements.
- 13. **Budgeting arrangements.** The project will prepare an annual budget based on the agreed annual work program. The budget should be adopted before the beginning of the year and its execution will be monitored on a quarterly basis and reports of budget monitoring and variance analysis will be prepared and included in the IFR. Annual draft budgets will be submitted to the steering committee and then submitted to the Bank for non-objection no later than November 15, every year.

## Flow of funds and disbursement and banking arrangements

- 14. **Disbursement arrangements.** Disbursements will be transactions-based whereby withdrawal applications will be supported with Statement of Expenditures (SoE). The following disbursement methods may be used under the project: reimbursement, advance, direct payment and special commitment as specified in the DFIL and in accordance with the Disbursement Guidelines for IPF, dated February 2017. Documentation will be retained at *Taazour* for review by World Bank staff and auditors. The DFIL will provide details of the disbursement methods, required documentation, designated accounts (DAs) ceiling and minimum application size.
- 15. **Banking Arrangements.** Two DA for the project will be opened in the Central Bank of Mauritania and two Project Account (PA) in local currency will be opened in a commercial Bank in Nouakchott on terms and conditions acceptable to the World Bank. The first DA will be used for all eligible expenditures financed by the credit and consistent with the specific terms and conditions of the Financing Agreement. The second DA will be related to the GA.
- 16. **Flow of funds arrangements.** The flow of funds arrangements for the project is described in figure A1.1.

Figure A1.1: Flow of Funds



17. **FM Action Plan.** The following actions need to be taken to enhance the FM arrangements for the project.

#### **Table A1.1 FM Action Plan**

	Action	Date due by	Responsible
1	Prepare and agree with the World Bank on the format of the IFRs.	By effectiveness	<i>Taazour</i> project team
	Draft the terms of references (ToRs) for financial audits of the project		
	Update the project administrative and FM manual		
2	Select the external auditor	No later than four months after effectiveness	<i>Taazour</i> project team

#### **Procurement**

### **Processes and Procedures**

- 18. Procurement procedures for the Mauritania Social Safety Nets II Project will be carried out in accordance with the World Bank procurement regulations. The Borrower will carry out procurement under the proposed project in accordance with the World Bank's "Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers" (Procurement Regulations) dated July 2016 and revised in November 2017 and August 2018 under the NPF, and the 'Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants', dated July 1, 2016, and other provisions stipulated in the Financing Agreements.
- 19. The general description of various items under different expenditure categories is presented below under *Procurement Arrangements* and will be detailed in the project's administrative and fiduciary manual. For each contract, the different procurement methods or consultant selection methods, the need for prequalification, estimated costs, prior review requirements, and time frame are agreed between the Recipient and the World Bank in the PP. The PP will be updated at least annually, or as required, to reflect the actual project implementation needs and improvements in institutional capacity.
- 20. **Reviews**. In addition to prior review of contracts by the World Bank as indicated in the PP, the procurement capacity assessment recommends at least one supervision mission each year to carry out post review of procurement actions and technical review. Post reviews focus on technical, financial and procurement reports carried out by World Bank and/or consultants selected and hired under the project. The percentage of the procurements subject to post reviews and technical reviews will be decided on a case-by-case basis by the World Bank mission.
- 21. **Advertising procedures.** To get the broadest attention from eligible bidders and consultants, a General Procurement Notice (GPN) will be prepared by the implementing agency and published in the United Nations Development Business online (UNDB online), on the World Bank's external website, and in at least one newspaper of national circulation in the Borrower's country, or in the official gazette, or a widely used website or electronic portal with free national and international access. The Borrower will keep record of the responses received from potential bidders/consultants interested in the contracts and send them the Specific Procurement Notices (SPNs).
- 22. SPNs for all goods and non-consulting services to be procured under International Competitive Bidding (ICB) and Expressions of Interest for all consulting services with a cost equal to or above US\$500,000

will be published in the UNDB online, on the World Bank's external website, and in at least one newspaper of national circulation in the Borrower's country, or in the official gazette, or a widely used website or electronic portal with free national and international access. SPNs for goods and non-consulting services will be procured using National Competitive Bidding (NCB). Expressions of Interest for all consulting services with a cost less than US\$500,000 will be published in at least one newspaper of national circulation in the Borrower's country.

23. **Fraud and corruption.** All procurement entities as well as bidders and service providers (that is, suppliers, service providers, and consultants) shall observe the highest standard of ethics during the procurement and execution of contracts financed under the project in accordance with paragraphs 1.16 and 1.17 (Fraud and Corruption) of the Procurement Guidelines and paragraph 1.23 and 1.24 (Fraud and Corruption) of the Consultants Guidelines, and the *'Guidelines on Preventing and Combating Fraud and Corruption in Projects Financed by IBRD Loans and IDA Credits and Grants'*, dated July 1, 2016 in addition to the relevant articles of the national public procurement legislation.

### **Procurement Arrangements**

24. The project must use procurement methods for all activities in accordance with the World Bank's 'Procurement Regulations for IPF Borrowers' (Procurement Regulations) dated July 2016 and revised in November 2017 and August 2018 under the NPF.

# Assessment of Procurement Capacity of the Implementing Agency and Risks

- 25. **The procurement capacity is considered moderately satisfactory**. The *Tadamoun* Procurement team have carried out procurement activities for the first phase project (P150430). While working on this project in the past five years, the team has revealed capacity gaps. The scale-up of project activities may stretch the capacity of the current team to handle procurement in an adequate manner. Furthermore, this new project will be subject to the Procurement Regulations while the former one was under the Guidelines regime. Therefore, the *Taazour* General Delegation, which will host the fiduciary team previously hosted in Tadamoun, shall be strengthened with the recruitment of a procurement specialist acceptable to the World Bank, no later than four months after project effectiveness. The specialist will ensure adequate transfer of knowledge to the existing team.
- 26. The ongoing project has a procedures manual describing procurement procedures. This manual of procedures should be updated to take into account: (a) the World Bank's New Procurement Regulations 2016; (b) the new institutional framework resulting from the new public procurement reform of 2017; (c) the creation of CIMAC at *Taazour* level for the processing of cases below the threshold of the procurement commission; (d) the obligation to involve value for money (VFM) in the procurement processes of activities financed by the project; and (e) the insertion of a clause on dual reviews. The updated procedures manual should define the composition and modalities of CIMAC meetings and decision-making. The revised procedures manual, including a procurement section, shall be prepared no later than project effectiveness.
- 27. **The procurement risk is moderate**. This rating is based on the capacity of the existing procurement team, including capacity-building needs and the fact that it has limited experience with the World Bank new Procurement Regulations. The proposed mitigation measures include: the recruitment of a procurement specialist, the creation of a CIMAC at *Taazour*, training of the new coordinator, procurement staff, and members of the *Taazour* CIMAC on the New Procurement Policy for investment projects, and the update of the project's administrative, financial and procurement procedures manual.
- 28. **Identified risks and measures.** The procurement risks identified and the measures to be implemented are provided below:

**Table A1.2: Risks and Mitigations Measures** 

No	Key risks	Mitigation Measures	By When
1.	Lack of proficient skills /capacity and experience to carry out consultant selection process, draft ToRs and Requests for Proposals (RFPs), undertaking and managing consultancy services contracts	Hiring an experienced and qualified procurement specialist or TA (Firm) experienced and familiar with World Bank procurement procedures (to be recruited competitively).	Four months after effectiveness
2.	Lack of information about World Bank procurement procedures	Taazour Agency procurement staff and all staff involved in procurement shall be trained on World Bank's procedures and attend the regular procurement clinics provided by the World Bank's Country Office in Nouakchott and shall attend the regular progress review meetings with the World Bank procurement specialist based in Nouakchott.	At signature of the project and throughout project life
3.	Administrative, Procurement and Accounting Manual under preparation	Updated Administrative, Procurement and Accounting Manual	By effectiveness
4.	Fraud and Corruption	World Bank Fraud and Corruption provisions shall be included in all bidding, procurement and contract documents. World Bank audit and inspection right, conflict of interest and eligibility requirements shall be inserted in all bidding, procurement and contract documents.	Throughout project life

29. **World Bank's review requirements.** The procurement decisions subject to Prior Review by the World Bank, as stated in Appendix 1 to the Procurement and Consultant Guidelines, are detailed below:

Table A1.3: Procurement and Contract review

Expenditure category	Contract Value US\$ (threshold)	Procurement Method	Contract Subject to prior review
1. Works	NA		
2. Goods	≥2,000,000	ICB	All contracts
	<2,000,000	NCB	All contracts < 2,000,000 are subject to post review
	<200,000	Shopping	NA
	≥1,000,000	QCBS; QBS; LCS; FBS; DS	All contracts
3. Consultants Firms	<1,000,000	QCBS; QBS; LCS; FBS, DS	All contracts < 1,000,000 are subject to post review (except TTL decision)
	< 300 000	CQS	NA
4.0	≥300,000	EOI	All contracts
4. Consultants Individuals	<300,000	EOI	Prior review for project
	<100,000	Comparison of 3 CVs	implementation staff

- All Terms of reference and technical specifications regardless of the value of the contract are subject to prior review.
- An EOI notice must be published for the recruitment of firms and individual consultants above US\$100,000 and key personnel of the project; and highly recommended for the recruitment of individual consultants under US\$100,000.
- Note: EOI Expression of Interest; FBS Fixed Budget Selection; ICB International Competitive Bidding; LCS –
  Least-Cost Selection; NCB National Competitive Bidding; QBS Quality-Based Selection; QCBS Quality CostBased Selection; DS Direct Selection and CQS Consultant Qualifications Selection.
- 30. **Procurement Plan.** For each contract, the PP will define the appropriate procurement methods or consultant selection methods, the need for pre-qualification, estimated costs, prior review requirements, and time frame. The procurement plan was reviewed during project appraisal and confirmed during negotiations. The PP will be updated at least annually, or as required, to reflect the actual project implementation needs and capacity improvements. All procurement activities will be carried out in accordance with approved original or updated procurement plans. All PPs should be published on the World Bank website according to the Regulations.
- 31. **Frequency of procurement reviews and supervision**: The World Bank's prior and post reviews will be carried out on the basis of thresholds indicated in table A1.2 (for Goods and non-consultant contracts: US\$2,000,000, for Consultants contracts (firms): US\$1,000,000, (individuals): US\$300,000). IDA will conduct six-monthly supervision missions and annual Post Procurement Reviews, with the ratio of post review at least one to five contracts. IDA may also conduct an Independent Procurement Review at any time until two years after the closing date of the project. Prior review by the National Commission for Public Procurement Control (*Commission Nationale de Contrôle des Marchés Publics*, CNCMP) is not required for contracts subject to IDA prior review as set in the PP approved by IDA.

32. **Project Procurement Strategy for Development.** A PPSD was prepared to ensure that procurement activities are packaged and prepared in such a way as to minimize risk to the project. The PPSD concludes that the environment is favorable for procurement of the activities envisaged under the proposed project. These comprise primarily; (i) goods and non-consulting services: vehicles and motorcycles; computers and IT equipment and laboratory equipment; and (ii) consulting services: individual consultants and firms of consultants for specific activities. Among the latter, the PPSD makes a distinction between specialized consultants and others. A procurement plan for the first 18 months of the project is included in the PPSD.

### **Environmental and Social**

33. Environmental and Social Standards review would be carried out in accordance with the new ESF. The review will be carried out at least twice a year and will involve a desk review of all documentation related to the activities within the social and labor management plans. The environmental review will not be necessary as the project activities are environmentally neutral without including any new construction or rehabilitation/renovation of existing buildings. The environmental and social teams will provide opportune support and, as necessary, training to the implementation team to ensure adequate compliance with the related requirements.

### **Monitoring & Evaluation**

- 34. The project will be monitored using the following sources and methodologies: (a) data collected through MISs supported by the project (Registry, payment systems); (b) regular administrative data collection processes; (c) beneficiary surveys (spot-checks) supported by the project and conducted by outsourced external firm(s); (d) process evaluations of the registry, the cash transfers and the human development (social promotion) interventions supported by the project and conducted by outsourced external firms; (e) an additional round of the impact evaluation of the cash transfers, conducted by outsourced external firms and including a targeting assessment of the cash transfers; (f) other M&E studies conducted by the Recipient; and (g) progress reports to be prepared by the project implementation team (especially the M&E specialist).
- 35. In general, the *Taazour* team would be responsible for gathering the relevant reports and information from CSA representatives and other relevant parties involved in the project implementation to monitor the PDO and results, and for communicating with the World Bank according to the frequency of reports to be described in the project's Results Framework. The proposed project will also support continued capacity-building of *Taazour* and CSA capacity to better track implementation, monitor key safety net interventions, and evaluate policy and programs based on the systematic and organized feedback from beneficiaries, the impact evaluations and the use of MIS data.

# **Implementation Support Plan and Budget**

36. The Implementation support plan is presented in the table A1.4 and the related budget in the table A1.5.

# **Table A1.4: Implementation Support Plan**

Activity	Frequency
Financial management support plan	
IFR review	Quarterly
Audit report review of the program	Annually
Review of other relevant information such as interim internal control systems reports.	Continuous as they become available
Review of overall operation of the FM system	Annual for implementation support mission
Monitoring of actions taken on issues highlighted in audit reports, auditors' management letters, internal audit and other reports	As needed
Transaction reviews (if needed)	As needed
FM training sessions	During implementation and as and when needed.
Procurement support plan	
Procurement supervision	Twice a year and as needed
Activity implementation support plan	
Social Registry implementation supervision on the field	Twice a year
Mid-Term Review	After 30 months of implementation
Social Registry TA	Dedicated TA during the 2 first years
Tekavoul cash transfer supervision on the field	Twice a year
Social promotion tools and processes support	Continuous with the support of UNICEF
Social promotion activity supervision on the field	Twice a year
Shock-responsive system TA	Continuous with the support of WFP
Elmaouna cash transfer supervision on the field	Twice a year
Elmaouna monitoring support	Once a year
Common Financial Vehicle for shock response design	Dedicated TA during all the project
Social and environmental standards support plan	
Field visit including focus group discussion with beneficiaries	Annually
and non-beneficiaries, leaders, authorities and any other relevant stakeholders.	
Review of the grievance mechanisms reports	Twice a year

**Table A1.5: Implementation Support Plan Budget** 

Support	Resource		Supervision
	Team Member	Time	Cost per year
Project's TTL: (a) coordination of overall project supervision and implementation support, (b) technical and operational support in the area of SSNs, (c) M&E, (d) overall implementation, and (e) policy dialogue.	Social protection specialist (international)	15 weeks	
Technical support: (a) day to day implementation with a specific focus on ASP, (b) social assistance, (c) support to project team and connection with other World Bank specialists as necessary, (d) ongoing technical dialogue with the Government	Social Protection specialist (local)	40 weeks	
Technical support for shock response system and Elmaouna implementation	Consultant	20 weeks	US\$ 280,000
Technical support to Social Registry	Consultant	20 weeks	
TA for financing strategy and common financial vehicle	Senior consultant	20 weeks	1
Other specific support (analysis, field visit, evaluation, and so on)	Consultant	20 weeks	
Social and environmental support	Social and environmental specialists	4 weeks	
FM support	FM specialist	4 weeks	
Procurement support	Procurement specialist	4 weeks	

### **ANNEX 2: Economic and Financial Analysis**

- 1. The proposed project will support the strengthening and extension of the SSN system in Mauritania to break the cycle of intergenerational poverty. The proposed project is expected to support the expansion and update of the Social Registry, the expansion of cash transfers and a stronger shock response. The expansion of the registry will add a portion of households located in the Mbera Refugee Camp to the planned 200,000 households. The registry will also be updated, with a review of the method for determining related local quotas. For the socio-economic inclusion of poor households, the proposed project will support the expansion of *Tekavoul* from the existing 30,000 to approximately 45,000 beneficiary households. This will include a re-certification of all beneficiary households reaching five years in the program, and a supplementary economic inclusion package for those exiting the program. In terms of shock-response, the proposed Project will support the continuation and expansion of the shock-response cash transfers from the present average of 3,500 households to an average of 8,000 households annually. Moreover, an EWS, a financing strategy and a common financial vehicle will be put in place to strengthen the Government's capacity to respond to climate-based shocks.
- 2. The proposed project will have critical indirect and direct impacts on welfare and poverty. The updating and enhancing of the Social Registry will have important indirect impacts. The cash transfers and economic inclusion package provided through the continuation and expansion of the *Tekavoul* program will have a direct welfare impact for beneficiary households, but also important spillover effects for the communities where they live. Meanwhile, the support provided for shock response will avert long-lasting shocks for poor households and alleviate the need to resort to negative coping strategies.

## **Updating and enhancing the Social Registry**

4. Given the nature of updating and enhancing of the Social Registry, it is not feasible to quantify the benefits. However, the gains of recertifying existing social registry households, adding additional households and promoting its usage more widely would be multiple. An up-to-date Social Registry would permit the GoM to improve the targeting of its existing programs. Its increased usage by other government and development partners programs would improve coordination. In doing so, this would likely have an impact on: (a) further reducing the duplication of benefits across programs; (b) further reducing administrative costs associated with the various Government and donor-financed programs, and therefore representing a public good for the country; and (c) permitting the Government to continue its monitoring of the welfare of poorest households at a larger scale. Finally, the further the registry expands, the more relevant it will become for responding to crises, such as droughts, which have negatively impacted the country over the past decades. In terms of the costs associated with updating the social registry, these would amount to US\$6.9 million, whilst the costs associated with promoting it usage would be approximately US\$400,000.

### Tekavoul - Enhancing the socio-economic inclusion of households in extreme poverty

**5.** The expansion of the *Tekavoul* program is expected to have some direct impacts on consumption-based poverty, but also many other dimensions. The impact of these transfers on consumption-based extreme poverty has been estimated using the 2014 EPCV data, assuming annual transfers of US\$160 per household. Given that the project is financing all households under the *Tekavoul* program, the analysis assumes a baseline of zero coverage (that is, the counterfactual without the project financing) and an endline of 45,000 households being covered by year 5 of the program. In running these simulations, two core assumptions were made: (a) that the cash transfers do not impact the labor market participation rate for beneficiary households; and (b) that the full transfer amount is added to the household's consumption rather than being partially saved.

Table A2.1. Simulated Change in Extreme Poverty with Tekavoul Transfers

Preliminary Extrem	Preliminary Extreme Poverty Estimates from		International extreme poverty line (%)	
EPCV data		Without <i>Tekavoul</i> transfer	With <i>Tekavoul</i> transfer	
Headcount	Baseline (2019)	6.10	6.10	
	Year 5 (2024)	4.56	3.59	
Gap	Baseline (2019)	1.36	1.36	
	Year 5 (2024)	1.06	0.71	
Severity	Baseline (2019)	0.50	0.50	
	Year 5 (2024)	0.38	0.25	

of projected increases in per capita expenditure. *Tekavoul* has some impact on the poverty headcount rate using the international poverty line, whilst there are also small but positive effects on the poverty gap and poverty severity. These impacts are notable, given the scale of the program (covering only 5.6 percent of all households, after the scale-up) and the relatively small benefit size, when compared to mean household expenditure. This dynamic strengthens the case for longer-term support. Beyond the direct impacts noted on the poverty gap and poverty severity, it is expected that the *Tekavoul* program will continue to have important impacts on food security, household coping strategies, human capital, productive investments, as well as other spillover effects on local economies, which will be documented in the forthcoming impact evaluation.

## **Tekavoul** – Economic inclusion package

- 7. The economic inclusion package will likely consist of a package of basic mentoring services to support planning and objective-setting and referral to existing interventions in the beneficiary moughataa of residence including possibly for some individuals, the economic inclusion program of the Mauritania Youth Employability Project (P162916). The economic inclusion package is expected to have important short-, medium-, and long-term benefits. In the short-term, it will reduce the costs borne by the GoM in continuing these beneficiaries in the *Tekavoul* program. In the medium to long-term, it will improve the ability of those exiting *Tekavoul* to apply their skills in the labor market, enhance their ability to link up with existing labor demand, and provide them with the tools and support required to become self-sufficient.
- 8. The economic inclusion package would benefit ten to 20 percent of *Tekavoul* beneficiary households, which would exit the program on an annual basis. The average cost of the economic inclusion package would be US\$470 per beneficiary. In terms of the benefits, facilitating access to wage employment or likely more productive self-employment opportunities, is estimated to yield a four percent increase in earnings per beneficiary. The EPCV data has baseline annual earnings for the not in employment, education, or training at US\$1,764. If a working life of 25 years were assumed (given that some beneficiaries will be exiting the program at a young age and others closer to retirement), this would equate to net gains of US\$3,145 per beneficiary over a working life. Under these assumptions, the IRR of 16 percent for the economic inclusion package would exceed the discount rate of 10 percent.

### Strengthening the shock response system for households vulnerable to climate-shocks

9. The Elmaouna program and accompanying EWS represent potentially significant benefits at the

household level, in terms of losses averted. The *Elmaoun*a program also brings spillover benefits for surrounding communities, and at the national level through a quicker rebound for the productive sectors of the economy. In terms of household welfare losses averted, there is evidence from other parts of Africa (notably Ethiopia), which suggest that every dollar secured ahead of time for rapid drought response, can save up to five dollars in future costs (Wiseman and Hess 2007). If this ratio were applied in the case of *Elmaouna*, the program would be generating up to US\$38.8 million in benefits over the lifecycle of the project. These gains would be generated mainly through two channels: (a) the avoidance of negative coping strategies at the household level and (b) a quicker return to the labor market and productive activities for beneficiaries. The collective cost of the EWS would be US\$1.5 million. Meanwhile, the costs associated with the continuation and expansion of the shock response transfers would be approximately US\$7.8 million. Under this scenario, the IRR significantly exceeds the discount rate.

10. The disaster risk financing strategy also yields benefits in terms of losses averted. The financial impact of droughts and other climate shocks in Mauritania is two-fold: (a) they have historically had significant impacts on GDP; and (b) the GoM and development partners must mobilize resources to respond. In the wake of a drought, the GoM generally faces a financing challenge as demand for Government support and services increase, but tax revenues and other income typically contract. By putting in place a financing strategy *ex ante*, the Government can rapidly disburse funds to affected households and avert higher welfare losses than would be the case, if funding was disbursed later (or not at all).

### **Project Coordination and Management**

- 11. This component of the project contains the activities relating to project management, monitoring, and evaluation. Whilst these are critical to the delivery and implementation of the Social Safety Net programs, the benefits associated with these aspects of the project do no lend themselves to quantification. As a result, the costs and benefits are covered in qualitative terms.
- 12. The main costs associated with this component would include: (a) the continuation of existing staff for the project implementation unit and hiring of any additional staff; (b) the equipment and operating costs (equipment maintenance costs, services and supplies, communications, vehicle operations, maintenance and insurance); (c) internal and external audits; (d) any additional training for the project team; and (e) costs associated with project reports, including a mid-term review involving key stakeholders and civil society. The benefit of continuing to have a well-functioning and effective project in place will be that *Taazour*, the CSA and other relevant agencies can efficiently deliver on the Social Registry, *Tekavoul/ Elmaouna* program, and the Common Financial Vehicle without any delays resulting from fiduciary bottlenecks.

## **Full Cost Analysis**

13. The cost of the project is estimated at about \$14.4 million per year (\$72 million over the five years of the project). A large portion of the one-off development and equipment costs for the Social Registry and *Tekavoul* program were covered under the first phase of the project (P150430). However, keeping the Registry current and managing beneficiaries' flow mean recurrent costs. In total, 63 percent of funds will be channeled towards transfers (*Tekavoul*, economic inclusion package, and *Elmaouna*).

### **ANNEX 3: Gender Gaps in Mauritania**

1. Despite a relatively strong legal framework, gender equality remains distant in Mauritania. Most households self-reported as male-headed (64 percent). Gender gaps in human capital, access to jobs, access to assets and financial services, and voice and agency are pervasive and intersect with location (rural/urban), ethnicity, culture, age and displacement status.

### **Human Capital**

- 2. According to the 2013 census<sup>21</sup>, the Mauritanian population counted with 50.7 percent of women. This is a young and growing population: those aged under 15 represent 44.2 percent of the population and the population growth rate hovers around 2.7 per cent per year.
- 3. Health. According to the 2<sup>nd</sup> National Health Development Plan (*Plan National de Développement Sanitaire*, PNDS2<sup>22</sup>), the maternal mortality ratio remains high: from 687 deaths per 100,000 live births in 2001, to 626 in 2011<sup>23</sup> and 582 in 2013<sup>24</sup>. The PNDS2 target of 232 deaths per 100, 000 live births was largely missed.
- 4. Education. Thirty-seven percent of females and 29 percent of males older than six are without schooling (RGPH, 2013). Literacy rates are 59 percent for women and 69 percent for men. In 2014, young women represented only 18 percent of tertiary students. In rural areas, informal skill acquisition and apprenticeship is through parents and communities, both of which tend to favor boys, rather than girls whose main future is seen as wives and mothers. The Social Promotion sessions seek to promote investments in human capital for both girls and boys.

## Poverty and access to income and jobs

- 5. Labor force participation. Only 20.5 percent of women are in the labor force, compared to 69.6 percent of men. Unemployment is twice as frequent among women (19.3 percent) as men (9.9 percent). Mauritania's National Employment strategy (2017-2030) highlights the high inactivity rate of women (over half of them). Women are inactive because of social and family reasons while men are inactive because of lack of relevant skills. Especially in rural areas, norms for men to be breadwinners lead to underinvestment in education for girls.
- 6. Women's economic participation is under-accounted, as most women work in the informal sector, which represents 31.4 percent of GDP. Adult and young women are behind the informal sector dynamism in urban areas. Beyond agricultural jobs, urban informality is concentrated in retail (48 percent), transformation (24.4 percent), and services (16.7 percent). Women account for a large share of informal retail, agro-food transformation and unqualified services. Self-employment is also higher among women (44.9 percent) than among men (26.9 percent)<sup>25</sup>.

## Access to productive assets and financial services

7. Land tenure. Women hold less than eight percent of existing land titles -2,146 out of 27,000 registered land titles -. In the Senegal river valley, this proportion decreases to 5 percent of titles<sup>26</sup> and in

<sup>21</sup> Synthèse des Résultats du RGPH MRT 2013 / ONS

<sup>22</sup> Plan National de Développement Sanitaire II.

<sup>23</sup> MICS 2011.

<sup>24</sup> National Population census (Recensement Général de la Population et de l'Habitat RGPH) 2013.

<sup>25</sup> République Islamique de Mauritanie (2014). Situation de l'emploi et du secteur informel en Mauritanie en 2012. Ministère de l'Emploi de la Formation Professionnelle et des Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication.

<sup>26</sup> Direction Générale des Domaines et du Patrimoine de l'Etat.

other rural areas, to less than one percent. Women tend to organize in economic interest groups or cooperatives to access land since customary law enables land transfers to these groups.

- 8. *Property*. Article of 15 of the Mauritanian constitution enshrines equal access to property for unmarried women and men. Under article 58 of the Penal Code, married women and men have the same rights regarding the management of their properties, however a husband can intervene were his wife to decide to give or sell more than a third of her property.
- 9. Access to financial services. Women can sign contracts, register firms, and open a bank account, like men. According to the Global Findex 2017, there is however a 9.8 percentage points gap in access to accounts between women (15.5 percent) and men (26.3 percent) above 15 years of age. The GoM adopted a national strategy for micro-finance for micro-, small, and medium-enterprises and the sector grew rapidly in the 1990s. Microcredit mechanisms have helped women access loans, especially in rural areas. However, few women take advantage of these opportunities, due to low educational levels, low leadership to start-up a firm and the "need" for a man's husband, brother, father to feel the confidence to launch a business. By providing payment cards to women, the project is supporting their access to both income and basic financial services.

### Voice and agency

- 10. Representation. GoM demonstrates a strong political commitment to gender equality. Mauritania has ratified the main international human rights and gender equality conventions and has undertaken serious efforts to harmonize national judicial systems, such as the elimination of any kind of discrimination against women in 2000. In addition, the government has set-up a national gender monitoring group including public sector representatives, donors, and civil societies. In 2015, after a diagnostic on women's situation, the GoM adopted the National Gender Strategy (Stratégie Nationale d'Intégration du Genre, SNIG). The 2015-25 SNIG acknowledges that even if the Constitution guarantees the equality of women and men in front of the law, in practice women and men do not share the same status with imbalances in political, economic, judicial and cultural issues. The SCAPP puts equity at its center but does not really identify specific activities in terms of gender equality.
- 11. Politics. Women and men have the same rights to vote and be elected. Affirmative action measures include quotas. In 2013, the election law set up a 20 percent quota of women on electoral lists. This enabled women to get 22.5 percent of seats in the Assembly, 18 percent in the Senate that year and 35 percent of municipal councils, with six female mayors in 2018. Progress is slow: in 2019, the national assembly has 25 percent of seats occupied by women and 36 percent in local assemblies. Hurdles facing women's participation include: low schooling levels, lack of resources to engage in political activities, and social norms about the role women can play in public life.
- 12. *Mobility*. Women can obtain a passport and national identity card, independently of their marital status. However, foreign women who marry a Mauritanian citizen obtain citizenship through marriage while Mauritanian women cannot transmit their nationality to foreign husbands.
- 13. *GBV*. Data about GBV (including female genital mutilation, sexual violence, early and forced marriages) is difficult to come by. Legal protection of survivors is weak, which may also deter reporting. The 2015 Demographic and Health Survey yields the following statistics:
  - a. Two-thirds of women aged 15 to 49 have suffered some form of female genital mutilation/excision (FGM/E). These rates are higher in rural (75 percent) than in urban (55 percent) areas and decrease with education (75 percent of women without schooling vs. 49 percent among women with at least secondary education). More than half of female respondents declared that at least one of their daughters alive had undergone some form of MGF/E. Highest rates are in Assaba and Hodh el Gharbi

regions (86 and 87 percent respectively).

- b. Early marriage is frequent with rates as high as 51.8 percent in the Guidimakha region.
- c. The national teenage pregnancy rate is 23.6 percent, with higher rates in Guidimagha (40.6 percent), Assaba (32.8 percent), Hodh el Gharbi (26.6 percent) and Hodh Charghi (24.3 percent).
- d. More than a fourth of women (27 percent) think that a husband can be physically violent with his wife(ves) in some circumstances. Acceptance of intimate partner violence is higher among women with no schooling (37 percent) than women with at least secondary education (15.9 percent), higher among poor women (40 percent) than among rich ones (13.5 percent), higher in rural (32.1 percent) than in urban areas (21.5 percent).

## Intersectionality

- 14. Ethnicity. Women in some ethnic groups are more subordinated to men. They face a high workload, especially in rural areas where they are tasked with all domestic chores as well as agricultural production, while men hold decision-making power in all domains. Women in rural areas are doubly or triply deprived: by the intersection of their gender, ethnicity and poverty.<sup>27</sup>
- 15. Displacement. Women and girls in refugee and host communities in Hodh Chargui are disproportionally vulnerable to the complex challenges facing the region in terms of access to services, livelihoods and agency. Only 40 percent of the young women below the age of 24 in the wilaya are literate, an indicator that is likely to deteriorate given the low school enrollment rates. Many females are married during childhood (20 percent before the age of 15), and a large majority of adult women have been subjected to FGM/E. With high levels of divorce, a significant proportion of households are comprised of women and children only. Among the refugees, family separation linked to displacement results in more than half of households in the camp without a male head present. Women and girls in the camps are equally experiencing GBV, including sexual harassment, rape and physical assault, female genital mutilation, and child marriage (sometimes as a protection against the risks mentioned before). Lack of latrines and remote access to water increase risks in host communities.

### Gender data

16. Sex-disaggregated data is scarce in Mauritania and data on some key gender gaps – individual poverty measure, time use, some types of GBV – is missing. The on-going impact evaluations of both *Tekavoul* and the gender training course will make some additional data available.

<sup>27</sup> Gender analysis for the EU 2<sup>nd</sup> Gender Action Plan in Mauritania.

## ANNEX 4: Refugees and Host Communities - World Bank Program in Mauritania

## **Country Context**

- 1. One of the more stable countries in the Sahel region, Mauritania hosts a large population of refugees from neighboring conflicts. As of October 2019, Mauritania hosts 59,000 refugees, 95 percent of whom are Malians who have been arriving in the country since 2012. In addition to the Malian population, there are around 3,000 urban refugees and asylum seekers, mostly from Central African Republic, Syria and Cote d'Ivoire. Most refugees in Mauritania live in the arid moughataa (district) of Bassikounou, located approximately 50 kilometers from the Malian border. The Malian refugee population is predominantly concentrated in the Mbera refugee camp, with small enclaves scattered in host communities near the camp.
- 2. Mauritania is a party to several international conventions related to refugees. These include the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, the 1967 United Nations Protocol Relating to the Status of Refugees, and the 1969 Organization of African Unity (OAU) Convention Governing the Specific Aspects of Refugee Problems in Africa. A refugee law providing the basis for a national asylum system was developed in 2014 and reviewed by the relevant Government ministries in 2016. The bill is still pending submission to the Parliament. The new law would formalize refugee protection, including the commitment to not force refugees to return to insecurity and/or persecution in their country of origin (the principle of "non-refoulement"), grant civil rights and provide access to social services. In the interim, a Decree (number 022 of 2005) regulates the application of the norms contained in the 1951 UN Convention and the 1969 OAU Convention. The World Bank and the UNHCR will continue the dialogue with the inter-ministerial National Consultative Commission on Refugees (Commission Nationale Consultative sur les Réfugiés, CNCR) on the progress of the bill.
- 3. Assistance for refugees in Mauritania is coordinated by the Ministry of the Interior and Decentralization, through the CNCR. The CNCR has the authority to recommend decisions on the recognition of refugee status for urban refugees, based on positive individual assessments carried out by UNHCR. Refugees from Northern Mali receive their status on a *prima facie* basis. The ANRPTS is responsible for the issuance of identity cards and has set up a field office in the Mbera camp.
- 4. Humanitarian actors, led by the UNHCR and WFP, have traditionally provided the bulk of assistance to refugees, and to some extent, host communities in Mauritania. Status as refugee—rather than poverty/vulnerability is the key targeting factor for assistance. Direct support to refugees has been accompanied by the provision of basic social services and activities to promote self-reliance and income generation. However, many of these services are of short duration. Humanitarian actors have opened their services to and made some smaller investments for host populations. However, their support has focused predominantly on refugees and their immediate needs, rather than on social, economic and human capital development to ensure long-term development of both refugee and host communities.
- 5. Until recently, the southern border regions (Hodh Chargui and Hodh El Gharbi) were not benefitting from much development assistance from the international community but this is changing fast. The Sahel Alliance, a multi-donor initiative that aims to increase financial and technical support to the G5-Sahel countries over 2018-23, decided to concentrate their efforts there. Similarly, the European Union is supporting an agriculture and pastoralist project in the area. From 2020 onwards, the AFD also plans to support priority infrastructure investments in sectors of wider relevance (Declic II project). The AfDB will intervene in these two regions through a project to support the promotion of micro and small enterprises and youth employment more broadly (PAMPEJ).

- 6. The local government has limited capacity to support the increasing population and changing service and infrastructure needs in the region. The refugees increase the size of the poor and vulnerable population in the region. Overall, there is weak capacity both in the Bassikounou *moughataa* as well as throughout the region to coordinate an integrated and cost-effective response for regional development. The Mbera refugee camp is an emerging economic center of activities in the sub-region, with impacts on key resources such as water, pasture and fire wood. At present, the provision of services and resource management run in parallel between the camp and host region, with little coordination between UNHCR and the relevant line ministries, which limits synergies and cost-effectiveness.
- 7. Conscious of the likely prolonged nature of forced displacement in the country, the GoM is strongly committed to ensuring the protection of refugees while promoting their increased self-reliance and the resilience of the host communities. In its Refugee and Host Community Policy Development Letter, the Government stressed this commitment, including the adoption of a national asylum law. The Government has laid out the following three strategic directions for the national short- and medium-term response to the situation: (a) transforming local economic opportunities in a timely, sustainable, and inclusive manner; (b) improving social protection and access to basic services; and (c) strengthening the governance and management of the refugee response.
- 8. In December 2019, during the first World Refugee Forum, Mauritania, represented by the Minister of Foreign Affairs, made strong commitments in favor of local solutions for all refugees in Mauritania: (i) to adopt the national asylum law by 2020, (ii) to register all refugees with the civil registry services in order to allow them to obtain a national identification number, issue them with a secure national identification card and allow their inclusion in national systems, including statistical systems, (iii) to ensure the inclusion of refugees in health services on the same basis as nationals, and (iv) to ensure that refugees have the same conditions of access to the labor market as nationals.

### World Bank Program for Refugees and Host Communities in Mauritania

- 9. The World Bank Board approved Mauritania's eligibility for the IDA18 Regional Sub-Window for Refugees and Host communities (RSW) in November 2018. Mauritania currently meets the three eligibility criteria: (i) the number of UNHCR-registered refugees, including persons in refugee-like situations, it hosts is at least 25,000 or 0.1 percent of the country population; (ii) the country adheres to an adequate framework for the protection of refugees; and (iii) the country has an action plan, strategy, or similar document in place. The RSW allocation will enable the World Bank to support the implementation of a program to support refugees and host populations in Mauritania.
- 10. The World Bank Group has adopted a programmatic multisectoral approach to support the implementation of the Government's strategy, through policy dialogue, operations and analytical work. The program will take into consideration the fact that this is a new area for the World Bank Group and will complement UNHCR's interventions and policy work. It will also factor in the challenge stemming from a lack of existing World Bank Group engagement in the refugee-affected areas and in the broader region, which borders Mali.
- 11. The proposed overall development objective of the program is to improve the delivery of basic social services and infrastructure for refugees and host communities in targeted areas. Specifically, this will be achieved through strengthening the institutional capacity of the Mauritanian Government's social services and selected infrastructure within the two Hodhs. A key synergy across the World Bank programs will be to support the inclusion of the poorest/most vulnerable refugee and host communities' households in targeted interventions to address inequities and promote access to services. Initially the multisectoral program will include sectors prioritized by the Government: (a) health, mainly maternal and child health; (b) SP; (c) water

and sanitation and (d) decentralization and urban infrastructure—including electricity—and services in intermediate cities. This overall development objective is aligned with the Government strategy, the World Bank Group CPF and the focus areas of the Sahel Alliance.

12. The RSW resources will support the existing projects, building on existing partnerships and delivery mechanisms, or to projects under preparation to extend their activities in the targeted areas. The tentative breakdown of the financing between projects is presented below (table A4.1).

Table A4.1: The RSW-supported program in Mauritania

Project	PDO	From National PBA	From the RSW	
Social safety net system II (P171125)	To increase the effectiveness and efficiency of the nationwide adaptive social safety net system and its coverage of poor and vulnerable households, with targeted social transfers, including in refugee and host communities.	US\$27 million	US\$67 million	
Support for the health system – AF (P170585)	To improve utilization and quality of Reproductive Maternal Neonatal and Child Health services in selected regions	US\$8 million		
Water and sanitation (P167328)	To Increase access to improved water and sanitation services in selected rural areas and small towns and strengthen the performance of sector institutions.	US\$30 million		
Decentralization and urban development (P169332)	To improve (i) improve access to local services in selected localities; and (ii) strengthen the capacity of Local Governments to plan and manage public services	US\$46 million		
TOTAL		US\$111 million	US\$67 million	

13. The Refugees and Host communities' program will strengthen the "spatial approach" developed by the World Bank in Mauritania (see annex 5) and enhance cross-sectoral collaboration between several GPs including Social Protection, Health, Urban Development, Water and Energy. The spatial approach will also help generate linkages between the host regions and the camp as an economic center. The program will seek to maximize synergies with other existing and pipeline projects (such as the Sahelian Regional Support Project [Projet Régional d'Appui au Pastoralisme au Sahel, PRAPS], the Integrated Agriculture and Livestock in Dryland Areas Project, or the Mauritania Youth Employability project). Given the overall development challenges facing the region, many of which are closely linked to efforts at the national level, the World Bank Group could take advantage of many of its core areas of engagement to mitigate some of the existing pressures and to benefit host communities and/or refugees. The World Bank program for refugees and host communities will seek to complement other partners' interventions, considering the value-added and current expertise of the World Bank Group in Mauritania as well as donors' ongoing and upcoming operations.

ANNEX 5: Map on World Bank Spatial Approach in Mauritania

