



The World Bank

Strengthening Pandemic Preparedness in the Eastern, Central and Southern Africa Health Community Project
(P176300)

Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary

Concept Stage

(ESRS Concept Stage)

Date Prepared/Updated: 07/08/2021 | Report No: ESRSC02163



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Region	Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any)
Africa	AFRICA	P176300	
Project Name	Strengthening Pandemic Preparedness in the Eastern, Central and Southern Africa Health Community Project		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Health, Nutrition & Population	Investment Project Financing		9/27/2021
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)		
East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA-HC)	East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA-HC)		

Proposed Development Objective

Financing (in USD Million)	Amount
Total Project Cost	5.00

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

No

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

D. Environmental and Social Overview

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

Public Disclosure



The activities being proposed are focused on technical assistance and capacity building at the regional and national level. The Project will focus on technical assistance from the East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA-HC) to Zambia, Rwanda, Mozambique, Malawi and Tanzania. As such, there are no specific project location(s) where the Project will be implemented.

D. 2. Borrower’s Institutional Capacity

ECSA-HC as the implementing agency has been involved in the implementation of two previous projects in line with the World Bank Operational Policies for safeguards, notably the East Africa Public Health Laboratory Network Project (EAPHLN - P111556) and AFR RI-Southern Africa Tuberculosis and Health Systems Support Project (P155658). However, this project will be their first project under the new Environmental and Social Framework, and as such, they have limited knowledge of the new requirements under the World Bank’s Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) or for Environmental and Social Risk Management staff. However, given the minimal environmental and social impacts anticipated from project activities, this should not be critical. If the scope of the project changes, the need and capacity to implement the World Bank’s Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs) will be assessed and an institutional strengthening plan will be developed, agreed upon accordingly and included in the design of the project.

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

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC) Moderate

Environmental Risk Rating Moderate

The environmental risk rating for the project is Moderate. The project focusses on building capacity of member states to (a) strengthen surveillance systems and (b) prepare for health emergencies. Under strengthening surveillance systems, the project will provide capacity building to support the roll out events-based surveillance (EBS) systems; enhance point of entry disease surveillance capacities and expand cross border disease surveillance; and enhance laboratory-based disease surveillance as well as improve antimicrobial surveillance. For all of these activities, the project will support training of trainers (ToT), provide mentorship, conduct rapid assessments, develop generic protocols/guidelines, and provide country-specific customized capacity building where appropriate. Under preparing for health emergencies, the project will build capacity of countries to develop and conduct annual peer review mechanism of the preparedness systems based on the WHO Joint External Evaluation (JEE); map priority public health risks and resources; and conduct one health simulation exercise to test the plans and mobilize experts, using virtual platforms and some face to face interaction. Therefore, the project will not result in any irreversible environmental risks and impacts because the project will not finance or support (i) laboratory testing, procurement of laboratory equipment (ii) cross border surveillance or entry point checks (iii) any type of infectious healthcare waste management (iv) require any land acquisition (v) civil works of any type and; (vi) and will not procure and support IT equipment, software or any type of digital platforms. The project will have a positive effect on the environment because of the early detection and control of diseases will prevent unsustainable resource depletion, enhance biodiversity protection and pollution prevention. The project will help avoid community and occupational health and safety risks and impacts, reduce the generation of infectious healthcare waste that will lead to minimal air, soil and water pollution. On a macro scale, this project will avoid expansion of the cold storage chain and its reliance on existing refrigeration equipment containing freons with Ozone Depleting Substances and a Global Warming Potential and reduce the likelihood of accidental or deliberate release. There are project Occupational

Public Disclosure



Health and Safety (OHS) risks where face to face interactions could take place and ESCA will require appropriate OHS policies in place to maintain a safe working environment and to mitigate all Covid-19 risks and impacts for its workers, experts and consultants. Other environmental risks include the indiscriminate disposal of Covid-19 related PPE waste that will be used at face to face meetings, possible capacity building events and the simulation exercises where experts are mobilized. All PPE waste will be managed in accordance with national legislation, WB ESHG and the requirements of ESS 3 whether non-infectious or infectious through the respective solid waste or health care waste streams. The majority of the project activities will be carried out by ESCA in collaboration with the country experts. In a few cases, targeted TA will be provided, and in such cases, Terms of Reference (ToRs) should be developed for the capacity building and training needs to define the scope and outputs of technical assistance activities and to ensure they are conducted within the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF).

Social Risk Rating

Low

The social risk classification for the project is low based on the nature of the activities which mainly involves capacity building and technical assistance at the Regional and National level to strengthen systems in the target countries. The project is expected to have positive social impacts by contributing to an improvement in disease surveillance at the national and regional level. The Project will not include any civil works and any direct interaction with communities is expected to be limited. Engagement will be required with other professional agencies including NGOs, WHO, and African CDC to ensure successful implementation of the project. Due to the likely nature and scale of the workforce issues related to labor and working conditions are anticipated to be negligible but will be addressed through the requirement for national law and requirements for ESS2 to be met as part of the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).

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

B.1. General Assessment

ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Overview of the relevance of the Standard for the Project:

The project includes technical assistance and capacity building activities funded by a small grant. All studies that are conducted for this project as well as reports generated and training or capacity building provided will be developed to be consistent with requirements of the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). Any Terms of Reference developed as part of the Project will include reference to the need to apply the requirements of the Environmental and Social Framework, including consideration of inclusion and access for all in line with the requirements of not only ESS1 but also ESS4 and ESS7. These measures will be documented in the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).

The Project is likely to result in beneficial outcomes associated with community health and safety through improved disease surveillance and response mechanisms e.g. through the development of emergency preparedness and response planning. This is likely to result in associated socio-economic benefits, associated with more rapid responses to outbreaks, reduced transmission, reduction in the burden of health care (costs and time) and enabling people to remain in work without restrictions such as curfews, social distancing measures, etc seen in some participating countries as a result of Covid-19. In addition, the research activities will include consideration of the application of World Bank environmental and social requirements and additional awareness raising on the same



which is likely to improve the awareness of participating stakeholder’s knowledge of the Environmental and Social Framework.

There is the risk of recurring exposure, risk of infection and transmission of Covid-19 as project workers are expected to travel to conduct capacity health simulation exercises, attend capacity building events and face to face meetings. A Personal Protective Equipment (PPE) protocol as part of a broader Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) plan that will include appropriate OHS training for project workers to protect them from the virus and other communicable diseases. Mitigation measures will follow WHO protocols, WB and GIIP and will include the use of hand sanitisers, PPE, social distancing measures, disinfection of meeting areas, monitoring of body temperatures, limited travel and face to face meetings and ensure policies, training and messaging on Covid-19 protection measures are displayed in all project areas. Measures will be introduced to manage project related personnel who have contracted Covid-19. ESCA-HC will secure a sufficient budget for PPE provisions and other relevant disease prevention measures.

Proper training on the risk management procedures including OHS measures will be provided by the project’s environmental and social focal points for the project workers to ensure they fully understand the Covid-19 protocols and principles for face to face events and appropriate PPE disposal. The requirement for disease prevention (including PPE) budget allocation, its provision and training will be established in the ESCP. The project will appoint an environmental and social focal point to provide oversight and technical support to ensure that environmental and social risk management, especially on managing Covid19 risk and taking the necessary OHS measures are adequately integrated into the project design through the Terms of References (ToRs) for the focal points. The ToRs for the Focal Points will be prepared by ESCA-HC and approved by the World Bank. The management of Covid-19 PPE waste will be implemented through a solid waste plan that will be required for all project locations or events. ToRs should be developed for the capacity building and training needs to define the scope and outputs of technical assistance activities and to ensure they are conducted within the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF).

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

The use of the borrowers frameworks is not being considered as part of the project.

ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

In order, to undertake the activities proposed and to support capacity building, engagement will be required with stakeholder groups. Engagement will be undertaken with government agencies, Regional Health agencies (e.g. African Society for Laboratory Medicine and African CDC), NGOs (involved in the health sector) and CSOs etc who are involved in the implementation of the health surveillance activities to ensure sustainability. The engagement will mainly be at the regional level, with some national level engagement taking place. The participating agencies will then need to roll out the assistance within their own countries at the various administrative levels. Given the technical nature of the engagement, aspects relevant to stakeholder engagement will be built into the ESCP. The ESCP will also present a Grievance Mechanism (GM), which will be proportionate to the potential risks and impacts of the project which will be managed by ECSA.

Public Disclosure



Any engagement will be undertaken in a manner which is COVID-19 secure and in line with national requirements for gatherings at the time of engagement. The engagement activities will be informed by WHO’s “COVID-19 Strategic Preparedness and Response Plan Operation Planning Guidelines to Support Country Preparedness and Response” (2020) and also the World Bank’s “Technical Note: Public Consultations and Stakeholder Engagement in WB-supported operations when there are constraints on conducting public meetings” (March 20, 2020). This may involve the use of virtual meetings, smaller meetings or other measures as relevant.

B.2. Specific Risks and Impacts

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

ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions

The project will be implemented by ESCA in collaboration with national government agencies. The Project may need to hire consultants to support the TA activities including the development of guidelines and delivery of training. As such it is expected that Project workers will mainly be Direct Workers and that contracted workers, community workers and supply chain workers will not form part of the workforce.

Given the nature of the project, the risk of labor abuses, in-migration and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Sexual Harassment risks are considered to be low. As part of the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan, the borrowers will be required to demonstrate that they employ their staff in line with national law and the requirements of ESS2. This will include ensuring that all workers have contracts outlining the terms and conditions of their employment including hours of work, wages, overtime, rest periods, compensation and benefits; workers are subject to non-discrimination and equal opportunities, forced and child labor is prohibited and that workers have access to a Grievance Redress Mechanism. The risks of Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/ Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) are also expected to be low but the ESCP will require that measures to prevent and respond to SEA/SH are in place including codes of conduct and SEA/SH responsive GRMs.

In terms of Occupational Health Safety (OHS) given the nature of the work, ESCA will need to develop an OHS plan to maintain a safe working environment, provide the necessary level of training and information, risk assessments are undertaken as required for work related travel, conferences, meetings, face to face instruction, demonstrations, readiness and response exercises and any location designated as a place of work for the project and that there are accident and incident investigation and reporting requirements in place. OHS risks mitigation measures includes (i) social distancing, enhanced hygiene, increased availability of PPE for project staff and; (ii) procurement of facemasks, washbasins and soap, and monitoring equipment such as thermometers in meeting places, conferences and event. COVID-19 mitigation measures will be enhanced in a project COVID-19 policy that will include Good International Industrial Practice (GIIP) such as (iii) frequent handwashing or disinfection with an alcohol based hand sanitizer, physical distance of at least 2 meter or according to national regulations, wearing of face masks, regular environmental cleaning and disinfections of event locations (where the project is associated), limiting travel and ensure (iv) policies, training, messaging and education in all project related areas are increased to improve awareness of COVID-19 and (v) the management of people with COVID-19 or their contacts is also critical e.g. requiring project related staff, workers and participants who are unwell or who develop symptoms to stay at home, self-isolate and contact a medical professional or the local or regional COVID-19 information line for advice on testing and referral.



ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

ESS 3 is relevant. The project will positively enhance pollution prevention and energy efficiency by a reduction in the volume of healthcare waste generation and subsequent air, soil and water pollution if another pandemic or a national epidemic begins to develop. The Covid-19 pandemic has seen an exponential rise in demand for disposable PPE such as face shields, face masks, nitrile glove, plastic hand sanitizer containers of all types and a rise in the generation of healthcare waste such as syringes, vials and swabs. In addition, the need for refrigeration equipment and final healthcare waste disposal capacity is in demand under the current Covid-19 pandemic. This places pressure on already strained resources and infrastructure to properly manage it. Therefore, an improved response and increased capacity towards future pandemics will severely reduce the volume of pollutants to the air, water and land. There will be a reduced need for an expanded cold chain storage over the region that will decrease the potential for the leakage, accidental or deliberate release of freons with ozone depleting substances (ODS) and a high Global Warming Potential (GWP) to the atmosphere from the use of poorly maintained or obsolete refrigeration equipment. The project could offset the need for healthcare waste incineration and, therefore, will relieve pressure off the current limited operational active and legal compliant incineration capacity.

There is the potential for this project to increase technical capacity in the development of an Infectious Control and Waste Management Plan (ICWMP) in preparation for future pandemics. The ICWMP could be mainstreamed throughout the regional health authorities and developed in accordance with national legal standards, WB ESS 2, 3, 4, WB Environmental Safety Health Guidelines (ESHG) and Good International Industry Practice (GIIP). ICWMP capacity building should include inventory of existing incineration capacities, the target emission standards, action plans to ensure legal compliance, training in healthcare waste management and ICWMP implementation.

There is a risk that project related PPE used in meetings, capacity building events, conferences and exercises could be inappropriately disposed of in the local environment. All non-infectious PPE should be disposed of as solid waste through the normal solid waste collection systems. All those who are infected with COVID-19 should not dispose of their PPE through the solid waste streams but seek advice through their local healthcare facilities or follow the national guidance on disposing of COVID-19 related PPE. Capacity building needs to include how hazardous wastes such as healthcare wastes are transported in country, its legal requirements and best environmental practice in country. Capacity building needs to include how this aspect could be improved for future pandemics and what capacity is required in each country.

ESS4 Community Health and Safety

As no civil or infrastructure development activity is envisaged under the project, there is no potential health and safety risk or impact on communities as a result of direct activities. However, communities may benefit from improved system capacities to reduce the risks and impacts of future pandemics by a lower risk of indiscriminate



disposal or mismanagement of infectious healthcare waste that would otherwise lead to pollution of land, air and water. The required measures in the COVID-19 Annex will be implemented to ensure the risk of transmission and exposure to the virus is kept low during interactions within the local communities.

Communities will benefit from improved health surveillance and response measures, particularly at ports of entry, as a result of the development and implementation of the Project. The activities will assist the participating countries to respond to health outbreaks in future as a result of enhanced event-based surveillance, cross border surveillance and contingency planning for emergencies.

ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

This standard is not relevant as project activities will not require any land acquisition, restrictions on land use or involuntary resettlement.

ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

The project will not impact on biodiversity conservation and sustainable management of living natural resources and, therefore, ESS 6 is not relevant at this time. In addition, improved capacity and impact mitigation of future pandemics will reduce the effects on biodiversity and living natural resources through a reduced intensity of pandemic effects.

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

This standard is not considered to be relevant. Despite the presence of Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities (SSAHUTLC) in some of the countries, impacts on these communities are not anticipated as a result of the activities being undertaken by the Project. However, activities should include sensitization to SSAHUTLC including making sure that information and health services are culturally appropriate and provide equitable access to health prevention and treatment.

ESS8 Cultural Heritage

This standard is not considered to be relevant as project activities do not involve any physical works so impacts to cultural heritage sites are not envisaged. The project also does not involve any components related to the use of cultural heritage.

ESS9 Financial Intermediaries

The standard is not relevant. The use of Financial Intermediaries is not being considered.

C. Legal Operational Policies that Apply

OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways

No



OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas

No

III. WORLD BANK ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL DUE DILIGENCE

A. Is a common approach being considered?

No

Financing Partners

A common approach is not being considered.

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

Actions to be completed prior to Bank Board Approval:

An Environmental and Social Commitment Plan will be prepared by ECSA-HC

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

- 1) Requirements for monitoring and reporting on the management of environmental and social issues by ECSA-HC
- 2) Commitments to ensure all project workers are employed in line with the requirements of national law and ESS2, including with respect to working conditions, health and safety and grievance redress mechanisms.
- 3) Commitments to address SEA/SH Risks.
- 4) Requirements for Stakeholder Engagement including management of the GRM by ECSA-HC.
- 5) ECSA-HC to ensure that all studies associated with the project and all resultant deliverables will be developed consistent with the requirements of ESSs 1-10 .
- 6) ECSA-HC to ensure that any ToR prepared as part of the project are in line with the requirements of the ESF.
- 7) ECSA -HC to undertake all capacity building activities including trainings, workshops etc in line with WHO recommendations to prevent the spread of infectious diseases including Covid-19.

IV. CONTACT POINTS

World Bank

Contact:	Peter Okwero	Title:	Senior Health Specialist
Telephone No:	5355+3201	Email:	pokwero@worldbank.org

Borrower/Client/Recipient

Borrower: East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA-HC)

Implementing Agency(ies)

Implementing Agency: East, Central and Southern Africa Health Community (ECSA-HC)

Public Disclosure



The World Bank

Strengthening Pandemic Preparedness in the Eastern, Central and Southern Africa Health Community Project
(P176300)

V. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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

VI. APPROVAL

Task Team Leader(s): Peter Okwero

Practice Manager (ENR/Social) Iain G. Shuker Recommended on 29-Jun-2021 at 17:04:44 GMT-04:00