



Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary

Concept Stage

(ESRS Concept Stage)

Date Prepared/Updated: 02/28/2021 | Report No: ESRSC01873



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Region	Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any)
Lebanon	MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA	P176444	
Project Name	The Skilling Up Lebanon (SUL) Project		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Social Protection & Jobs	Investment Project Financing		4/1/2021
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)		
Beirut Digital District (BDD) Talent Development Hub	Beirut Digital District (BDD) Talent Development Hub		

Proposed Development Objective

The overall Development Objective (DO) of the proposed project is to develop a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model for increasing access to market relevant digital skills for youth in Lebanon. Vulnerable Lebanese youth negatively impacted by the Syrian conflict will especially be targeted and gender-balanced participation will also be sought.

Financing (in USD Million)	Amount
Total Project Cost	0.35

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]

The project will support the promotion of digital skills under the Skilling Up Lebanon (SUL) initiative launched by the World Bank in 2019. This initiative aims to prepare young women and men for the local, regional and global jobs of the future and attracting digital technology players to invest in the region. The specific outcomes expected for this component are to: (i) provide a proof of concept for the PPP model proposed under the SUL with a view to attract



additional funding to scale up and sustain the model; (ii) design and implement five pilot digital skills programs and training of approximately 800 young men and women.

D. Environmental and Social Overview

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

The geographic extent of this project is nationwide. The purpose of the project is to develop a Public-Private Partnership (PPP) model for increasing access to market-relevant digital skills for youth in Lebanon. Vulnerable Lebanese youth negatively impacted by the Syrian conflict will especially be targeted and gender-balanced participation will also be sought. No civil works are expected to be carried out under the project that will impact the physical environment.

D. 2. Borrower’s Institutional Capacity

The borrower is the Beirut Digital District (BDD) Talent Development Hub whose objective is to close the skills gap and upskill the workforce in Lebanon with the necessary and relevant digital skills to thrive in the local and global economy. The borrower does not have any previous capacity in the implementation of the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework. The bank task team will provide hand-holding support to ensure due assessment and mitigation of the environmental and social risks associated with the project as well as preparation of the relevant E&S instruments as per the ESF.

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

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Low

Environmental Risk Rating

Low

The environmental risk is assessed to be low since the project components are expected to have limited to no impact on the environment. All the project activities are of soft types of interventions (improving governance, hiring experts, online platform, career internship portal, logos, hashtags, and delivering of training) that will not generate any adverse risks or impacts on human population or the environment. This project will not support any civil works.

Social Risk Rating

Low

The social risk rating is 'low'. The project will have mainly positive social impacts through the provision of equally accessible training opportunities to both male and female youth nationwide. The pilot training programs will be selected before appraisal and the selection and targeting criteria will be prepared and finalized in a manner acceptable to the bank. However, the main social risk is related to the potential risk of sexual exploitation and abuse, and sexual harassment (SEA/SH) and more specifically during the training sessions which will be conducted for approximately 800 young men and women and where female students may be in close contact with male trainers. The project will need to ensure a robust grievance mechanism with SEA/SH referral pathways with capacitated staff who will be able to handle such complaints. The project will also need to raise awareness on this topic to all beneficiaries, project actors and trainers.

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

B.1. General Assessment

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ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Overview of the relevance of the Standard for the Project:

There will be some social impacts due to the potential risk of SEA/SH during delivering the training. The environmental impacts are negligible. In the absence of any physical interventions, the project does not require the preparation of a stand-alone environment and social assessment instrument, as the mitigation and prevention of SEA/SH aspects will be captured through the GBV Action Plan and the LMP as indicated below.

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

Borrower Framework is not being considered

ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

A Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) will be prepared by the implementing agency, BDD Talent Development Hub prior to the appraisal. The SEP will identify all stakeholders and beneficiaries including women beneficiaries, students, women, and vulnerable groups and it should ensure inclusive and meaningful outreach and consultation sessions to be conducted throughout project implementation. Vulnerable and disadvantaged groups will be identified in the SEP and dedicated approaches and increased level of resources will need to be planned to remove obstacles for their participation and foster a meaningful engagement of stakeholders, using specific consultation strategies amidst the COVID-19 pandemic. The SEP will allow the BDD Talent Development Hub to engage with stakeholders during the project cycle with (i) an early engagement during the pre-application phase; and (ii) in the post-application phase. It should also allocate necessary resources including staff and budget for the management, implementation, and monitoring of the SEP during the duration of the Project.

Finally, the SEP will allow the set-up of dedicated GRMs to address complaints and feedback. A GRM is already in place at BDD Talent Development Hub, which will be further assessed during project preparation and any improvements necessary will be agreed and reflected in the SEP and ESCP. The GRM has several channels available for beneficiaries and other interested parties to register any grievances / complaints as follows:

- Phone: +961.1.660.941
- Email address: customercare@beirutdigitaldistrict.com
- Website: <https://beirutdigitaldistrict.com/>
- Mobile App: BDD App

The responsible persons are: May Al Hajj; Mohamad Itani and Mouhamad Rabah. The hours of operation of the GRM: 9am - 5pm and the timeline for the closure of complaints is maximum of 5 days. The GRM plays an important role in enhancing public trust and can be valued as a means to strengthen the performance and to improve BDD Talent Development Hub reputation, administrative and systemic issues related to its projects and programs implemented. BDD shall maintain, throughout the Project implementation, and publicize the availability of this grievance mechanism, in form and substance satisfactory to the Bank, to hear and determine fairly and in good faith all complaints raised in relation to the Project, and take all measures necessary to implement the determinations made by such mechanism in a manner satisfactory to the Bank. The GRM will also include referral pathways to address any potential SEA/SH complaints.

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 involve the use of Direct workers (in the project management unit – PMU) and Contracted workers (trainers). The BDD Talent Development Hub will develop and implement Labor-Management Procedures (LMP) and will identify the different categories of workers to be engaged in the project, and establish and maintain a safe working environment consistent with the national law and ESS2 for all project workers. Provisions for LMP will be consistent with ESS2, which will be included in the ESCP, and will contain provisions on terms and conditions of employment, nondiscrimination and equal opportunity for employment, worker’s organizations, and restrictions on child and forced labor. Specific provisions will also need to be added in the LMP on Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) risks due to COVID-19 related risks as needed. A separate grievance mechanism system will be set up for all direct workers, and contracted workers to raise and resolve any workplace-related concerns including potential SEA/SH-related complaints. The LMP will be prepared by the Borrower before project effectiveness provisions for which will be included in the ESCP.

ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

The project will not involve any civil works that would lead to generation of waste. Soft type activities under Component 1 (such as installation of software) and training delivery under Component 2 are not generating waste except for the usual domestic wastes generated at training centers. All BDD training centers are currently operating so no additional waste due to project activities are not expected.. The procurement plan may include few number of PCs with very limited energy consumption.

ESS4 Community Health and Safety

The relevance of this ESS comes mainly from risks of exposure to COVID-19 . The Implementing Agency, BDD Talent Development Hub will follow the relevant national COVID19 preventive measures as well as the relevant WHO guidelines to be implemented particularly during face-to-face trainings. In addition, the IA will develop and implement measures and actions to assess and manage the risks of gender-based violence (GBV) and sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (SEA/SH). A Gender-Based Violence Action Plan that will be developed for the project will address such risks in a way that is commensurate to the risk level and will include primarily the need to have a code of conduct for all staff involved in the project, training/awareness-raising of SEA/SH, and a GRM channel for SEA/SH grievances. The GBV Action Plan will be prepared before project activities (such as training) and necessary provisions related to this will be included in the ESCP.

ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

This project does not require land acquisition, does not impact negatively on assets, or cause loss of assets. Therefore, ESS5 is not currently relevant.

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ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

No risks/impacts on biodiversity, natural habitats or living natural resources, as there are no physical interventions by the project.

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

ESS7 is not currently relevant for this project because there are no indigenous peoples in Lebanon.

ESS8 Cultural Heritage

No risks/impacts on tangible or nontangible cultural resources, as there are no physical interventions by the project.

ESS9 Financial Intermediaries

No FIs will be used to disburse the funds

B.3 Other Relevant Project Risks

None

C. Legal Operational Policies that Apply

OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways No

OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas No

III. WORLD BANK ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL DUE DILIGENCE

A. Is a common approach being considered? No

Financing Partners

N/A

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

Actions to be completed prior to Bank Board Approval:

The Borrower will prepare a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) and the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) prior to appraisal.

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

The ESCP will stipulate the need for the Borrower to carry out the following:

- Prepare the Labor-Management Procedures (LMP);

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- Prepare the GBV Action Plan;
- Implement and update the SEP as needed.

C. Timing

Tentative target date for preparing the Appraisal Stage ESRS

01-Apr-2021

IV. CONTACT POINTS

World Bank

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Borrower/Client/Recipient

Borrower: Beirut Digital District (BDD) Talent Development Hub

Implementing Agency(ies)

Implementing Agency: Beirut Digital District (BDD) Talent Development Hub

V. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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VI. APPROVAL

Task Team Leader(s):	Angela Elzir
Practice Manager (ENR/Social)	Pia Peeters Recommended on 28-Feb-2021 at 16:14:9 GMT-05:00

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