

The Republic of Maldives Ministry of Health

Maldives COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Project (L0378A)

ENVIRONMENTAL and SOCIAL COMMITMENT PLAN (ESCP)

**12 December 2024
Update 01: 12 February 2026**

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL COMMITMENT PLAN

1. Government of Republic of Maldives (hereinafter the **Recipient**) will implement the Maldives COVID-19 Emergency Response and Health Systems Preparedness Project (the **Project**), with the involvement of the following Ministries/agencies/units: Ministry of Health (**MoH**). Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) has agreed to provide financing for the Project.
2. The Recipient will implement material measures and actions so that the Project is implemented in accordance with AIIB's **Environmental and Social Framework (ESF)**. The project will follow the **2024 ESF** of the AIIB, which entered effectiveness on June 26, 2024, and will be governed by the **Environmental and Social Policy (ESP)**, **Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs)**, and **Environmental and Social Exclusion List (ESEL)**. This Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (**ESCP**) sets out material measures and actions, any specific documents or plans, as well as the timing for each of these.
3. The Recipient is responsible for compliance with all requirements of the ESCP even when implementation of specific measures and actions is conducted by the Ministry, agency or unit referenced in 1 above.
4. Implementation of the material measures and actions set out in this ESCP will be monitored and reported to the AIIB by the Republic of Maldives as required by the ESCP and the conditions of the legal agreement, and the AIIB will monitor and assess progress and completion of the material measures and actions throughout implementation of the Project.
5. As agreed by the AIIB and the Recipient, this ESCP may be revised from time to time during Project implementation, to reflect adaptive management of Project changes and unforeseen circumstances or in response to assessment of Project performance conducted under the ESCP itself. In such circumstances, the Recipient will agree to the changes with the AIIB and will update the ESCP to reflect such changes. Agreement on changes to the ESCP will be documented through the exchange of letters signed between the AIIB and the Recipient. The Recipient will promptly re-disclose the updated ESCP.
6. The project is categorized as **Category B** following AIIB's screening under the 2024 ESF, given the limited number of potentially adverse environmental and social (E&S) risks and impacts. The anticipated impacts are not unprecedented, with few irreversible or cumulative effects. The impacts are expected to be confined to the project areas and can be effectively managed through the application of good practices.
7. Only **Environmental and Social Standard 1 (ESS 1): Environmental and Social Assessment and Management** apply to the project, as it does not involve land acquisition or resettlement (ESS 2), nor does it affect Indigenous Peoples (ESS 3).
8. Where Project changes, unforeseen circumstances, or Project performance result in changes to the risks and impacts during Project implementation, the Recipient shall provide additional funds, if needed, to implement actions and measures to address such risks.

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Material Measures and Actions	Time Frame	Responsible Entity/Authority	
MONITORING AND REPORTING			
<p>REGULAR REPORTING: Prepare and submit to the AIBB regular monitoring reports on the environmental, social, health and safety (ESHS) performance of the Project, including but not limited to, stakeholder engagement activities and grievances log.</p>	<p><u>Monthly</u> and monitoring updates should be shared with the Bank, from the first complete month of implementation.</p>	<p>Ministry of Health.</p>	
ESS 1: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT			
A. GENERAL			
<p>1.1</p>	<p>ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE: The MoH shall establish and maintain a PMU with qualified staff and resources, including an environmental and social specialist to support management of ESHS risks and impacts of the Project and implement the ESMF and SEP.</p>	<p>The environmental and social specialist will be assigned to the project effective immediately.</p> <p>PMU should be maintained throughout Project implementation.</p>	<p>Ministry of Health.</p>
B. ASSESSMENT AND MANAGEMENT PROCESS			
<p>2.1</p>	<p>ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ASSESSMENT/MANAGEMENT PLANS AND INSTRUMENTS/ CONTRACTORS</p> <p>a. Assess the environmental and social risks and impacts of proposed Project activities, including to ensure that individuals or groups who, because of their particular circumstances, may be disadvantaged or vulnerable, have access to the development benefits resulting from the Project in accordance with Environmental and Social Standard 1 (ESS1) of the 2024 ESF and the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) of the Project. The ESMF includes an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) as necessary for low-medium scale construction works.</p>	<p>a. The ESMF shall be updated within 60 days after the Effectiveness Date consistent to the AIBB's 2024 ESF. Activities which involve establishment of isolation centers, involving any type of construction work and all other activities requiring ESMF screening cannot start before the ESMF is consulted and disclosed and other environmental and social assessments (if required after screening) are in place.</p> <p>b. Plans or instruments prepared before carrying out of the relevant activities and thereafter implemented throughout the carrying out of such activities.</p> <p>c. Before launching the procurement process for the relevant activities and thereafter throughout the implementation of the respective Project activities.</p>	<p>Ministry of Health.</p>

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	<p>b. Prepare, disclose, adopt, and implement the ESMP and any other environmental and social management plans or other instruments required for the respective Project activities as per the assessment process, in accordance with the ESS1 of AIIB’s ESF, the ESMF, the EHSs, and other relevant Good International Industry Practice (GIIP) including relevant WHO Guidelines in a manner acceptable to the AIIB. The ESMP shall be prepared in accordance with ESS1 of AIIB’s ESF and should align with requirements of the national EIA regulation 2012 and its amendments.</p> <p>c. Incorporate the relevant aspects of this ESCP, including, inter alia, any environmental and social management plans or other instruments, AIIB’S 2024 ESF requirements, and any other required ESHS measures, into the ESHS specifications of the procurement documents and contracts with contractors and supervising firms. Thereafter ensure that the contractors and supervising firms comply with the ESHS specifications of their respective contracts.</p> <p>d. Update environmental and social instruments and update any applicable requirements under ESS 1 of the 2024 ESF, the EHSs, and other relevant Good International Industry Practice (GIIP) and relevant WHO guidelines satisfactory to the AIIB.</p> <p>e. Ensure that terms of reference for studies, capacity building, training and any outputs of technical assistance provided under the Project, are acceptable to the AIIB and duly incorporate and take into consideration the requirements of the ESS1 of the 2024 ESF.</p>	<p>d. The most updated guidelines should be used while updating the ESMF and SEP in 60 days after Effectiveness and the revisions in WHO, EHSs, GIIPs should be continuously followed and addressed in E&S instruments throughout project implementation. Most updated versions of E&S instruments shall be used during project implementation.</p> <p>e. Throughout project implementation.</p>	
<p>2.2</p>	<p>EXCLUSIONS: The following type of activities shall not be eligible for finance under the Project:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities that may cause long term, permanent and/or irreversible (e.g. loss of major natural habitat) adverse impacts on wetlands, protected terrestrial areas /marine protected areas within the Republic of Maldives. 	<p>f. These exclusions shall be applied as part of the screening process conducted under action 1.2.a. above.</p>	

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Activities that may further elevate the existing solid waste management challenges of the Maldives, including sea dumping of health care waste. • Activities that have high probability of causing serious adverse effects to human health and/or the environment other than during treatment of COVID-19 cases. • Activities that may have significant adverse social impacts and may give rise to significant social conflict. • Activities that may affect lands or rights of indigenous people or other vulnerable minorities. • Activities that may involve permanent resettlement or land acquisition or adverse impacts on cultural heritage • All the activities prescribed in the Environmental and Social Exclusion List (ESEL) of the AIIB’s 2024 ESF: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Forced labor or harmful or exploitative forms of child labor. 2. The production of, or trade in, any product or activity deemed illegal under national laws or regulations of the Republic of Maldives, or international conventions and agreements, or subject to international phase out or bans, such as: <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2.1. Production of, or trade in, products containing polychlorinated biphenyl (PCBs). 2.2. Production of, or trade in, pharmaceuticals, pesticides/herbicides and other hazardous substances subject to international phase outs or bans (Rotterdam Convention, Stockholm Convention). 2.3. Production of, or trade in, ozone depleting substances subject to international phase out (Montreal Protocol). 3. Trade in wildlife or production of, or trade in, wildlife products regulated under the Convention on International Trade in Endangered Species of Wild Fauna and Flora (CITES). 4. Transboundary movements of waste prohibited under international law (Basel Convention). 5. Production of, or trade in, weapons and munitions, including paramilitary materials. 		
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	<p>6. Production of, or trade in, alcoholic beverages.</p> <p>7. Production of, or trade in, tobacco.</p> <p>8. Gambling, casinos and equivalent enterprises.</p> <p>9. Production of, trade in, or use of asbestos fibers, whether or not bonded.</p> <p>10. Activities prohibited by legislation of the Republic of Maldives or by international conventions relating to the protection of biodiversity resources or cultural resources, such as, Bonn Convention, Ramsar Convention, World Heritage Convention and Convention on Biological Diversity.</p> <p>11. Commercial logging operations or the purchase of logging equipment for use in primary tropical moist forests or old-growth forests.</p> <p>12. Production or trade in wood or other forestry products other than from sustainably managed forests.</p> <p>13. Marine and coastal fishing practices, such as large-scale pelagic drift net fishing and fine mesh net fishing, harmful to vulnerable and protected species in large numbers and damaging to marine biodiversity and habitats.</p> <p>14. Shipment of oil or other hazardous substances in tankers that do not comply with IMO requirements (IMO, MARPOL, SOLAS and Paris MOU).</p> <p>15. Thermal coal mining, coal-fired power and heating plants or Projects that are functionally related to coal.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Any other excluded activities set out in the ESMF of the Project. 		
2.3.	<p>STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT PLAN: Prepare, disclose, adopt, and implement a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) consistent with AIB's ESF, in a manner acceptable to the AIB.</p> <p>Stakeholder consultations should be carried out in a manner proportional to the project risks and impacts.</p>	The SEP will be updated within 60 days after the Effectiveness Date. The SEP will be continuously updated throughout the project implementation and implemented throughout the project.	Ministry of Health
2.4.	<p>PROJECT-LEVEL GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM: Accessible grievance arrangements shall be made publicly available to receive and facilitate resolution of concerns and grievances in relation to the Project, consistent with AIB's ESF, in a manner acceptable to the AIB.</p>	The Project-Level GRM should be operational by the time of implementation of relevant project activities.	Ministry of Health

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	GRMs for receiving and handling public grievances, and a commensurate mechanism for project workers, shall be devised. GRM for project workers shall be included in the updated Labor Management Plan.	Throughout project implementation.	
2.5.	PROJECT AFFECTED PEOPLE'S MECHANISM: The public and the community where the project is taking place shall be made aware of the availability of AIIB's independent accountability mechanism (IAM), the Project-affected People's Mechanism (PPM) and the process.	Throughout Project implementation.	Ministry of Health
2.6.	ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL INFORMATION DISCLOSURE: The following documents shall be disclosed at project site and at MoH website, as early as feasible: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Draft Environmental and Social Documentation including applicable ESIA's, ESMP's or ESMPF's. b. Information on GRM and IAM, including project level GRMs. c. Final Environmental and Social Documentation. Final reports following clearance from AIIB and/or Environmental Regulatory Authority (ERA) if applicable. d. Material changes to environmental and social information. e. Environmental and Social Monitoring Reports. f. Bank Signage at Project Site. Signage that is understood by the project affected communities and stakeholders. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a. Draft E&S documents shall be disclosed for 30 calendar days at project sites prior to bank approval. b. The Recipient shall disclose the final E&S reports at project sites following bank approval. c. Information on GRM, IAM and Monitoring reports should be displayed at project sites. d. Signage including information on GRM and OHS requirements shall be displayed at the project site. 	Ministry of Health and ERA (if ERA clearance is required following national EIA screening).
C. ENVIRONMENTAL COVERAGE			
3.1	POLLUTION PREVENTION AND RESOURCE EFFICIENCY: Relevant aspects shall be considered, as needed, under action 2.1, including, inter alia, measures to: manage healthcare waste, and other types of hazardous and non-hazardous wastes.	Throughout Project implementation	Ministry of Health
3.2	BIODIVERSITY IMPACTS: Measures to effectively screen for and manage risks and impacts on biodiversity will be identified and included as part of the ESMF.	Throughout Project implementation	Ministry of Health
D. SOCIAL COVERAGE AND E. HEALTH AND SAFETY			

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5.1.	Relevant aspects shall be considered, as needed, under action 2.1. above, including, inter alia, measures to: minimize the potential for community exposure to communicable diseases; ensure that individuals or groups who, because of their particular circumstances, may be disadvantaged or vulnerable have access to the development benefits resulting from the Project; and prevent and respond to Gender-based violence (GBV), sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and sexual harassment (SH).	Throughout Project implementation	Ministry of Health
5.2.	The Recipient will put measures in place to prevent or minimize the spread of the COVID-19 or other pandemics or communicable diseases.	Throughout Project implementation	Ministry of Health
5.3.	The Recipient will implement emergency preparedness measures in case of laboratory accidents/ emergencies, e.g. a fire response or natural phenomena event.	Throughout Project implementation	Ministry of Health
5.4.	The Recipient will operate quarantine and isolation centers in line with the applicable requirements of AIIB's 2024 ESF, and the ESHGs	Throughout Project implementation	Ministry of Health
5.5.	The Recipient will ensure the avoidance of any form of GBV, SEA or SH by relying on the WHO Code of Ethics and Professional conduct for all workers in the quarantine facilities as well as the provision of gender-sensitive infrastructure such as segregated toilets and adequate lighting in quarantine and isolation centers.	Throughout Project implementation	Ministry of Health
5.6.	The Recipient will operate quarantine and isolation centers and screening posts in a conflict-sensitive manner, avoiding any aggravation of local communal conflicts.	Throughout Project implementation	Ministry of Health
5.7.	The Recipient will ensure that any security personnel operating for quarantine and isolation centers and screening posts follow strict rules of engagement and avoid any escalation.	Throughout Project implementation	Ministry of Health
F. LABOUR AND WORKING CONDITIONS			
6.1.	LABOR MANAGEMENT: The Project shall be carried out in accordance with the applicable requirements of AIIB's ESF, in a manner acceptable to the AIIB, including through, inter alia, implementing adequate occupational health and safety measures (including emergency preparedness and response measures), setting out grievance redress mechanism for project workers to address work place concerns, and incorporating labor requirements into the ESHS specifications of the procurement documents and contracts with contractors and supervising firms.	Throughout Project implementation.	Ministry of Health

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6.2.	The Recipient shall implement adequate occupational health and safety measures (including emergency preparedness and response measures) in line with the ESMF, the applicable requirements of AIIB’s 2024ESF, the ESHGs and other relevant GIIP including the WHO guidelines on COVID-19 in all facilities, including laboratories, quarantine and isolation centers, and screening posts.	Throughout Project implementation.	Ministry of Health
6.3.	The Recipient shall ensure that all health workers adhere to the WHO Code of Ethics and Professional conduct.	Throughout Project implementation.	Ministry of Health
6.4.	The Recipient will prohibit child labor (any person under the age of 18).	Throughout Project implementation.	Ministry of Health
CAPACITY SUPPORT (TRAINING)			
	<p>Training topics for personnel involved in the implementation of Project activities will among others include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Risk communication and community engagement <p>The ESMF prepared under action 2.1 will include a draft training plan that will cover key topics including the following in line with the ESMF</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduction to AIIB’s ESF, Processes and best practices as per the ESMF • Environment and social monitoring and reporting • Training in stakeholder engagement and consultation • Occupational health and safety including on emergency prevention and preparedness and response arrangements to emergency situations. • Environmental Awareness • Gender Based Violence (GBV), Sexual Harassment (SH) and Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA) • Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs) and other communicable diseases 	<p>Throughout Project implementation.</p> <p>The ESMF will be updated during project implementation to include further detailed trainings which will be implemented throughout Project Implementation.</p>	Ministry of Health