

Performance Standard 1

Social and Environmental Assessment and Management Systems

Introduction

1. Performance Standard 1 underscores the importance of managing social and environmental performance throughout the life of a project (any business activity that is subject to assessment and management). An effective social and environmental management system is a dynamic, continuous process initiated by management and involving communication between the client, its workers, and the local communities directly affected by the project (the affected communities). Drawing on the elements of the established business management process of “plan, implement, check, and act,” the system entails the thorough assessment of potential social and environmental impacts and risks from the early stages of project development, and provides order and consistency for mitigating and managing these on an ongoing basis. A good management system appropriate to the size and nature of a project promotes sound and sustainable social and environmental performance, and can lead to improved financial, social and environmental project outcomes.

Objectives

- To identify and assess social and environment impacts, both adverse and beneficial, in the project’s area of influence
- To avoid, or where avoidance is not possible, minimize, mitigate, or compensate for adverse impacts on workers, affected communities, and the environment
- To ensure that affected communities are appropriately engaged on issues that could potentially affect them
- To promote improved social and environment performance of companies through the effective use of management systems

Scope of Application

2. This Performance Standard applies to projects with social or environmental risks and impacts that should be managed, in the early stages of project development, and on an ongoing basis.

Requirements

Social and Environmental Management System

3. The client will establish and maintain a Social and Environmental Management System appropriate to the nature and scale of the project and commensurate with the level of social and environmental risks and impacts. The Management System will incorporate the following elements: (i) Social and Environmental Assessment; (ii) management program; (iii) organizational capacity; (iv) training; (v) community engagement; (vi) monitoring; and (vii) reporting.

Social and Environmental Assessment

4. The client will conduct a process of Social and Environmental Assessment that will consider in an integrated manner the potential social and environmental (including labor, health, and safety) risks and impacts of the project. The Assessment process will be based on current information, including an accurate project description, and appropriate social and environmental baseline data. The Assessment will consider all relevant social and environmental risks and impacts of the project, including the issues identified in Performance Standards 2 through 8, and those who will be affected by such risks and impacts. Applicable laws and regulations of the jurisdictions in which the project

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operates that pertain to social and environmental matters, including those laws implementing host country obligations under international law, will also be taken into account.

5. Risks and impacts will be analyzed in the context of the project's area of influence. This area of influence encompasses, as appropriate: (i) the primary project site(s) and related facilities that the client (including its contractors) develops or controls, such as power transmission corridors, pipelines, canals, tunnels, relocation and access roads, borrow and disposal areas, construction camps; (ii) associated facilities that are not funded as part of the project (funding may be provided separately by the client or by third parties including the government), and whose viability and existence depend exclusively on the project and whose goods or services are essential for the successful operation of the project; (iii) areas potentially impacted by cumulative impacts from further planned development of the project, any existing project or condition, and other project-related developments that are realistically defined at the time the Social and Environmental Assessment is undertaken; and (iv) areas potentially affected by impacts from unplanned but predictable developments caused by the project that may occur later or at a different location. The area of influence does not include potential impacts that would occur without the project or independently of the project.

6. Risks and impacts will also be analyzed for the key stages of the project cycle, including pre-construction, construction, operations, and decommissioning or closure. Where relevant, the Assessment will also consider the role and capacity of third parties (such as local and national governments, contractors and suppliers), to the extent that they pose a risk to the project, recognizing that the client should address these risks and impacts commensurate to the client's control and influence over the third party actions. The impacts associated with supply chains will be considered where the resource utilized by the project is ecologically sensitive, or in cases where low labor cost is a factor in the competitiveness of the item supplied. The Assessment will also consider potential transboundary effects, such as pollution of air, or use or pollution of international waterways, as well as global impacts, such as the emission of greenhouse gasses.

7. The Assessment will be an adequate, accurate, and objective evaluation and presentation of the issues, prepared by qualified and experienced persons. In projects with significant adverse impacts or where technically complex issues are involved, clients may be required to retain external experts to assist in the Assessment process.

8. Depending on the type of project and the nature and magnitude of its risks and impacts, the Assessment may comprise a full-scale social and environmental impact assessment, a limited or focused environmental or social assessment, or straightforward application of environmental siting, pollution standards, design criteria, or construction standards. When the project involves existing business activities, social and/or environmental audits may need to be performed to determine any areas of concern. The types of issues, risks and impacts to be assessed, and the scope of the community engagement (see paragraphs 19 through 23 below) can also vary considerably, depending on the nature of the project, and its size, location, and stage of development.

9. Projects with potential significant adverse impacts that are diverse, irreversible, or unprecedented will have comprehensive social and environmental impact assessments. This assessment will include an examination of technically and financially feasible¹ alternatives to the

¹ "Technical feasibility" is based on whether the proposed measures and actions can be implemented with commercially available skills, equipment and materials, taking into consideration prevailing local factors such as climate, geography, demography, infrastructure, security, governance, capacity and operational reliability. "Financial feasibility" is based on commercial considerations, including the relative magnitude of the incremental

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source of such impacts, and documentation of the rationale for selecting the particular course of action proposed. In exceptional circumstances, a regional, sectoral or strategic assessment may be required.

10. Narrower scopes of Assessments may be conducted for projects with limited impacts that are few in number, generally site-specific, largely reversible, and readily addressed through mitigation measures.

11. Projects with minimal or no adverse impacts will not be subject to further assessment beyond their identification as such.

12. As part of the Assessment, the client will identify individuals and groups that may be differentially or disproportionately affected by the project because of their disadvantaged or vulnerable status.² Where groups are identified as disadvantaged or vulnerable, the client will propose and implement differentiated measures so that adverse impacts do not fall disproportionately on them and they are not disadvantaged in sharing development benefits and opportunities.

Management Program

13. Taking into account the relevant findings of the Social and Environmental Assessment and the result of consultation with affected communities, the client will establish and manage a program of mitigation and performance improvement measures and actions that address the identified social and environmental risks and impacts (the management program).

14. Management programs consist of a combination of operational policies, procedures and practices. The program may apply broadly across the client's organization, or to specific sites, facilities, or activities. The measures and actions to address identified impacts and risks will favor the avoidance and prevention of impacts over minimization, mitigation, or compensation, wherever technically and financially feasible. Where risks and impacts cannot be avoided or prevented, mitigation measures and actions will be identified so that the project operates in compliance with applicable laws and regulations, and meets the requirements of Performance Standards 1 through 8 (see paragraph 16 below). The level of detail and complexity of this program and the priority of the identified measures and actions will be commensurate with the project's risks and impacts.

15. The program will define desired outcomes as measurable events to the extent possible, with elements such as performance indicators, targets, or acceptance criteria that can be tracked over defined time periods, and with estimates of the resources and responsibilities for implementation. Recognizing the dynamic nature of the project development and implementation process, the program will be responsive to changes in project circumstances, unforeseen events, and the results of monitoring (see paragraph 24 below).

cost of adopting such measures and actions compared to the project's investment, operating and maintenance costs and whether this incremental cost could make the project nonviable to the client.

² This status may stem from an individual's or group's race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. The client should also consider factors such as gender, ethnicity, culture, sickness, physical or mental disability, poverty or economic disadvantage, and dependence on unique natural resources.

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Action Plan

16. Where the client identifies specific mitigation measures and actions necessary for the project to comply with applicable laws and regulations and to meet the requirements of Performance Standards 1 through 8, the client will prepare an Action Plan. These measures and actions will reflect the outcomes of consultation on social and environmental risks and adverse impacts and the proposed measures and actions to address these, consistent with the requirements under paragraph 21. The Action Plan may range from a brief description of routine mitigation measures to a series of specific plans.³ The Action Plan will: (i) describe the actions necessary to implement the various sets of mitigation measures or corrective actions to be undertaken; (ii) prioritize these actions; (iii) include the time-line for their implementation; (iv) be disclosed to the affected communities (see paragraph 26); and (v) describe the schedule and mechanism for external reporting on the client's implementation of the Action Plan.

Organizational Capacity

17. The client will establish, maintain, and strengthen as necessary an organizational structure that defines roles, responsibilities, and authority to implement the management program, including the Action Plan. Specific personnel, including management representative(s), with clear lines of responsibility and authority should be designated. Key social and environmental responsibilities should be well defined and communicated to the relevant personnel and to the rest of the organization. Sufficient management sponsorship and human and financial resources will be provided on an ongoing basis to achieve effective and continuous social and environmental performance.

Training

18. The client will train employees and contractors with direct responsibility for activities relevant to the project's social and environmental performance so that they have the knowledge and skills necessary to perform their work, including current knowledge of the host country's regulatory requirements and the applicable requirements of Performance Standards 1 through 8. Training will also address the specific measures and actions required under the management program, including the Action Plan, and the methods required to perform the action items in a competent and efficient manner.

Community Engagement

19. Community engagement is an on-going process involving the client's disclosure of information. When local communities may be affected by risks or adverse impacts from a project, the engagement process will include consultation with them. The purpose of community engagement is to build and maintain over time a constructive relationship with these communities. The nature and frequency of community engagement will reflect the project's risks to and adverse impacts on the affected communities. Community engagement will be free of external manipulation, interference, or coercion, and intimidation, and conducted on the basis of timely, relevant, understandable and accessible information.

³ For example, Resettlement Action Plans, Biodiversity Action Plans, Hazardous Materials Management Plans, Emergency Preparedness and Response Plans, Community Health and Safety Plans, and Indigenous Peoples Development Plans.

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Disclosure

20. Disclosure of relevant project information helps affected communities understand the risks, impacts and opportunities of the project. Where the client has undertaken a process of Social and Environmental Assessment, the client will publicly disclose the Assessment document. If communities may be affected by risks or adverse impacts from the project, the client will provide such communities with access to information on the purpose, nature and scale of the project, the duration of proposed project activities, and any risks to and potential impacts on such communities. For projects with adverse social or environmental impacts, disclosure should occur early in the Social and Environmental Assessment process and in any event before the project construction commences, and on an ongoing basis (see paragraph 26 below).

Consultation

21. If affected communities may be subject to risks or adverse impacts from a project, the client will undertake a process of consultation in a manner that provides the affected communities with opportunities to express their views on project risks, impacts, and mitigation measures, and allows the client to consider and respond to them. Effective consultation: (i) should be based on the prior disclosure of relevant and adequate information, including draft documents and plans; (ii) should begin early in the Social and Environmental Assessment process; (iii) will focus on the social and environmental risks and adverse impacts, and the proposed measures and actions to address these; and (iv) will be carried out on an ongoing basis as risks and impacts arise. The consultation process will be undertaken in a manner that is inclusive and culturally appropriate. The client will tailor its consultation process to the language preferences of the affected communities, their decision-making process, and the needs of disadvantaged or vulnerable groups.

22. For projects with significant adverse impacts on affected communities, the consultation process will ensure their free, prior and informed consultation and facilitate their informed participation. Informed participation involves organized and iterative consultation, leading to the client's incorporating into their decision-making process the views of the affected communities on matters that affect them directly, such as proposed mitigation measures, the sharing of development benefits and opportunities, and implementation issues. The client will document the process, in particular the measures taken to avoid or minimize risks to and adverse impacts on the affected communities.

Grievance Mechanism

23. The client will respond to communities' concerns related to the project. If the client anticipates ongoing risks to or adverse impacts on affected communities, the client will establish a grievance mechanism to receive and facilitate resolution of the affected communities' concerns and grievances about the client's environmental and social performance. The grievance mechanism should be scaled to the risks and adverse impacts of the project. It should address concerns promptly, using an understandable and transparent process that is culturally appropriate and readily accessible to all segments of the affected communities, and at no cost and without retribution. The mechanism should not impede access to judicial or administrative remedies. The client will inform the affected communities about the mechanism in the course of its community engagement process.

Monitoring

24. As an element of its Management System, the client will establish procedures to monitor and measure the effectiveness of the management program. In addition to recording information to track performance and establishing relevant operational controls, the client should use dynamic mechanisms, such as inspections and audits, where relevant, to verify compliance and progress

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toward the desired outcomes. For projects with significant impacts that are diverse, irreversible, or unprecedented, the client will retain qualified and experienced external experts to verify its monitoring information. The extent of monitoring should be commensurate with the project's risks and impacts and with the project's compliance requirements. Monitoring should be adjusted according to performance experience and feedback. The client will document monitoring results, and identify and reflect the necessary corrective and preventive actions in the amended management program. The client will implement these corrective and preventive actions, and follow up on these actions to ensure their effectiveness.

Reporting

Internal Reporting

25. Senior management in the client organization will receive periodic assessments of the effectiveness of the management program, based on systematic data collection and analysis. The scope and frequency of such reporting will depend upon the nature and scope of the activities identified and undertaken in accordance with the client's management program and other applicable project requirements.

External Reporting on Action Plans

26. The client will disclose the Action Plan to the affected communities. In addition, the client will provide periodic reports that describe progress with implementation of the Action Plan on issues that involve ongoing risk to or impacts on affected communities, and on issues that the consultation process or grievance mechanism has identified as of concern to those communities. If the management program results in material changes in, or additions to, the mitigation measures or actions described in the Action Plan on issues of concern to the affected communities, the updated mitigation measures or actions will also be disclosed. These reports will be in a format accessible to the affected communities. The frequency of these reports will be proportionate to the concerns of affected communities but not less than annually.