



15.11.2023

## Environmental and Social Data Sheet

### Overview

Project Name:	North East Ramallah Wastewater Project
Project Number:	2023-0080
Country:	Palestine
Project Description:	The project foresees the provision of a wastewater collection and treatment system for Northeast Ramallah
EIA required:	Yes

The project will be subject to an ESIA for the proposed WWTP, pump stations and sewer networks according to the national laws and regulations.

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise: no

### Environmental and Social Assessment

#### Environmental Assessment

The project aims to provide safely managed sanitation services in an area located north east of Ramallah, in West Bank Areas B and C in Palestine. The project scope will include the following components: (i) the construction of a wastewater collection system with a total length of 184 km including trunk sewer lines and local sewer networks for 14 villages/municipalities for a total population of around 60,000 inhabitants, and (ii) the construction of a wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) with an average design dry weather flow rate of 5,818 m<sup>3</sup>/d aiming to provide treatment of the sewerage according to national standards. The effluent of the WWTP will be reused for agricultural or industrial purposes, contributing to climate change adaptation, and improving water resilience in one of the most water scarce regions in the world. The potential of including a photovoltaic component as part of the project will be discussed during the project implementation stage. The project is not located in or close to a protected area. A sludge management plan will be prepared prior to the completion of the works.

The project will, as a minimum, comply with national environmental requirements as defined in the Palestinian Environmental Law (1999) and its related guidelines and technical specifications for the effluent of WWTPs (TS 34/2012, The Palestinian Treated Wastewater Standard). The Ministry of Environment Affairs was replaced by the Environment Quality Authority (EQA) by Presidential Decree No (6) of 2002. The decree also moved all the responsibilities and the Ministry of Environmental Affairs to the EQA. It is now the body responsible for protecting and developing environmental projects in Palestine according to the Palestinian Environmental Law (1999).

The Palestinian Environmental Assessment Policy (PEAP) dictates that Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA) studies are mandatory for both new projects and/or the expansion of

existing projects as a part of the approval procedure. Within the EU context, the project would be categorized under Annex II of the EU EIA Directive 2014/52/EU amending the EIA Directive 2011/92/EU. This implies that Member States could individually decide if a full EIA would be required.

A preliminary Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) has been prepared as part of a feasibility study for the preparation of the project. This feasibility study was financed by the EIB under the Facility for Euro-Mediterranean Investment and Partnership (FEMIP) Trust Fund. A full ESIA will be financed through a grant from the Water Sector Fund (WSF) delegated to the EIB. The preparation of detailed engineering designs and tender documents for the project will be financed by the World Bank.

The Promoter of the project will be the Palestine Water Authority (PWA), and the Jerusalem Water Undertaking (JWU) will be the utility responsible for providing sanitation services in the region. Technical assistance (TA) will be provided to the Promoter during project implementation, to be financed by a grant from the EU Neighbourhood Investment Platform (NIP).

#### Short-term environmental and social impacts

According to the preliminary ESIA, the typical project activities will involve clearing of construction sites from obstacles, excavation of trenches, laying of sewer pipes, construction of concrete structures and installation of electromechanical equipment. Negative environmental impacts are limited to the construction period and include land disturbance, air pollution due to dust generation, noise, generation of construction waste and ecosystem disturbance due to excavations. These impacts are expected to be temporary and confined to the immediate construction sites.

#### Long-term environmental and social impacts

Results from the preliminary ESIA showed that the emissions will not negatively affect the ambient air quality relative to the EQA Ambient Air Quality Criteria. Results from the dispersion modelling indicated that potential emissions from the proposed WWTP are expected to meet all the EQA and local regulatory requirements. The impact of the emissions from the proposed plant on the ambient air quality is insignificant and the emissions result in ambient air concentrations that are expected to be within the required Palestinian standards.

The scope of the project is fully in line with the Bank's Water Sector Lending policy and contributes to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal No.6 (SDG) of "*availability and sustainable management of water and sanitation for all*", particularly in the rural low-income areas.

#### **Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement**

As part of the preliminary ESIA, the following activities were carried out: (i) a meeting and presentation with all relevant project stakeholders; (ii) several meetings with individual stakeholder groups; (iii) several open house public consultation meetings. All key stakeholders were consulted: the Jerusalem Water Undertaking (JWU), relevant Government Ministries and Authorities, local village and municipal councils, and private businesses. In addition, (iv) open-house public consultations held in the village/municipal halls were conducted with residents of the project area.

As part of the public consultation process, the key stakeholders were involved in the process of selecting the most appropriate location of the WWTP and sewerage networks in an effort to address in advance: (a) any reactions to the project's implementation and (b) any issues

related to land availability for the construction of foreseen infrastructure (i.e. routes of local networks and trunk mains, pumping stations, construction of the WWTP). The proposed site for the WWTP has been selected and the preliminary ESIA concluded that the construction of the treatment plant is not expected to involve any involuntary resettlement. The land required for the construction of the WWTP will be acquired according to the land acquisition procedure in the West Bank.

## Conclusions and Recommendations

The environmental and social benefits resulting from the implementation of the project will lead to a significant reduction in environmental pollution, and an improvement of public health conditions and living standards for the local population. Furthermore, the project is not expected to have any significant adverse impacts on the environment, with possible negative environmental effects being temporary and confined to the immediate construction sites. These adverse impacts can be either prevented and/or minimised through appropriate mitigation measures and by adhering to national standards and relevant international standards, guidelines and design criteria.

All environmental and social impacts will be addressed in accordance with Palestine's national regulations and to the satisfaction of the Bank through the project's final ESIA to be submitted by the Promoter. The completion of the corresponding ESIA, to the satisfaction of the Bank, will be a condition prior to any disbursement relating to the works.

The project will comply with the requirements of the national legislation and the EIB.

The scope of the project is fully in line with the Bank's Lending Priority in Climate and Environment and the Water Sector Lending Policy and will contribute to the achievement of Sustainable Development Goal No. 6.

In order to comply with the Bank's E&S standards, the Promoter will be required to comply with the following conditions and undertaking:

Disbursement condition for works:

- The Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) and the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) of the project is satisfactory to the Bank and sent to be published on the Bank's website, together with the favourable opinion of the competent authority in charge of the environment.
- People affected by the project have been compensated prior to the start of the works.

Undertaking:

- The Promoter commits to comply with the recommendations of the project's ESMPs during the implementation of the project.

*With the above conditions in place, the project is acceptable for financing in environmental and social terms.*