

## Environmental and Social Data Sheet

### Overview

Project Name:	PNG Rural Bridges
Project Number:	20140388
Country:	Papua New Guinea
Project Description:	The Project concerns the replacement of 27 narrow, single-lane, mostly modular steel bridges with dual-lane structures on 5 of the 16 national road corridors of Papua New Guinea (PNG). The dismantled structures (21 modular Bailey steel bridges) will be stored but reassembled by local authorities on feeder roads to improve rural access.
EIA required:	No

### Key Environmental and Social Issues

In general replacement and rehabilitation of existing bridges are not expected to generate any adverse impact on the environment that could be considered significant. For this reason the Project is not subject to a compulsory Environmental Impact Assessment, neither under PNG Laws (Environmental Act 2000 and the Environmental Regulation 2002) nor under the relevant EIA EU Directive applicable in EU Member Countries (2011/92/EU). Nevertheless, the project has already been subject to a full Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) as specified by the Asian Development Bank (ADB) for compliance with strict safeguard policies. The IEE includes an EIS (Environmental Impact Study) that has been made public, numerous public consultations that have been done at central, provincial, district and community levels, as well as a detailed EMP (Environmental Management Plan) for follow-up during the design and implementation phases. The EMP will be updated by the contractors in accordance with their actual working procedures during construction. These initiatives are fully satisfactory for a project of this type.

New bridges have been designed as permanent structures capable to clear the maximum water level of a 200 year flood, taking into consideration the most updated information about climate change risks. No conservation areas, nor special cultural or heritage site have been identified. Although some land acquisition is necessary at almost all bridges' approaches (due to the higher embankments), other environmental impacts (such as water turbidity, noise, dust and pollution during construction) are of routine nature, project-specific and have been addressed for mitigation in the EMP.

The Project will benefit mainly the rural communities living near the 5 priority road corridors in the southern and northern regions of PNG (Central Province, and Madang and East Sepik Provinces respectively) as well as in the island of New Britain, for an estimated overall population of about 400 000 people. It will give local households a much better access to social services and will contribute to support increasing movement of people and goods for business activities. Project implementation will also generate much needed jobs opportunities in rural areas, which in turn will facilitate indirect job creation via its multiplier effects, resulting in economic growth and poverty reduction. For these reasons the project is expected to have a positive social impact. By the provision of double-lane bridges with separate footpaths for pedestrians, the Project is also expected to improve road safety. It meets hence the EIB's requirements in relation to environmental and social standards.

**Compliance with EIB environmental and social standards is included in the loan conditions. However, in order to ensure compliance and in coordination with the Asian Development Bank (ADB), EIB will provide direct Technical Assistance to the Project Implementation Unit (PIU) with dedicated Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists.**

## Environmental and Social Assessment (supplementary information)

PNG is one of the most culturally diverse countries in the world, with over 800 languages, of which 3 official, and an isolated, large and dispersed rural population (87% of a total of 7 million living on a territory almost the same size of Spain). In the 2013 UN Human Development Report, PNG ranks 156 out of 187 countries and territories in the Human Development Index (HDI) which indicates that, despite a growing economy, extreme poverty is still widespread. These environmental and social considerations have been part of the project identification and preparation and will be followed-up during implementation. The projects are expected to generate 8600 person-years during implementation. No permanent employment is expected.

The following supplementary information is available for key environmental and social issues:

**Public Consultations:** Carried out mainly in May 2011 at various levels, including community, tribal and clan levels as land is community owned. Follow-up is happening ever since, particularly, during the design and tendering phases, and is expected to intensify during construction.

**Environmental Impacts and Implementation Arrangements:** Monitoring of compliance for contractors is included in the detailed CEMP (Contractor Environmental Management Plan) that will be prepared by contractors and approved by the PIU in the DoW (Department of Works). An "environmental assessment review framework" has also been submitted for information to the Department for Environment and Conservation albeit, for a project of this type, approvals are not required under PNG laws. Particular attention has been paid in the design on river training (gabions, geotextiles, river banks re-shaping) to avoid landslides, future floods or bridges washed-out during heavy tropical storms. Increase water turbidity associated with excavations, piles driving and river training is almost unavoidable (but as it is common in the tropics, most PNG rivers are naturally turbid).

**Social impacts and Involuntary Resettlement:** A draft Resettlement Policy Framework and a Resettlement Action Plan, including analysis of anticipated project impacts and compensation budget estimates have been prepared by the promoter. The total number of households to be resettled is yet to be confirmed and will be reflected in the final RAP. The estimation is of some 100-150 people in one location only, due to the road realignment and higher embankments approaching the new bridge. In the local context, however, these matters are dealt with at the community level as land is communally owned. At other locations, limited land acquisition is also necessary, e.g. at almost all bridge approaches due to higher embankments, with some consequent, marginal loss of crops. Local communities are the primary beneficiaries of the Project, and they have expressed their support for the project. In summary, therefore, appropriate measures will be put in place to mitigate any adverse social and involuntary resettlement impacts.

## Other Environmental and Social Aspects, as appropriate

The Project is co-financed with the ADB which, for its environmental and social safeguards standards, has classified the project as "Category B", meaning that **impacts are minor, site-specific, not irreversible and with mitigating measures that can be easily designed and implemented**. Similar to the EU Environmental Impact Directive, the ADB does not require a full EIA procedure for a project of this type, and therefore the IEE procedure has been carried out instead. During implementation, compliance with the environmental and social safeguards will be ensured by the international and local specialist consultants working in the PIU.