

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	Réhabilitation Urbaine Tunisie II
Project Number:	2015-0146
Country:	Tunisia
Project Description:	The project concerns the rehabilitation of poor urban areas distributed across all 24 regions (Gouvernorats) of Tunisia through the provision of basic public infrastructure. In particular, the project's will consist in the creation - or extension, as needed - of water and wastewater networks, roads pavement and drainage, extensions of power networks, installation of public lighting, constructions of playgrounds, sports and socio-cultural centers, and economic and manufacturing facilities. The project builds upon the success of the first phase (EIB loan signed in December 2012).
EIA required:	Multi-scheme operation with sub-projects of small size. If located in the EU, some of the schemes might have fallen under Annex II of the EIA Directive and would need to be screened by the Competent Authority.

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise: no

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The promoter will be the Tunisian Agency for Urban Rehabilitation and Renewal (Agence de Réhabilitation et de Rénovation Urbaine - ARRU), operating under the authority of the Ministry of Public Works, Housing and Territory Development (Ministère de l'Équipement de l'Habitat et de l'Aménagement du Territoire - MEHAT).

The operation is structured as a Framework Loan (FL) and will include the provision of basic urban public infrastructure. In particular, the project's will consist in the creation - or extension, as needed - of water and wastewater networks, roads pavement and drainage, extensions of power networks, installation of public lighting, construction of communal facilities (e.g. playgrounds, sports and socio-cultural centers) and economic and manufacturing facilities. It is envisaged that mainly small size investments (cost below EUR 5m) will be included in this operation. However at appraisal stage, individual schemes were not confirmed.

Concerning environmental procedures, ARRU does not need environmental authorisations to implement rehabilitation operations, agreed with the local authorities, and which are already parts of the existing urban planning documents. Nevertheless, ARRU has an environmental management systems which includes an annual review of environmental impacts of all ARRU activities including rehabilitation projects, based on a checklist and carried out with support of a specialised consulting office, in compliance with Environmental regulations in force.

The legal basis of the EIA is the article 5 of the law establishing the National Agency for the Protection of the Environment (ANPE) as amended by Law N ° 14-2001 of 30 January 2001. The decrees (N ° 91-362 of 13 March 1991 and N ° 1991 of 11 July 2005) specify the provisions and the regulatory procedures for drawing up and approving EIA.

Given the relative small size of the individual schemes and the nature of the sectors concerned, most of the schemes are deemed not to have significant environmental impacts or require an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA). Should any scheme require an EIA, the Promoter shall deliver the EIA document and, if applicable the social assessment, to the Bank before the Bank's funds can be allocated to the scheme concerned.

Whilst there may be some minor negative impact during the construction/implementation phase of the sub-projects, substantial positive net environmental impacts of the investment programme are expected once the works are completed. Considerable environmental benefits are anticipated from all rehabilitation, upgrading and extension schemes of public infrastructure facilities. Environmental benefits should furthermore be increased by the technical assistance proposed under Urban Project Finance Initiative (UPFI) to ARRU, especially in the fields of improvement of environmental diagnosis, public consultation and energy efficiency.

Social Assessment

Positive net social impacts will be substantial as well. Drainage, water and sewage networks will bring improvements in quality of life and health conditions (e.g. elimination of chronic flooding of houses, reduced epidemiological risks, etc. The construction of urban roads with hard surface, public lighting installation etc. will bring other social benefits stemming from better access of motor vehicles to rehabilitated areas (including taxis, ambulances, school transport, etc.). Construction of playgrounds, socio-cultural buildings and sports centers, will bring complementary social benefits to all categories of population, especially young population.

The project will strengthen the economic resilience of Tunisian municipalities; it will contribute to local development and job creation through the spill-over effects of the investments in infrastructure and buildings distributed across all 24 regions (Governorates) of Tunisia. The direct and indirect socio-economic benefits will be very large, with strong leveraging of private investments by public infrastructure investments.

The gender approach will be particularly taken into account in the implementation modalities of the project, with the help of the preparatory technical assistance to the promotor. The consideration will be given to focusing on consultation activities, placing greater emphasis on the role and responsibilities of women. In addition, particular attention will be paid to the type of public facilities identified in the neighbourhoods.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

The Promoter following National policy is keen to develop participative methods with strong involvement of populations in areas under rehabilitation. There was a long-lasting tradition in Tunisia of consultation of local populations about land planning documents (PLU's)

All multisector schemes are coordinated and monitored by local Steering Committees chaired by Governors, in which regular consultations of Municipalities, representatives of civil society and other key stakeholders are handled.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

In the previous operation financed by EIB (Rehabilitation Urbaine Tunisie 2012-280), ARRU has adopted, project, the Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP), which has allowed the improvement of ARRU practices in the environmental and social fields and embark the institution on a new approach that meets the objective of assessing and mitigating social and environmental impacts in the conduct of its projects

The project will be co-financed by the AFD who will also apply to the Neighbourhood Investment Facility for a grant contribution to the project to cover both investment and TA needs.

There is an explicit objective to improve the energy efficiency in rehabilitated areas. It was agreed with the promoter and the project co-financiers to consider a Technical Assistance facility, aimed at integrating energy efficiency investments into the various schemes.

Conclusions and Recommendations

The project intends to have long-term positive environmental and social impacts in terms of employment and economic activity, social cohesion and inclusion, and to contribute to a higher standard of living in the poor urban areas distributed across all 24 regions (Gouvernorats) of Tunisia.

All schemes must comply with the EIB Environmental and Social Principles and Standards, as contained in the Volume 1 of the EIB Environmental and Social Handbook. ARRU shall carry out environmental and social due diligence as part of its overall due diligence process before EIB funds are allocated to the schemes concerned.

The institutional capacity of ARRU to manage the environmental and social issues is deemed good. Therefore, given the nature of the operation and the procedures concerning ESIA and nature protection put in place by the promoter, subject to the conditions mentioned in this ESDS, which are included in the Finance Contract, the Framework Loan is acceptable in environmental and social terms.

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