

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	GREATER TRIPOLI BASIN WASTEWATER NETWORKS
Project Number:	2017-0963
Country:	LEBANON
Project Description:	Construction of wastewater networks in the area of Tripoli city conveying sewerage to the existing wastewater treatment plant.
EIA required:	no
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	no

(Details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project involves the construction of some 570km of sewer collectors, which shall be connected to the existing wastewater treatment plant (WWTP) of Tripoli. This plant was completed in 2009, but currently only operates at pre-treatment level for about 100,000 inhabitants already connected. Through the project, about 400,000 inhabitants will benefit from a connection to the public wastewater collection and treatment system. The project promoter is the CDR (Council for Development and Reconstruction), the Lebanese Government's agency for all public investments, while the North Lebanon Water Establishment (NLWE) would be the beneficiary. NLWE provides water supply and wastewater services under the authority of the Ministry of Energy and Water in the North and Akkar Governorates.

Compliance of the project with the principles of Annex I and Annex II of the EU Directive 2014/52/EU amending the EIA² Directive 2011/92/EU, and EIB Environmental and Social Standards was analysed, alongside compliance with the Lebanese legislation. The two main legal documents governing the EIA procedure in Lebanon are Law No. 444 (issued in 1992), setting the fundamental principles that govern the management of the environment and the use of natural resources, and the Decree N°8633 (dated 07.08.2012) on "Fundamentals of Environmental Impact Assessment". International treaties/agreements ratified by Lebanon (such as the Barcelona Convention) have second priority in the Lebanese legislative framework, following the country Constitution.

¹ Only projects that meet the scope of the Pilot Exercise, as defined in the EIB draft Carbon Footprint Methodologies, are included, provided estimated emissions exceed the methodology thresholds: above 100,000 tons CO₂e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tons CO₂e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

² Environmental Impact Assessment

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According to the national legislation, a full EIA is not required, because no new wastewater treatment plant shall be constructed. If located in the EU, the project would fall under Annex II of the EIA Directive, with the obligation to prepare a full EIA being subject to the decision of the competent authority. This type of project would normally not require a full EIA if it took place in the EU. The project will not affect any protected area.

According to the above legislation, IEE (Initial Environmental Examinations) shall be prepared for the different stretches of sewer collectors during the design stage. The Ministry of Environment shall approve these IEEs.

The Promoter is committed to respect the WWTP discharge to the sea in full compliance with the Lebanese legislation³. The quality of treated wastewater required by Lebanese legislation (Emission Limit Values) are mostly in line with the requirements of the relevant EU Directive⁴.

The review and appraisal of the proposed operation have identified a number of potential positive environmental impacts:

- Establishment of reliable wastewater collection and waste water treatment with significant reduction of impacts on the environment, including air, soil, sea, surface and ground water, as well as minimisation of odour emissions;
- More efficient use of natural resources due to utilization of biogas from sludge digestion for energy generation;
- Reduction of greenhouse gas emissions.

Negative impacts are limited to the construction works and include:

- Temporarily increased levels of noise and vibration.
- Risk of polluting surface water, groundwater or the sea through construction materials and products.

One or several Environmental and Social Management Plan(s) (ESMP) shall be developed for the execution of the works with due account of the design solutions adopted. The ESMP shall provide measures and actions to mitigate potential adverse impacts, and to enhance positive or beneficial impacts.

Climate Action

The Project has a significant contribution to Climate Action Mitigation (98% of project investment cost) under application of EIB's relevant Guidelines. The climate action stems from the reduction of the methane emissions compared with the treatment in septic tanks or direct discharge of untreated sewage to the environment and the recovery of energy from biogas thanks to sludge digestion.

³ Decision 51/1 (1996): National Standards for Environmental Quality and Environmental Limit values for Air and Water

⁴ Urban Waste Water Treatment Directive 91/271/EC

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Social Assessment

The review and appraisal of the proposed investment projects have identified a number of potential positive social impacts:

- Improved quality of life of local communities across the Project area, with high population density, due to reduced odour emissions and less pollution to surface waters, the beaches and the sea;
- Reduction of risks to community health and safety related to waste water collection and treatment;
- Local employment associated to the construction phase.

Negative impacts will be mostly limited to the construction phase and include:

- Temporary diversion of traffic and related loss of time;
- Temporary Reduced quality of life due to nuisance from the construction sites.

The ESMP shall propose mitigation measures for any of the aforementioned impacts. Special attention shall be paid to stakeholder engagement (through the preparation of a Stakeholder Engagement Plan, (SEP) inclusive of a project wide grievance mechanism), managing construction activities, as well as supervision of design and construction works. Recommendations for enhancement of the Project benefits shall be identified where possible.

The project is not expected to cause any permanent involuntary resettlement. In case any temporary economic or physical displacement becomes necessary during implementation, including displacement of informal settlements, the promoter will be responsible for the preparation of satisfactory documentation required under EIB standard 6 (including abbreviated resettlement action plans). The promoter has demonstrated experience in the preparation and implementation of Resettlement action plans (e.g. application of OP4.12 of World Bank)

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

Information of the public and stakeholders is foreseen in the relevant legislation governing the preparation of the IEE but has not yet been carried out. However, preliminary engagement has started.

A stakeholder engagement plan inclusive of a grievance mechanism has yet to be prepared, taking into account, among others, the conflict environment in Lebanon.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

In accordance with national law on labour standards and ILO obligations ratified by Lebanon, (Lebanon has ratified all ILO fundamental conventions), the promoter is committed to make a grievance mechanism available to all project personnel including contractors and sub-contractors. Furthermore, CDR will include into their tender documents and subsequent agreements with selected contractors, the requirement to manage environmental and social aspects of the contract works in line with the applicable national requirements, ILO standards and EIB requirements (including: working conditions, occupational and community health and safety and provision of grievance mechanism). The promoter will as well conduct regular inspections to monitor contractor's practices.

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The promoter will be supported by a technical assistance also on E&S aspects with the aim of strengthening compliance with EIB standards and international best practices.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Overall, the project will generate positive impacts on the environment.

The project will also provide long-term socio-economic benefits to the local population in the form of employment opportunities and improved quality of life. Potential negative impacts of the Project are in general controllable and can well be prevented or reduced as required by the proposed mitigations and through implementation of the ESMP and the SEP.

The promoter will be reporting on the implementation of the Environmental and Social Management Plan(s) (ESMP) and the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). The promoter will set up a PIU (project implementation unit), supported by a social expert and an international consultant, which, inter alia, will supervise the implementation of the ESMP.

The provision of the IEEs approved by the competent authority, the ESMP, and the SEP to the satisfaction of the Bank will be required as a condition for first disbursement. The provision of the Code of Conduct (as defined in the relevant ESMP) for all project personnel including contractors and sub-contractors and the preparation of satisfactory documentation required under EIB standard 6 (including abbreviated resettlement action plans) shall be a condition for first and subsequent disbursements for works.

In an undertaking to the finance contract, the EIB will require the promoter to comply with the SEP and the ESMP.

In view of the above findings and conditions, the project is acceptable for EIB financing from the perspective of environmental and social compliance.