

SUMMARY POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

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| Country: | Viet Nam | Project Title: | Water Efficiency Improvement in Drought-Affected Provinces Project |
| Lending/Financing Modality: | Project Loan | Department/Division: | Southeast Asia Department/ Environment, Natural Resources and Agriculture Division |

I. POVERTY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY

Poverty Targeting: Geographic (TI-G)

A. Links to National Poverty Reduction Strategy and Inclusive Growth Strategy and Country Partnership Strategy

The Water Efficiency Improvement in Drought-Affected Provinces Project will improve the living conditions of command area residents in five drought-affected provinces (Binh Thuan, Dak Lak, Dak Nong, Khan Hoa, and Ninh Thuan) by increasing access to water and improving the efficiency of its use. Although Viet Nam attained lower-middle-income country status in 2010, poverty gains remain fragile, and significant portions of the population, particularly in rural areas and among ethnic minorities, remain vulnerable.^a The project contributes to achieving several government poverty reduction policies: the National Target Program on Sustainable Poverty Reduction for 2016–2020 and the National Target Program on New Rural Development, which focus on improving material and spiritual life of poor residents, especially those in disadvantaged areas; the 10-year Socio-Economic Development Strategy (2011–2020); and the 5-year Socio-economic Development Plan (2016–2020).^b The project aims to improve the agricultural productivity of water and climate resilience in modernized irrigation systems that allow farmers to adopt a longer-term planning and investment horizon for improving income generation. This aligns with the Asian Development Bank (ADB) country partnership strategy (2016–2020) for Viet Nam, which aims to promote more inclusive and environmentally sustainable economic growth.^c

B. Results from the Poverty and Social Analysis during PPTA or Due Diligence

1. Key poverty and social issues. Viet Nam’s national poverty rate has decreased from 58% in 1993 (measured by international standards) to 9.9% in 2016, but poverty rates in three of the five target provinces exceed the national rate (Ninh Thuan, at 14.9%; Dak Lak, at 19.4%; and Dak Nong at 19.3%).^d In terms of income and non-income poverty, the central highlands and south central coast present significant challenges for vulnerable and ethnic minority groups. Poverty has reduced more slowly for ethnic minorities than other groups, as measured by income and other dimensions (e.g., education, health, housing, sanitation and water access). Ethnic minorities make up 5% of the population but 74% of the poor in the central highlands, and 11% of the population and 34% of the poor in the south central coast.^e

Target provinces are frequently drought-affected, most recently by the 2014–2016 El Niño drought that had a significant, long-term impact on rural incomes. Households in target provinces depend predominantly on agriculture for their livelihoods. Poor and ethnic minority households have limited land and financial resources and depend on off-farm employment, but such opportunities are limited in rural areas. The project will provide the poor and landless more labor opportunities on the large-scale farms that are expected to develop in high-tech agricultural production zones.

2. Beneficiaries. Rural inhabitants account for 85% of the population in the target provinces. An estimated 39,000 people in the subproject areas will benefit from the project; 18% are ethnic minorities, with 5,800 poor households and 3,000 near-poor households that will gain access to a reliable and adequate water source for crop production, including high-value crops (HVCs). About 1,500 poor and near-poor households in command areas will receive training on micro irrigation, including 20% that are ethnic minorities. Employment opportunities will be created through civil works construction in several subprojects, especially in remote areas.^f

3. Impact Channels. The overall impact of the project will be improved access to and more efficient use of water resources, while preserving the integrity of groundwater resources. The project will improve water-use efficiency for irrigated agriculture, applying more reliable surface water supplies to HVCs. Under output 1, the planning and allocation of water to irrigation systems will be improved, with support provided to irrigation management companies and the private sector to improve system operational efficiency. Farmers will also be offered services to improve their application and scheduling of water. Output 2 will improve the level of service available to farmers, with near on-demand access to water and reduced water losses during distribution. Output 3 will promote improved water management by farmers to improve their livelihoods through the adoption of water-efficient and labor-saving technologies. These activities will improve farmers’ household incomes and increase their confidence that water will be made available at the time and in the quantity required, thus enabling corresponding planning of farming activities.

4. Other social and poverty issues. There is a lack of safe, clean water during dry seasons and severe droughts. Women of selected ethnic groups (such as Raglei group) in projects areas face language and integration barriers.

5. Design features. The project will address key poverty and social issues through (i) improved irrigation systems that provide farmers, including vulnerable farmers (the poor, ethnic minorities, women, and households headed by women) more reliable access to water, which reduces the burden and time poverty of women; (ii) technical support for interested farmers; (iii) training for 1,500 poor and near-poor households to allow them to adopt micro irrigation; and (iv) employment opportunities resulting from civil works construction in several subprojects, and access road construction activities financed by the project (in Ninh Thuan) (endnote f).

| II. PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERING THE POOR | |
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| <p>1. Participatory approaches and project activities. Participation of beneficiary farmers (including the poor and vulnerable) will be fostered by (i) consultations with beneficiaries during detailed design of irrigation systems; (ii) community consultation meetings with beneficiaries in the command area to introduce and disseminate new management approaches for modernized irrigation schemes under output 1 (e.g., provision of water on-demand with flexible services, priority water allocation scheduling, pilot water charging, and public-private partnerships for operation and maintenance); and (iii) establishment of a grievance redress mechanism to ensure that affected people have a mechanism to report grievances and seek redress on a fair and transparent basis. These measures are described in the Project Administration Manual (PAM) and associated safeguards documents.</p> <p>2. Civil society organizations. Organizations such as women's unions will be involved in the detailed design phase, and will facilitate dissemination of micro-irrigation information, implementation of technical support for micro irrigation, and implementation of safeguards. Their involvement will include consultation on proposed designs and design alternatives, water allocation planning, and water-charging frameworks.</p> <p>3. Civil society organization participation forms. The Women's Union <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information gathering and sharing <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership</p> <p>4. Participation plan. Will a project-level participation plan be prepared to strengthen participation of civil society? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No. Participation actions are included in the Gender Action Plan (GAP) and Resettlement and Ethnic Minority Development Plan (REMDP). Effective GAP and REMDP implementation will ensure participation of civil society organizations and local communities.</p> | |
| III. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT | |
| Gender mainstreaming category: Effective gender mainstreaming (EGM) | |
| <p>A. Key issues. Women have fewer opportunities than men to participate in public decision making, and have less access to information, training, and employment in the field of irrigation.⁹ The mobility of women is limited because of traditional gender roles that give women primary responsibility for household chores, and they consequently have less opportunity for exposure to new and improved agricultural technologies than men. The time poverty of women reduces their opportunities to participate in training; training usually focuses on heads of households (who are typically men). Additional barriers include lower education levels, and language and cultural barriers, particularly for women from ethnic groups in the project sites (e.g. indigenous ethnic groups in Dak Lak and Dak Nong, and Ninh Thuan provinces). Women and men are responsible for irrigation water for crop production, especially HVCs. However, in severe drought areas, ensuring irrigation water for crops becomes labor intensive, and women are less involved, with the exception of households headed by women. Micro irrigation will have a significant positive impact on women's work by reducing drudgery related to irrigation, and dependence on men's labor for watering crops. Few women work in irrigation companies in the project provinces, especially in technical roles, but the project will seek to engage them.</p> <p>B. Key actions. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender action plan. Design features of the GAP are (i) equal opportunities and benefit-sharing between men and women in project water command areas through access to water and information on water efficient technologies; (ii) a reduction in gender inequalities and social risks (HIV/AIDs transmission prevention, social issues during construction); (iii) training of women farmers, including those from ethnic minorities, on micro irrigation, and for female staff on modern irrigation management; (iv) increased involvement of women in decision-making bodies (project management units), in consultations on detailed designs and pipe layouts, and as female facilitators; and (v) collection of sex-disaggregated data to support monitoring and evaluation and GAP reporting.</p> | |
| IV. ADDRESSING SOCIAL SAFEGUARD ISSUES | |
| <p>A. Involuntary Resettlement Safeguard Category: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> FI</p> <p>1. Key Impacts. All subprojects have some households that are affected as a result of providing access and minor realignment of buried pipes, resulting in some loss of productive assets, but no involuntary relocation. As pipes are buried, land can be replanted after installation. Income loss is temporary.</p> <p>2. Strategy to address the impacts. A combined REMDP has been prepared for each subproject that addresses all resettlement issues. An inventory of losses has been prepared, which will be reviewed during detailed design. Each REMDP provides mitigation measures for involuntary resettlement impacts, a grievance redress mechanism, and compliance with ADB information disclosure and consultation requirements.</p> <p>3. Plan or other Actions: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Combined resettlement and indigenous peoples plan</p> | |
| <p>B. Indigenous Peoples Safeguard Category: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> B <input type="checkbox"/> C <input type="checkbox"/> FI</p> <p>1. Key impacts. Ethnic minorities constitute about 18% of the population in the project area. The area features a diversity of ethnic groups, including indigenous ethnic minorities and migrant ethnic minority groups, mostly from the northern mountains. Impacts on ethnic minorities in the project area are overwhelmingly positive: the subprojects directly impact all those with land in the command areas, which will experience economic and social improvements. The project will not cause physical displacement from traditional or customary lands, nor negatively impact the identity, culture, or customary livelihood systems of ethnic minorities.</p> <p>Is broad community support triggered? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>2. Strategy to address the impacts. The REMDP will be used to ensure the inclusion of ethnic minorities and their access</p> | |

to project participation opportunities and the resultant benefits. The REMDP includes mitigation measures to address impacts on ethnic minorities, an institutional capacity development program, a grievance redress mechanism, and compliance with ADB information disclosure and consultation requirements.

3. Plan or other actions. Combined resettlement plan and indigenous peoples plan

V. ADDRESSING OTHER SOCIAL RISKS

A. Risks in the Labor Market

1. Relevance of the project for the region's labor market:

unemployment under-employment retrenchment core labor standards.

2. Labor market impact. The project will address underemployment, directly and in the short term through the creation of opportunities for unskilled and semi-skilled labor during construction, and indirectly and in the long term through support to agribusiness and other businesses that will benefit from increased economic activity associated with HVC development. The access road investment in Ninh Thuan will attract additional investment and create employment and increase opportunities to trade products.

B. Affordability

Beneficiary farmers will access free connections to the modernized system that will cover the cost of meters installed directly after the valves that control farmers' access to the irrigation system. Consultations with beneficiaries during field visits show that farmers are willing to pay a water tariff, although a specific tariff level was not determined. Income levels will be further clarified during implementation to ensure tariffs meet affordability criteria. Public private-partnerships between irrigation management companies (IMCs) and irrigation operators for pumped systems will be trialed under the project. As the project provides a higher level of service, there will be many cases where individual farmer pumping costs will be reduced.

C. Communicable Diseases and Other Social Risks

1. The impact of the following risks are rated as high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA):

Communicable diseases: Human trafficking: Others (please specify): **NA**

2. Risks to people in project area. There may risks of HIV/AIDS transmission or human trafficking for community inhabitants because contractors are likely to source skilled and some semi-skilled labor from outside the immediate project area, creating a temporary resident population. The Local Women's Union has an ongoing awareness raising program on HIV/AIDS prevention and human trafficking prevention for local community people, particularly ethnic minorities and women. However, the Viet Nam Women's Union will request that contractors that bring external workers to local communities conduct awareness-raising sessions on HIV/AIDS and human trafficking prevention for their workers to prevent transmission of risks to community inhabitants. This action is included in the GAP and the PAM.

VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

1. Targets and indicators. The design and monitoring framework and key GAP indicators for targets related to social and poverty dimensions include (i) the number of people (disaggregated by sex and ethnicity) with access to training on modern irrigation system, water, on micro-irrigation technology, and access to irrigation advice services via the internet by 2030; and (ii) the number of beneficiary households adopting micro irrigation, including the poor and near poor, women, and ethnic minorities.

2. Required human resources. Each provincial project management unit and the central project management unit under the central project office has a safeguard and gender focal, with a monitoring officer who will be supported by the social, gender and communications specialist to be recruited under the project implementation consultants (with 14 person-months of inputs).

3. Information in the PAM. The PAM includes information on the GAP, including implementation arrangements; REMDP implementation and reporting, and terms of reference for gender consultants.

4. Monitoring tools. The project management units will submit quarterly GAP and REMDP monitoring reports to ADB. GAP monitoring tables and key targets, design and monitoring framework and REMDP monitoring are part of monitoring poverty and social dimensions outlined in the PAM.

^a World Bank. [Lower Middle Income](#). Accessed 12 September 2018.

^b Government of Viet Nam. 2016. *Decision 1722/QĐ-TTg approving the National Target Program on Sustainable Poverty Reduction for Period 2016–2020*; Government of Viet Nam. 2012. [Viet Nam Sustainable Development Strategy for 2011-2020](#). Hanoi; The National Assembly of Viet Nam. 2016. [Resolution No. 142/2016/QH13 on Five-Year Socio-Economic Development Plan 2016–2020](#). Hanoi.

^c ADB. 2016. *Country Partnership Strategy: Viet Nam, 2016–2020—Fostering More Inclusive and Environmentally Sustainable Growth*. Manila.

^d Ministry of Planning and Investment. 2015. *Country Report: Achieving Viet Nam Millennium Development Goal 2015*. Hanoi; and Government of Viet Nam. Ministry of Labor, Invalids and Social Affairs. 2016. Decision No. 1095/QĐ-LĐTBXH approving the results of the review of poor and near poor households in 2015 based on multi-dimension poverty criteria for 2016–2020.

^e Ministry of Planning and Investment. 2010. Official Report *Population and Housing Census, 2009* (page 1). Ha Noi.

^f Tra Tan subproject (Binh Thuan province), Dak Lak subproject and Dak Mil subproject (Dak Nong province).

^g Women account for just 20%–30% of irrigation company staff in the project provinces.

Source: Asian Development Bank.