

SUMMARY POVERTY REDUCTION AND SOCIAL STRATEGY

Country:	Republic of Uzbekistan	Program Title:	Sustainable Solid-Waste Management Project
Lending Modality:	Project	Department/ Division:	Central and West Asia Department, Urban Development and Water Division

I. POVERTY AND SOCIAL ANALYSIS AND STRATEGY

Poverty targeting: targeted intervention—geographic (also SDG 7)

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

The proposed project is aligned with the government's National Development Strategy for 2017–2021, which entails market-oriented reforms and a shift from government subsidies to targeted social programs. The project directly contributes to the government's goal of accelerating socioeconomic development and enhancing the living standards of Uzbekistan's population. The proposed project is also aligned with the government's ongoing implementation of its Strategy on Solid Waste Management 2019–2028, which aims to (i) improve core collection and disposal processes, provide disposal services throughout the country, and promote recycling and materials recovery; (ii) ensure safe and efficient neutralization and disposal of hazardous wastes to minimize damage to public health and the environment; and (iii) ensure the efficient use of available resources in setting up investments and development schemes that will improve solid-waste collection, recovery, and disposal in all the country's rural and urban areas. The proposed project aligns with ADB's country partnership strategy for Uzbekistan 2019–2023^a by supporting Sustainable Development Goals 12 by modernizing solid-waste management infrastructure, improving environmental sustainability, and promoting green and inclusive growth.

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

1. Key poverty and social issues. The poverty rate in Uzbekistan fell from 27.5% in 2001 to 11.5% in 2018.^b Using 1.5 times the minimal wage as the poverty threshold, however, the PSGA revealed that 23.3% of the project area's households are poor, and 21.9% of these are households headed by women. Of the surveyed households in the project area, 63% are satisfied with SWM services, except for the regions of Kashkadarya, Djizzak, and Namangan, where 15% of the households rated the collection and removal of waste disposal as "bad" and "not reliable"; 10% of surveyed households noted that SWM services are not available in their neighborhood. Solid waste generated in rural areas is not collected regularly (1-2 times weekly) and there is a shortage of waste collection points that are accessible to residents in *mahallas* (local community). PSGA results revealed that 14.00% of households are dumping their waste randomly in open areas without any treatment, and 13.25% of households burn their wastes openly, generating harmful gases and emissions. The same survey also revealed that 66% of households consider the lack of SMW management to be a threat to public health, especially to children, and 81% of households believe that this will lead to environmental deterioration. Public consultation participants indicated that the lack of solid-waste collection services is attributable to poor infrastructure, lack of transportation stations, and outdated waste collection vehicles. The solutions presented by the communities include (i) providing distinct containers for sorting waste, e.g., paper, glass, food, and metal (53%); (ii) creating accessible waste collection points (45%); and (iii) ensuring that waste collection points are clean and safe (38%). About 92.7% of the surveyed households confirmed their willingness to pay for improved collection services.

2. Beneficiaries. The ultimate beneficiaries of the project are the people of Uzbekistan, in both rural and urban areas. The number of beneficiaries is approximately 6 million customers, 61% of whom live in rural areas and 39% in urban areas. Women and children (especially girls) will directly benefit from the project, with the provision of secure and better managed solid-waste collection and disposal services. Society as a whole will benefit from reduced greenhouse gas emissions, resulting in a healthier environment.

3. Impact channels. The project will (i) improve the living conditions and public health of residents, (ii) improve the awareness of sustainable SWM, and (iii) provide access to employment opportunities created by the project. The project will directly contribute to poverty reduction in the project areas by (i) enhancing public infrastructure and the living environment for local residents, (ii) establishing a community-based waste sorting-at-source system and improving SWM, (iii) reducing environment-related diseases by improving environmental sanitation, and (iv) creating direct skilled and unskilled jobs during construction and operation of the project. The project will indirectly help generate economic and employment opportunities for both urban and rural populations.

4. Other social and poverty issues. None.

5. Design features. Key design features include (i) strengthening the regulatory and institutional framework, supporting implementation of policies on waste management and operational financing, and improving *toza hudud* (state unitary enterprise) capacity; (ii) supporting development of 13 regional O&M services; and (iii) supporting the gender action plan and awareness raising on sustainable SWM practices.

Policy reform actions to improve the governance and efficiency of *toza hududs* will contribute to the reliable and affordable provision of SWM services.

II. PARTICIPATION AND EMPOWERING THE POOR	
<p>1. Participatory approaches and proposed project activities. During the project preparation, consultations were carried out, social benefits maximized, and adverse impacts mitigated, if not avoided completely. Since July–August 2019, more than 1,500 people have been surveyed, 12 consultation meetings with government agencies held, and 12 focus group discussions were undertaken during the field surveys. In addition, public consultations for the environment were conducted in all 13 regions. The local <i>khokimiyat</i> (local municipal government)—Sanitary Epidemiologic Station, the State Committee of Environment Protection and Ecology, Ecology Party of Uzbekistan, Makhalla Foundation, Women Committee, and local nongovernment organizations—took part in the participatory activities. Forty percent of the focus group discussions were held exclusively for rural women, who were positive about the need for the investment, especially for environmental sanitation. The consultation process will continue during project implementation.</p> <p>The main implications of the PSGA findings include that the institutional strengthening component of the project should include public participation, information, and education components to (i) provide general consumer information about solid-waste services; (ii) inform the public about the project; (iii) introduce SWM into the formal education system by producing an information tool kit for schools; and (iv) sensitize the general population, especially youth, to the need for public cleanliness and the importance of waste sorting and recycling. There should be public consultations during project implementation.</p> <p>2. Civil society organizations. Consultations were held with several civil society organizations throughout the project preparation. Civil society will be engaged in public awareness campaigns with focus on waste reduction concepts; separation and categorization; and collection, reuse, and recycling through a “Clean City” information campaign.</p> <p>Community-based organizations in rural areas (<i>mahalla</i> councils) will be engaged to conduct the public consultations on the Draft Law on Waste, which will be one of the outputs.</p> <p>The stakeholders’ inputs will include monitoring visits and end-line and customer satisfaction surveys.</p> <p>3. The following forms of civil society organization participation are envisaged during project implementation, rated as high (H), medium (M), low (L), or not applicable (NA): <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Information gathering and sharing (M) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Consultation (M) <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Collaboration (L) <input type="checkbox"/> Partnership (N/A)</p> <p>4. Participation plan. <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>Consultation and participation activities will be included in the gender action plan and will be implemented and managed by a social and gender specialist in the project management unit.</p>	
III. GENDER AND DEVELOPMENT	
Gender mainstreaming category: Effective gender mainstreaming	
<p>A. Key issues. The PSGA conducted for this project revealed that 35.6% of households in the project area are headed by women. Women are more active in unpaid family activities than their male counterparts, especially in rural areas. Women’s economic participation is low compared to males in the project area. Key gender issues include insufficient solid-waste collection services in rural areas, particularly in social institutions (kindergartens, schools, and health clinics), resulting in poor environmental sanitation. The consultations and gender analysis conducted revealed that women in both rural and urban areas are particularly affected by the poor living conditions in the project area attributed to lack of waste collection services, polluted water, and polluted air.</p> <p>The PSGA indicates that women are primarily responsible for household solid-waste disposal (73.1%), payment for SWM services (50.0%), and waste sorting and recycling (41.0%). The majority of the respondents (60%) have limited knowledge on waste sorting and recycling because recycling programs in the country have not yet started, and the communities lack environmental education. However, 72% of respondents are willing to learn more about recycling. Respondents are also aware of the environmental and economic benefits of recycling, but they decline to walk long distances to bring their wastes for recycling.</p> <p>Women are underrepresented in the SWM subsector (12%) and lack meaningful involvement and participation in the decision-making process. <i>Toza hududs’</i> human resources and operational policies and procedures as well as their capacity-building activities do not consider gender issues and have no gender-specific designs and approaches.</p>	
<p>B. Key actions. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Gender action plan <input type="checkbox"/> Other actions or measures <input type="checkbox"/> No action or measure</p> <p>The key measures in the project gender action plan include (i) gender-responsive provisions in SWM policies, (ii) transforming <i>toza hududs</i> into more gender-sensitive agencies, (iii) setting targets for women’s participation in training and certification, (iv) employing women in the environmental laboratory, (v) ensuring women’s participation in the Clean City and Zero Waste campaigns, and (vi) collecting and reporting sex-disaggregated data.</p>	
IV. ADDRESSING SOCIAL SAFEGUARD ISSUES	
<p>A. Involuntary Resettlement Safeguard Category: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C</p> <p>1. Key impacts. No Impact. Due diligence has confirmed that the construction of 13 O&M centers for solid-waste management vehicles, provision of equipment in 13 regions, and any other project activities will not entail any involuntary resettlement impacts. Land plots for the nine new O&M centers have been allocated from government</p>	

reserved lands. The remaining four existing O&M centers will not require additional land provision. The SDDR has been prepared to (i) screen all the project activities, key potential involuntary resettlement impacts, and risks associated with the project; (ii) confirm there are no outstanding legacy issues in the project sites; and (iii) confirm effective measures to avoid the adverse impacts are integrated in the project design.

2. Strategy to address the impacts. Closely monitor if any impact arises.

3. Plan or other Actions

<input type="checkbox"/> Program safeguard systems improvements <input type="checkbox"/> No action	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Preparing due diligence report
<p>B. Indigenous Peoples Safeguard Category: <input type="checkbox"/> A <input type="checkbox"/> B <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> C</p> <p>1. Key impacts. There is no indigenous peoples impact as the country does not have indigenous peoples communities as defined in ADB's Safeguard Policy Statement (2009) for operational purposes. Is broad community support triggered? <input type="checkbox"/> Yes <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No</p> <p>2. Strategy to address the impacts. None</p> <p>3. Plan or other actions <input type="checkbox"/> Program safeguard systems improvement <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> No action</p>	

V. ADDRESSING OTHER SOCIAL RISKS

A. Risks in the Labor Market

1. Relevance of the program for the country's or region's or sector's labor market. Indicate the impact as high (H), medium (M), and low or not significant (L).

unemployment (M) underemployment (L) retrenchment (L) core labor standards (L)

2. Labor market impact.

B. Affordability

A willingness to pay survey conducted in 2019 revealed that the targeted households were willing to pay a higher tariff. According to the survey, the willingness to pay ranged from SUM1,863 to SUM3,022 per person per month. The projected tariff increase in the analysis is operating cost recovery, which is considered reasonable given that the impact of tariffs in the project's first operational year of 2024 is less than 1% of monthly household income. The increased tariff rates projected are consistent with the principles of operating cost recovery, which are in accordance with the latest economic and fiscal reforms being pursued by the government.

An affordability analysis was also conducted on the projected tariffs (using per capita income for 2018) in each *toza hudud* using data sourced from the State Statistics Committee of Uzbekistan. This was adjusted with a gross domestic product growth rate of 5.8% to arrive at per capita income in 2024. The impact of projected tariffs in 2024 on the monthly household income is less than 1% in all *toza hududs* and is considered affordable.

C. Communicable Diseases and Other Social Risks

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

Communicable diseases (L) Human trafficking (N/A)

Others (please specify) _____

2. Risks to people in program area.

No social risks associated with the program.

VI. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

1. Targets and indicators. The design and monitoring framework and the gender action plan contain key targets and indicators.

2. Required human resources. The PMU will assign a national social and gender specialist who will be recruited through the consulting services budget.

3. Information in the project administration manual. The project administration manual is accessible as a linked document in Appendix 2 of the project's report and recommendation of the President.

4. Monitoring tools. The PMU will be responsible for submitting consolidated monitoring reports, including for all activities under the project on safeguards, GAP, awareness generation, participation, and training. The midterm review will evaluate the scope of the loan, implementation arrangements, safeguard issues, achievement of targets, contract management progress, and other issues, including mid-course corrections. An evaluation will be undertaken 1 year after the closure of the project. Findings of the completion report will be shared and disseminated within ADB and with key government officials.

ADB = Asian Development Bank; GAP = gender action plan; O&M = operation and maintenance; PMU = project management unit; PSGA = poverty, social, and gender assessment; SDDR = social due diligence report; SWM = solid-waste management.

Source: Asian Development Bank.

^a ADB. 2019. [Country Partnership Strategy: Uzbekistan, 2019–2023—Supporting Economic Transformation](#). Manila.

^b World Bank. 2019. [Uzbekistan Country Economic Update, Summer 2019: Toward a New Economy](#). Washington, D.C.