

THE HASHEMITE KINGDOM OF JORDAN

Resilient and Sustainable Social Protection Project (RSSP)

PROPOSED PROGRAM FOR RESULTS

(P508708)

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SYSTEMS ASSESSMENT (ESSA)

Draft Summary

March 2025

Executive Summary

Introduction

The proposed Resilient and Sustainable Social Protection Project (RSSP) Program for Results (Pfor) (P508708) is being developed by the Government of Jordan with support from the World Bank. The program objective is to enhance the shock-responsiveness, effectiveness, and sustainability of Jordan's SP system for the poor and vulnerable. This Environmental and Social Systems Assessment (ESSA) of the Program should be read in conjunction with the Program's Project Appraisal Document (PAD) to provide full details of the Program Design.

The program is designed to support the implementation of Jordan's new National Social Protection Strategy (NSPS) (2026-2033) that will be launched in the first half of 2025, currently under preparation and public consultations. The draft NCPS, is structured around four main pillars: **Dignity, Empowerment, Opportunity, and Resilience**. The **Dignity** pillar focuses on social assistance, including cash and in-kind aid, while the **Empowerment** pillar addresses essential social services like healthcare, health insurance, education, and protection. The **Opportunity** pillar targets social security, labor market programs, and work-related social insurance, while the **Resilience** pillar emphasizes the system's response to shocks and crises, including those caused by climate change.

Purpose and Scope of the ESSA

This Environmental and Social Systems Assessment (ESSA) has been prepared by the World Bank according to the requirements of the Bank's Policy for PforR financing for adequately managing the environmental and social effects of the Program. The ESSA assesses the potential Environmental and Social (E&S) effects of the PforR, including direct, indirect, induced, and cumulative effects as relevant. It also assesses the Borrower's capacity (legal framework, regulatory authority, organizational capacity, and performance) to manage those effects in line with the core principles of the World Bank policy for PforR and identifies measures to enhance both the environmental and social (E&S) management systems and the E&S outcomes during Program implementation. Program activities and the expenditure framework will be further screened against exclusion criteria including child and forced labor and any other high-risk activity. The findings and recommendations of the ESSA are subsequently factored into the operations overall Integrated Risk Assessment, Program Appraisal Document (PAD), and PAP. The findings, conclusions and opinions expressed in the ESSA document are those of the World Bank.

Methodology

The preparation of the ESSA was carried out in a participatory manner involving feedback and inputs from the key stakeholders relevant to the social protection sector including governmental institutions, non-governmental organizations, civil society, and development partners. The ESSA team collected information relevant to the assessment and conducted consultations with stakeholders' groups. A first draft ESSA will be shared with the main implementing agency, Ministry of Social Development (MOSD). The Bank and MOSD have conducted public consultations with stakeholders on the Draft ESSA end of February 2025.

Findings of the assessment will be used in the decision-making process by the World Bank regarding the Program activities that may be supported under the proposed PforR and at a later stage the formulation

of E&S related actions of the PAP with key measures to improve environmental and social management outcomes of the Program. The World Bank team has assessed to what degree the PforR Program Systems address the core environmental and social principles. The ESSA Report is based on data from implementing agencies, published studies, media reports, web-based information, and assessments from other Bank-supported activities. The ESSA was prepared during January- February 2025 and included several meetings with main stakeholders' groups in Jordan's social protection sector.

Program's Description:

The program aims to enhance Jordan's SP systems' shock-responsiveness, effectiveness, and sustainability to better support the poor and vulnerable during crises. It will achieve this through three key result areas. The first result area (RA1), "Enhancing Shock Responsiveness". Activities include preparing NAF systems for rapid response, and integrating Geographic Information System (GIS) with Jordan's early warning infrastructure. The intended outcome is an SP System that is resilient to shocks and better equipped to respond to crises. The second result area (RA2) is "Integrated Socio-economic Packages for enhanced Human Capital." This includes linking individuals to non-monetary support, including education and health programs, improving targeting of cash transfers for vulnerable populations, and supporting upskilling and sustainable income opportunities for the poor. Outputs include updated instructions, professionalized services, and targeted programs that enhance beneficiaries' resilience and opportunities. The third result area (RA3) is, "Strengthening enablers for a more resilience, efficient and sustainable social protection system". The outcomes include a sustainable SP system with expanded coverage and greater alignment with the national priorities.

The implementation of the program is supported by the Implementation Support Unit (ISU), which has been established and incorporated into the organizational structure of the MoSD. The PSU will oversee the implementation of both the World Bank-financed program as part of the upcoming NSPS, ensuring alignment with strategy goals, facilitating coordination across pillars, and managing day-to-day operations effectively.

The NSPS is governed and overseen by a steering committee chaired by the Minister of Social Development, with membership including the Ministers of Education, Health, Planning and International Cooperation, and Labor, as well as representatives from NGOs and the private sector. The design and coordination are managed through four committees, each aligned with one of the strategy's pillars: the Dignity Pillar is led by the NAF Director General, the Empowerment Pillar by the Secretary General of the MoSD, the Opportunity Pillar by the SSC Director General, and the Resilience Pillar by the NCSCM. Additionally, a technical committee supports the overall design of the strategy.

Stakeholders' Mapping and Consultations:

In January and February 2025, as part of the Environmental and Social Systems Assessment (ESSA) preparation, the ESSA team conducted a thorough stakeholder mapping and consultation process, categorizing government outlined in Annex II. Individual meetings and interviews were held with proposed

implementing agencies, guided by customized question guides. These consultations focused on evaluating Environmental and Social (E&S) risks as the project design evolved, as listed in Annex III. The outcomes of these consultations significantly informed the ESSA's risk assessment, ensuring the effective integration of E&S considerations into the project's planning and implementation.

Disbursement Linked Indicators (DLIs):

The Program consists of nine DLIs selected for their impact, the potential for the World Bank to add value, and the sequencing of results toward the final outcome. These DLIs are designed to address critical gaps in Jordan's social protection system by enhancing its shock responsiveness, integrating socio-economic support for human capital development, and strengthening the overall efficiency and sustainability of social protection mechanisms. Disbursement-Linked Results (DLRs) provide incentives for prioritization and sequencing of results, ensuring measurable progress in key reform areas. The following provides an overview of the rationale for DLI selection and relevance:

Proposed Disbursement Linked Indicators

RA 1. Enhanced Shock Responsiveness of SP

The DLIs will include actions related to the establishment, testing, and operationalization of an early warning system for shock response. Measures will also focus on equipping key institutions to ensure they are operationally ready to deliver timely and effective shock-responsive interventions.

RA 2. Integrated Socio-Economic Packages for Enhanced Human Capital for the poor and vulnerable

Proposed DLIs will include the provision of integrated support packages to the poor and vulnerable, alongside efforts to strengthen targeting mechanisms for health insurance programs serving low-income populations. The introduction of a new cash transfer program, designed to support individuals with multidimensional vulnerabilities, will also be part of the framework. Additionally, the legal framework for social work accreditation and licensing will be strengthened, and steps will be taken to facilitate labor market access for disadvantaged individuals through the implementation of an economic empowerment policy.

RA 3. Strengthened enablers for an Effective and Sustainable SP System

The DLIs will focus on the establishment and operationalization of a Social Protection and Care Fund (SPCF), leveraging corporate social responsibility (CSR) contributions to enhance resilience. Further actions will also be directed toward enhancing the targeting, expansion, and coverage of the Jordan Social Registry (JSR) to improve the efficiency and inclusiveness of social protection programs.

E&S Effects Screening:

The proposed program and Results Areas (Ras) outline several key Environmental and Social (E&S) benefits and risks associated with the program.

E&S Benefits:

The program environmental benefits of the Program are primarily related to the opportunity to incorporate environmental risk management approaches into crisis-response mechanisms and standard operating procedures for emergency responses, and to leveraging the sharing of environmental information and strengthening institutional collaboration for informed crisis-response to environmental risks and emergencies. Other environmental benefits include reducing the generation of paper waste due to modernization of the IT systems and solutions and reducing GHG emissions by reducing beneficiaries and service providers need for commuting (insignificant to low magnitude).

On the social side, the program enhances shock responsiveness, improving emergency preparedness and resilience among Jordan's vulnerable populations. It also integrates socio-economic packages that link cash transfers to essential non-monetary services such as health and education, enhancing long-term economic mobility and breaking the cycle of poverty. The professionalization of social work improves the quality of social services and aligns the sector with national and international labor market standards. Furthermore, the program promotes economic empowerment by integrating National Aid Fund (NAF) beneficiaries into national employment initiatives and linking them with training and green jobs. Lastly, the establishment of the Social Protection and Care Fund (SPCF) provides a stable funding source, ensuring financial resources are consistently available to meet the needs of the vulnerable.

E&S Risks:

However, the program also presents some environmental and social risks. On the environmental side, the program involves minor IT systems upgrade works and consequently the generation of e-waste, which can be mitigated with good Environmental, Health, and Safety (EHS) practices and compliance with national regulations.

Social risks include the potential for inequality in benefits distribution if the welfare formula used to select individuals eligible for benefits is not accurately refined or implemented transparently. There is also a risk of social conflict between public and private sector social workers due to differing licensing requirements. Vulnerable groups, particularly women and persons with disabilities (PWDs), may face social and structural barriers that hinder their participation in economic empowerment programs. Additionally, there is a potential risk of excluding vulnerable groups from timely assistance due to systemic issues related to registration and database inclusion.

Recommendations added to the PAP Actions:

Table 2: Recommendations added to the PAP Actions

Action	Source	DLI#	Entity	Timeline	Completion measurement
Assign one E&S Specialist to oversee the E&S aspects of program implementation.	E&S	All	MOSD	June 2025	E&S Specialist assigned
Develop and implement a comprehensive communication and outreach program aimed at all vulnerable groups and stakeholders regarding the NSPS, ensuring that all project stakeholders and beneficiaries are informed and able to access the project's benefits.	E&S	All DLIs	MOSD NAF	January 2026	Communication and outreach program developed and rolled out
MOSD to revise the exiting grievance mechanism (GM) with clear Standard Operating Procedures (SOPs), complying with the requirements of the World Bank and international best practices. The SOPs should be prepared to receive and process SEA/SH complaints. Additionally, the project will ensure that workers' complaints are handled through a dedicated mechanism.	E&S	All DLIs	MOSD	February 2026	- GM SOPs prepared and rolled out - Workers' GM in place and operational