# Social Safeguards Due Diligence Report

Armenia: Seismic Safety Enhancement Program (49078-005)

Reconstruction/retrofitting of Voskehat secondary school

February 2024

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#### **ABBREVIATIONS**

ADB Asian Development Bank

ATDF Armenian Territorial Development Fund

DRR Disaster Risk Reduction

EIA Environmental Impact Assessment

EMF Environmental Management Framework

EMP Environmental Management Plan

GRM Grievance Redress Mechanisms

IA Implementing Agency

IEE Initial Environmental Examination

ISA Initial Social Assessment

MTAI Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure

OM Operational Manual

PB Project Beneficiaries

RA Republic of Armenia

RPF Resettlement Policy Framework

SPS Safeguard Policy Statement

SSIP Seismic Safety Improvement Program

SSRP School Strengthening and Renovation Program

SDDR Social Due Diligence Report

#### 1. INTRODUCTION

## 1.1. Project Background

The Seismic Safety Enhancement Project (SSEP), financed by the Japan Fund for Prosperous and Resilient Asia and the Pacific (JFPR), aims to improve seismic disaster preparedness and response capacity in Armenia. The country is highly vulnerable to seismic risk and needs to improve construction capacity and public awareness of seismic disasters. The project will have two outputs: (i) strengthened capacity for seismic disaster resilient infrastructure and risk management, and (ii) raised awareness on seismic safety, including knowledge products. The JFPR project will complement the Seismic Safety Improvement Program (SSIP), a resultsbased lending, approved by Asian Development Bank (ADB) for the amount of \$88.5 million on 22 September 2015.2 SSIP will directly benefit about 18,000 students and 3,100 teachers and other school staff upon its completion with the outputs: (i) increased seismic resilience of 46 school buildings, (ii) strengthened seismic disaster preparedness and response capacity, (iii) improved supportive policies and systems for seismic disaster risk management and reduction, and (iv) enhanced national capacity in executing and implementing seismic safety programs. The JFPR project will build on the extensive experience gained on implementation of the SSIP and will enhance its outcome by retrofitting/reconstructing one more school, the Voskehat secondary school, and enhancing disaster preparedness of the Country by using modern technologies and social media.

## 1.2. Objective and Scope of the Social Due Diligence Report

- 2. This social due diligence report (SDDR) is prepared for reconstruction/retrofitting of the Voskehat secondary school located in Armavir region of Armenia and describes the findings of due diligence conducted to assess land acquisition and resettlement (LAR) permanent and temporary impacts in accordance with the ADB Safeguard Policy Statement (2009).<sup>3</sup> The SDDR provides the mitigation measures to be undertaken under the project to ensure, that the public is properly informed about the construction and that all possible impacts during the construction will be mitigated, if any.
- 3. The Seismic Safety Enhancement Program (Project) to be financed by JFPR grant will complement the Seismic Safety Improvement Program (SSIP). It involves design and construction of one public school near Yerevan. The school will be socially inclusive, suitable for 21st century education, transformative for community activities, and in line with high seismic safety standards. The Project will incentivize the government counterparts at all levels to institutionalize innovative and cost-efficient solutions in disaster risk management. The Project will provide (i) unconventional cost-effective design solutions for seismic retrofitting that will be replicated and scaled up in other SSIP schools, (ii) a building maintenance guide for the completed JFPR school which will be used and operationalized in other schools, and (iii) approaches for targeted and effective DRR campaigns in Armenia. If needed, the building norms for seismic design will be further upgraded and will affect the country's entire construction sector. Another aspect of the

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>1</sup> The JFPR is a possible funding source subject to the approval of the Government of Japan.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>2</sup> In 2023 ADB is processing an additional financing loan to SSIP as the planned SSIP targets could not be achieved because of cost overruns.

<sup>&</sup>lt;sup>3</sup> The type of construction intervention will be determined at the detailed design stage when the seismic condition of the school building is thoroughly assessed.

JFPR grant support, a well-planned assessment visit to Japan with pre-confirmed meetings and consultations with Japanese counterparts, will enhance effectiveness of the capacity building component. Japanese experience in mitigating seismic disaster risk through innovative and targeted awareness campaigns will be studied and applied in Armenia. Using technologies, social media, and celebrities as goodwill ambassadors for enhancing public awareness and preparedness for seismic events will be novel in terms of the unusual subject to be promoted through social media. Lessons learned during the SSIP implementation will be applied to the Project and will further enhance the Implementing Agency's (IA) capacity for engineering design and construction of seismic resilient building.

4. The Executing Agency (EA) of the Project is the Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructures (MTAI). The Armenian Territorial Development Fund (ATDF) is the implementing agency (IA). The ATDF will manage day-to-day coordination, implementation, monitoring, and management of environmental safeguards and immediate environmental oversight and monitoring of construction activities.

## 1.3. Safeguard Requirements of the Project

- 5. An environmental and social screening was conducted to ensure that environmental and social considerations are incorporated into the project design from an early phase with the overall aim of demonstrating the sustainability of the proposed Project. The Project safeguard classification is Category B for the environment and Category C for involuntary resettlement.
- 6. ADB's Involuntary Resettlement Policy under the Safeguard Policy Statement 2009 requires that:
  - (i) Involuntary resettlement is to be avoided or at least minimized;
  - (ii) Compensation/rehabilitation provisions shall be provided and shall ensure the maintenance of the project beneficiaries (PB) pre-Project standards of living;
  - (iii) PBs should be fully informed and consulted on LAR compensation options;
  - (iv) PBs' socio-cultural institutions should be supported/used as much as possible;
  - (v) Compensation will be carried out with equal consideration of women and men;
  - (vi) Lack of legal title should not be a bar to compensation and/or rehabilitation;
  - (vii) Particular attention should be paid to households headed by women and other vulnerable groups, such as Indigenous Peoples, and appropriate assistance should be provided to help them improve their status;
  - (viii) LAR should be conceived and executed as a part of the Project, and the full costs of compensation should be included in Project costs and benefits; and
  - (ix) Compensation and resettlement subsidies will be fully provided prior to clearance of right of way/ground leveling and demolition.

#### 1.4. Project Implementation Framework

- 7. The SSIP systems and implementation arrangements will be retained for the Project. The Armenian Territorial Development Fund (ATDF) will be the Implementing Agency responsible for daily management of the Project activities. ATDF is fully staffed with necessary specialists and is led by a full-time Executive Director. MTAI will be the Executing Agency and will oversee the implementation. SSIP Steering Committee will coordinate the implementation and facilitate Project-related decisions and government approval procedures. The ATDF Governing Council will approve national policy guidelines and provide strategic leadership and support.
- 8. ATDF will engage professional engineering design and technical supervision firms for preparing detailed engineering design and daily supervision of construction activities. The firms'

will be staffed with environmental, social and health and safety experts to cover respective aspects in line with Project requirements. Supervising Engineer/Technical Supervisor will ensure and supervise the construction of the Project including implementation of the EMP during construction and defect liability period, manage contract changes, claims, and scope revisions.

- 9. The Construction Contractor will
  - i. implement the EMP,
  - ii. hire the services of one full-time Environment and Social Specialist and one full-time health& safety specialist or one full-time environmental and social specialist with a background in health and safety, as defined in the tender document,
  - iii. Hire a part-time reptile specialist (herpetologist) to train the staff and collect and isolate the individuals of snakes and other reptiles if there will be observed
  - iv. notify the technical supervisor and the relevant emergency authorities immediately, in cases of emergencies and accidents or extraordinary situations,
  - v. obtain permits and approvals from relevant agencies and provide copies to technical supervisor,
  - vi. monitor construction works and provide Corrective Action Reports,
  - vii. report on the environmental program as specified in IEE/ EMP.
- 10. ADB will monitor the implementation and may carry out periodic reviews and inspections in conformity with the principles and requirements embodied in the SPS 2009. ADB will support ATDF in managing the social and environmental impacts and risks. ADB will also disclose Project information through the placing IEE, SDDR and EMP English versions, as well as annual Environmental Monitoring Reports on its website. Below are ADB's responsibilities in the different phases of the Project:

## 2. SCOPE OF IMPACTS OF THIS PARTICULAR SECTION

#### 2.1. Location of the Section

- 11. Civil works are anticipated only under the Output 1 strengthened capacity for seismic disaster resilient infrastructure and risk management which envisages reconstruction/retrofitting of the Voskehat secondary school. The school is located in the Voskehat settlement of Vagharshapat community of Armavir marz. Based on the initial engineering assessment the school will be reinforced without demolishing the main structure. The school building consists of three sections. The territory of the school is quite large (31169 sq. m), and the school main building occupies only 51% of the available area. A storage, toilet, boiler house, rifle range and swimming pool are also located on the territory of the school overall occupying 15% of the territory. These facilities are the property of the school. A google snapshot of the school territory is in the Figure 1.
- 12. In general the construction works will include:
  - Strengthening of foundations and load-bearing walls with reinforced concrete elements;
  - Changing of floor covers;
  - Installation of new doors and windows;
  - Implementation of new floors;
  - > Installation of partitions, internal sewage and water lines, internal heating and electricity;

- Interior finishing works;
- Construction of ramps and an elevator for people with limited mobility;
- and area improvement works.

Figure 2. The Google snapshot of the school territory



#### 2.2. Survey Methodology

- 13. ATDF conducted a baseline survey through desk review of the cadastral map and ownership certificate, field visits and face to face meetings with the stakeholders including school administration, school staff, students and local population. ATDF has officially obtained the latest Cadastral map for the Voskehat secondary school from the State Cadaster Committee. The ATDF respective engineers and social specialist reviewed the cadastral map of the school to identify any potential LAR impacts. Besides, field visits were organized by the engineers joined by the social specialist of ATDF. The correspondence of actual conditions of the land plot to information reflected in the cadastral map and ownership certificate was verified on the site. The land plot of the school is state owned and the school's premises are not used by any third parties. No privately owned land plots will be impacted under the Project. The Project does not require APs physical and economical displacement; there is no impact on PBs livelihood and income.
- 14. An introductory meeting was held with authorities of the impacted Voskehat settlement of Vagharshapat community. A joint meeting of the project engineering and environmental safeguard teams with Mr. Armen Khudabashyan, administrative head of the Voskehat settlement and Mrs. Sophik Petrosyan, principal in charge of the Voskehat Secondary School took place on May 12, 2023. During the meeting, the project team presented the proposed Project, informed on the need of an SDDR, IEE and the required mitigation measures, and requested support for the effective

and meaningful public consultations. An advertisement on the upcoming public consultation was also provided for disclosure and dissemination among affected people and other interested public.

15. Information about the Project has been disclosed through the Public Consultation meeting conducted on 18 May 2023 in the Voskehat settlement of Vagharshapat community. The details on public communication, consultation, and information disclosure are presented in Annex 2.

#### 2.3. Permanent and Temporary Impacts

16. Social due diligence screening was conducted by ATDF staff including social and environmental specialists and engineers in April (2023). Both permanent and temporary impacts were considered and analyzed during the screening process through desk survey and field visits. Physical reconstruction works and reinforcement of the building envisaged within the framework of the sub project do not presuppose any impact on PBs including private owners and informal users. The area of the school is fenced. Cemetery is located in 10 meters from the left side of the land plot. In the backward of the school territory a community road (5-meter width) is separating the school area from the private houses and private greenhouse. In the right side of the area in 8 and more meters from the boundaries of the school, private houses and cultivated land plots are located.

#### 2.4. Land Plot

17. The total surface area of the land plot to be impacted under the project is 3.1169 ha. The land plot is state owned and is given to the school for free use. Detailed information on the land plot and the existing buildings are shown in Table 1.

Table 1: The description of the land plot and the existing buildings

The indicator	The land plot	The buildings	
Cadastral code	04-081-0030-0039	School	04-081-0030-0039-001
		Storage	04-081-0030-0039-002
		Boiler house	04-081-0030-0039-003
		Toilet	04-081-0030-0039-004
		Rifle range	04-081-0030-0039-005
		Swimming Pool	04-081-0030-0039-006
The area	31169 sq. m	School	2352.4 sq. m
		Storage	56.1 sq. m
		Boiler house	70 sq. m
		Toilet	12.7 sq. m
		Rifle range	53.6 sq. m
		Swimming Pool	286.5 sq. m
The purpose	Residential	-	•
The type	Public construction	-	
The type of right	Free use	-	

## 2.5. Impact on Buildings

18. The school building and the boiler house will be reconstructed under the Project covering 2422 m². The storage and outdoor toilet structures with overall 68.6 m² area will be demolished. The existing buildings are made of stone. The rehabilitation of the stone made rifle range and the swimming pool will be considered in the design phase. The Program does not require any permanent or temporary impact on privately owned structures.

## 2.6. Impact on Businesses and Employment

19. No permanent or temporary impacts on businesses, employment or access to any economic resources are anticipated. The private buildings (residential, agricultural and public use including the cemetery) are located in distance of 7-50 m from the boundaries of the site proposed for the intervention. No businesses are located near the site.

#### 2.7. Impact on Trees

20. All trees including fruit, decorative and wood trees to be affected by the Project belong to the community and they will be replanted in the territory of the school at the ratio of 1:6 instead of the trees identified in this area according to the SSIP program Environmental Assessment and Review Framework (EARF) principles.<sup>4</sup>

<sup>4</sup> ADB. 2015. SSIP Environmental Assessment and Review Framework. Yerevan.

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## 3. ACTIVITIES TO BE COMPLETED PRIOR TO THE CIVIL WORKS

## 3.1. Mobilization of Social and Environmental Safeguard Experts

21. ATDF will be responsible for the day-to-day implementation, administration, monitoring, and coordination of the project, including inter alia, management of immediate social safeguards and environmental oversight and monitoring of construction activities. Two environmental specialists and a gender and social development specialist are hired within the Institutional Support Department of ATDF. ATDF is in charge of (i) detailed surveys, investigations, and engineering designs of the school; (ii) measurement of construction activities under the civil works contracts and certification of payments; (iii) public awareness campaigns; (iv)monitoring the environmental management plans (EMPs); (v) GRM establishing and functioning; and (vi) preparing monthly and annual reports. The design consultant will assist the ATDF in all these activities. The supervision consultant will impose the responsibilities on daily supervision of the environmental and social safeguards compliance.

#### 3.2. Initial Environmental Examination

22. An Initial Environmental Examination (IEE) has been done by ADB consultant in July 2023 for the project to ensure compliance with the ADB's environmental safeguard principles and all applicable laws, regulations, and standards for environmental protection in the Republic of Armenia. The IEE contains measures to mitigate and prevent negative impacts that may arise during implementation, as well as monitoring actions to check compliance of construction works to the planned mitigation measures through the whole cycle: from the engineering design phase, preconstruction, construction through the operation and maintenance. The detailed EMP developed on the bases of the design documents will be incorporated into the bill of quantities and will be an integral part of the bidding documents and the civil works contract. The contractors will be responsible for EMP implementation and shall include relevant clauses in the contracts with any sub-contractor.

# 4. PUBLIC AWARENESS, INFORMATION DISCLOSURE AND GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM

#### 4.1 Consultation and Participation

- 23. An introductory meeting on the intention to implement the Project within the territory of the village, with a brief description of the project sent to the administration of the impacted community, has been conducted with the head of the impacted Voskehat settlement of the Vagharshapat community on May 12, 2023 (See Annex 5).
- 24. During the introductory meeting stakeholders were informed about the details of the proposed Project and progress of the Social Due Diligence process and planning of mitigation measures. The head of the impacted community was informed that the Project initiators are in the process of organizing the public consultation events in accordance with Armenian legislation and ADB Safeguard Policy and were kindly requested to assist in this and to contribute to ensuring public participation and making the public consultation effective and meaningful. The public consultation has been conducted to meet the ADB SPS requirements on Public Consultation and Information Disclosure and the requirements of the RA legislation, particularly the RA Decree N 1325-N "On the procedures of information disclosure and public consultations". To fully comply

with the ADB's policy requirements and to meet the requirements of Armenian legislation public consultation shall be organized in the impacted Voskehat settlement.

- 25. Prior to organizing public consultation event the ATDF ensured that all the relevant and adequate information is timely disclosed and is understandable and accessible to affected people and is responsive to the needs of women, disadvantaged and vulnerable groups. The notification of the public consultation was placed on the official website and social network webpages of the Vagharshapat community, as well as attached in publicly visible places of the affected community.
- 26. The public consultation was organized and took place on May 18, 2023, in the Voskehat settlement of the Vagharshapat community. It was headed by Mr. Armen Khudabashyan, the administrative head of the settlement. The representatives of the impacted community, as well as the representatives of the impacted population, ATDF, and ADB, were invited. The public consultation was held with the purpose to inform the interested stakeholders and public on the intention and general concept of the project and to give them the opportunity to raise their concerns earliest possible, as well as incorporate all the reasonable suggestions into the Project detailed design, mitigation, and monitoring plan. The participants were informed about the project, implementation plan, potential social and resettlement impacts, results of the survey conducted under this SDDR exercise, and the structure, procedure and functioning of the GRM. In particular, the participants of the public consultation were requested the Project team to include in the school's design an irrigation system for irrigating existing trees, and restoration of the dilapidated shooting range, as well as to construct a stone fence to demarcate the school and the cemetery. Recognizing the importance of these suggestions, it was agreed that these matters would be further discussed and potentially included in the Detailed Design phase. The announcement, agenda, attendance list, and minutes of the public consultation containing full information on the issues and concerns raised by the participants and the agreements and resolutions achieved are being properly documented and attached as an Annex 5 "Report on Public Communication and Consultation" to the present report.
- 27. According to the requirements of the Law on Environmental Impact Assessment and Expertise of Armenia, two additional consultations will be organized by ATDF in the frame of preparation for the local EIA and expertise stage.
- 28. Taking into account that the educational process during the construction period will be organized in another community or state-owned buildings the school administration will be informed about the launch of construction works 2 months prior to the commencement of construction works in order to organize all relocation processes. The information about commencement of the civil works, civil works schedule, traffic management plan as well as the grievance redress mechanism will be disclosed to the public through consultation conducted by the contractor prior to the start of civil works. They were provided with contact information for further updates on the progress.

#### 4.2 Grievance Redress Mechanism

29. For receiving feedback, concerns and complaints, a Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM), inspired by the problem-solving function of ADB's guidelines and policies will be maintained for the whole duration of the project: from pre-construction and design stages, through the construction and operation. The GRM established for the SSIP will be used for the project and will ensure continuous communication with the public and prompt response and resolution of complaints and suggestions. The GRM is composed of the following steps:

- Step 1. A person affected by the project raises suggestions/ concerns/ complaints to the Contractor's dedicated staff or local focal point (elected during the public consultation meeting) who will resolve the issue at local level. In order to maintain transparency and accountability to affected communities and to make information, assistance and grievance resolution services accessible to the PBs, the contractor shall establish the following procedure as a part of the project's GRM:
  - Boards/ posters containing information on the location of the field office, working hours, names of responsible contact persons, phone numbers, regular mail and email addresses, etc.);
  - (ii) Field office:
  - (iii) Grievance register logbook kept in the field office;
  - (iv) Dedicated grievance redress staff;
  - (v) Designated telephone line and e-mail address including those of ATDF.
- 30. PBs can approach Contractor's representative (construction foreman, engineer, social or environmental specialist) or Supervision Engineer on-site and/or register the suggestion /complaint into the grievance register logbook kept at the field office established nearby the construction site. PBs can also address the grievances or suggestions to the community level local focal point who will register the suggestion in a log book kept in the Administrative office of the settlement. The template for recording grievance, content and format of the application shall be specified in the EMP and/or agreed with ATDF. Supervising Engineer and the Contractor will try to address the issues raised by PBs and will report on the progress. In the event that the issue is out of contractor's or community's responsibility and competency shall be forwarded to ATDF. On the other hand, the PB shall have unrestricted opportunity applying to ATDF.
- 31. Step 2. If the PB is not satisfied with the contractors' solution of his/her complains, further opportunities shall be provided. PB can apply to ATDF directly. All complaints including the outcome and solutions will be properly documented and made available for review, monitoring and evaluation purposes. ATDF shall regularly check the register logbook and the progress in addressing the complainers' comments, as well as shall solve the issues directly forwarded to ATDF. ATDF shall respond to the complaint within 5 days informing the complainer on the possible solution or required additional procedures. The GRM focal point/responsible employee of ATDF will direct the complaint to the respective department (Supervision, examination, environmental and social, procurement) depending on the scope of the complaint.
- 32. Step 3. Should the complainer not be satisfied with the ATDF's solution of his/her complaint, he/ she can apply to Ministry of Territorial Administration and Infrastructure (MTAI).

The person complaining may apply to the courts at any level of the GRM.

#### 4.3 Public Consultation and Communications Plan

33. The purpose of this sub-plan is to document all measures the ATDF, Contractor and Supervising Engineer must implement to maintain the project information disclosure and constant communications with the stakeholders, the project-beneficiaries, NGOs, and other interested groups about the project in compliance with the ADB SPS 2009 and with the Armenian legislation. The Public Consultation and Communications Plan (PCCP) creates a connection between the ATDF, Supervising Engineer and Contractor (and Sub-contractors), and the project beneficiaries (local residents, businesses, and other public) with regard to providing a channel for consulting and advising in advance and during the civil works and possible impacts. This sub-plan aims to

ensure the meaningful involvement of all the stakeholders and raise public awareness through the timely dissemination of information about the program, including construction works and related activities' timetable, employment opportunities and benefits of the project.

- 34. This sub-plan shall contain the general requirements to meet the concerns and interests of all the stakeholders including the local population and request the Contractor to establish an effective GRM.
- 35. For this purpose, the PCCP includes:
  - a. Pre-construction and further regular meetings to provide information and consultation opportunities to public about the project, including informing the public about the GRM and associated procedures.
  - b. GRM to be implemented by the Contractor.
  - c. Information disclosure.
- 36. **Pre-construction meeting.** A pre-construction public meeting will be arranged and held by the Contractor during the mobilization period, immediately after access to the site and the commencement permit for civil works is issued by the ATDF, at least 10 days prior to the start of civil works.
- 37. The Contractor shall attach posters announcing the date, place and purpose of a preconstruction meeting in visible public places and shall distribute among project beneficiaries. Notifications shall provide also contact details.
- 38. The Pre-construction consultation meetings will be held to present and discuss the project, the civil works program, the IEE/EMP, environmental protection and Health & Safety awareness program for the local community, anticipated environmental and social impacts, such as increased dust, noise, temporary road closures and traffic diversions, as well as GRM.
- 39. The Contractor shall address the raised issues to the Supervising Engineer in case the PBs'(in case of an unanticipated impact) comments/ issues are out of the scope of his responsibility. The Contractor shall report on the issues status (solved/ not solved) in the first monthly progress report. The Contractor shall ensure the working feedback mechanism for transparency to the stakeholders; valued sensitive receptors and the project beneficiaries and interested public participation. Details of the meeting attendees and comments shall be recorded by the Contractor and included in the EMP.
- 40. According to the requirements of the Law on Environmental Impact Assessment and Expertise of Armenia, two additional consultations will be organized by ATDF in the frame of preparation for the local EIA and expertise stage. The final SDDR will be disclosed on ATDF (atdf.am) web page after acceptance by ADB. Then it will be disclosed (via email) to all stakeholders including the school administration, community administration offices, regional administration office and the Project Steering Committee which is overseeing the implementation of the project.

## 5. MONITORING AND EVALUATION

41. The ATDF will be responsible for internal involuntary resettlement safeguard monitoring and include a chapter on the involuntary resettlement in the Project semi-annual monitoring reports submitted to ADB for review and approval during the project implementation. The

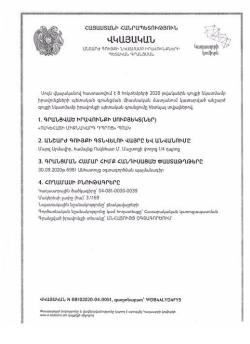
monitoring and reporting will help to identify and address any unanticipated resettlement impacts, addressing timely potential grievances in line with ADB SPS (2009) and laws of RA, and ensure compliance with involuntary resettlement safeguard requirements. Environmental and social safeguards specialists included in the Contractor's team and the Supervising Engineer's team will monitor the compliance status and report to ATDF on monthly bases.

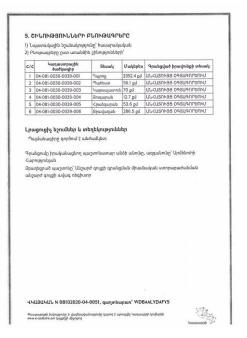
- 42. The main objectives of the monitoring and evaluation (M&E) component of the SDDR are to:
  - Review SDDR monitoring indicators, timelines, procedures, and reporting forms;
  - Preparing recommendations in compliance with the ADB's resettlement policy;
  - Preparing respective recommendation on adjustment of timeliness/terms;
  - Provide recommendations for mitigation measures

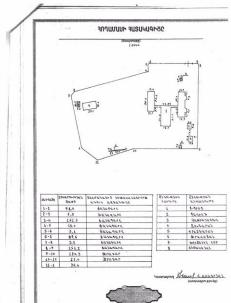
## 6. CONCLUSION

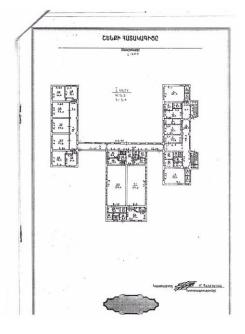
- 43. Reconstruction/retrofitting works will be implemented within the boundaries of the existing school which is a state-owned land plot. The land plot is not used by any other party formally or informally and there are no LAR related impacts in this particular section. There are no operating businesses in 50 meters from the boundaries of the school. The GRM is established and any complaint will be addressed through GRM.
- 44. No involuntary resettlement or indigenous people impact is envisaged under the program, as reconstruction/retrofitting of the school building will be at the existing locations and Armenia is homogeneous in ethnic composition.
- 45. The SSIP's safeguard classification is Category B for the environment, category C for involuntary resettlement, and Category C for indigenous peoples. The safeguards classification will continue for this grant project. At the same time according to Armenian EIA legislation, the EIA and expertise procedure is required for this project.
- 46. Most of the adverse environmental and social impacts during the construction stage, will be site-specific, limited within the range of construction works, and can easily be mitigated through good engineering and housekeeping practices, with specific measures provided in the EMP.
- 47. The project will certainly have essential positive effects on the socio-economic environment through the reconstruction of the mentioned school, at least 355 students will be studying in school buildings meeting the seismic safety standards.

## Annex 1. The ownership certificate of Voskehat School







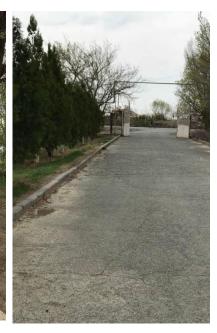


## Annex 2. Photos of the area

## Entrance of the school territory







Front yard







Right side





Left side Non-operating

toilet Boiler house







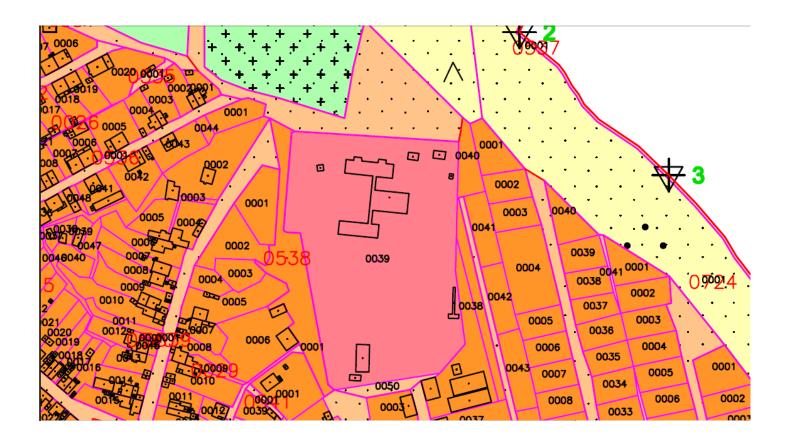
The road in the backward of Houses located 5 m away the territory from the fence



The adjacent land plot located in the right side



Annex 3. Cadastral map of the area



Annex 4. Google map snapshot



## **Annex 5. Report on Public Communication and Consultation**

## 1.1.1 <u>Introductory meeting with the administration of Voskehat settlement of the Vagharshapat community</u>

1. An introductory meeting was held on May 12, 2023, with the administration of Voskehat settlement in the Vagharshapat community. The purpose of the meeting was to inform the community about the Project and provide a brief overview of its environmental and social impacts, along with the proposed mitigation measures. The meeting took place at the Voskehat settlement administrative building and was attended by Mr. Armen Khudabashyan, the administrative head of Voskehat settlement, Mrs. Sophik Petrosyan, acting director of Voskehat Secondary School, Mr. Tigran Oganezov, National Environmental Consultant from ADB, and Mrs. Knarik Grigoryan, Social Specialist from ATDF.

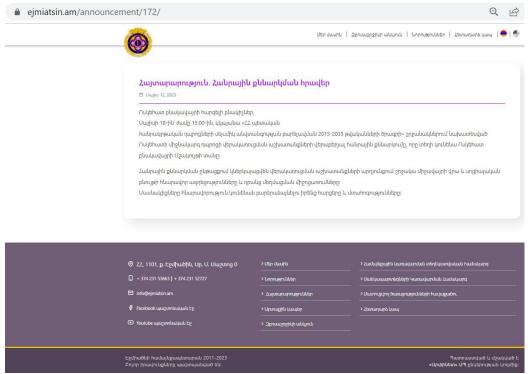


2. The introductory meeting with the community administration provided detailed information about the proposed Project, the progress made in the Initial Environmental Examination process, and the planning of mitigation measures. The head of the impacted settlement was informed about the Project initiators' commitment to organizing public consultation events in accordance with Armenian legislation, particularly the RA Decree N 1325-U "On the procedures of information disclosure and public consultations", and ADB Safeguard Policy requirements on Public Consultation and Information Disclosure.

- 3. The assistance and contribution to ensure effective and meaningful public participation in planned public consultation were requested from the administration of the Voskehat settlement.
- 4. Before conducting the public consultation events, ATDF ensured the timely disclosure of relevant and comprehensive information that is accessible and responsive to the needs of the project beneficiaries, particularly women, disadvantaged, and vulnerable groups.
- 5. The administration representatives pledged to assist in disclosing and disseminating project-related information by placing public consultation advertisements on their websites and posting them in publicly visible areas.
- 6. The following text (non-official translation) of the advertisement was provided to the administration of the impacted community for disclosure and dissemination among affected people and other interested public:
  - "On May 18, 2023, at 3:00 p.m., we invite you to participate in the public hearing on the reconstruction works of Voskehat secondary school planned within the framework of the "2015-2035 program for improving the seismic safety of RA state public schools", which will take place in the Voskehat House of Culture. During the public discussion, possible environmental and social impacts of the reconstruction work, and their mitigation measures will be presented. Participants will have the opportunity to voice their questions and concerns."
- 7. The notice was posted on the Vagharshapat community's official website (picture 1), and their social network webpage (picture 2), as well as prominently displayed in public places such as Voskehat Secondary School, the House of Culture and the administration building of Voskehat settlement (pictures 3-4).

## 1.1.2 Public consultation in Voskehat settlement of the Vagharshapat community

- 8. The public consultation event took place on May 18, 2023, and was organized to meet the requirements outlined in ADB SPS on Public Consultation and Information Disclosure, as well as the provisions of the RA Law on Environmental Impact Assessment and Expertise and RA Decree N 1325-U "On the procedures of information disclosure and public consultations."
- 9. The public consultation was hosted by the Voskehat settlement administration, led by Mr. Armen Khudabashyan, the administrative head of Voskehat settlement. A detailed protocol, including an attendance list and minutes of the event, documented the issues and concerns raised by participants.



Picture 1. Advertisement on the public consultation posted on the Vagharshapat community's official website



Picture 2. Advertisement on the public consultation posted on the Vagharshapat community's social network webpage (Facebook).



Picture 3. Advertisement on the public consultation attached in publicly visible places.



Picture 3. Advertisement on the public consultation attached in publicly visible places.



Picture 4. Advertisement on the public consultation attached in publicly visible places.

## 1.1.3 Protocol on Public Consultation prepared on May 18, 2023

#### **PROTOCOL**

on public consultations on the Initial Environmental Examination of the RECONSTRUCTION OF VOSKEHAT SECONDARY SCHOOL

**Date/ Time** May 18, 2023 / 15:00- 17:00 **Venue** House of Culture event hall

Address Armavir marz, Vagharshapat community, Voskehat settlement

Participants:

1. Mr. Armen Khudabashyan, Administrative Head of the Voskehat settlement of Vagharshapat community

- 2. Mrs. Sophik Petrosyan, Acting Director of the Voskehat Secondary School
- 3. Mr. Tigran Oganezov, National Environmental Consultant, ADB,
- 4. Mrs. Knarik Grigoryan, Social Specialist, ATDF
- 5. Representatives of the Vagharshapat community, Voskehat settlement administration, Voskehat school administration, and teachers, as well as residents of the Voskehat settlement, in total 78 people (see the list in Appendix 1).

**Agenda:** Presentation of the general environmental and social components of the reconstruction project for Voskehat Secondary School.

The public consultation event was opened by Mr. Armen Khudabashyan, the administrative head of Voskehat settlement, who highlighted its purpose: to discuss the reconstruction project of Voskehat Secondary School, to be implemented by ATDF, and address potential environmental and social impacts. Mr. Khudabashyan mentioned that the meeting was organized by ADB and then handed over the floor to Mr. Tigran Oganezov, ADB National Environmental Consultant.

Mr. Tigran Oganezov greeted the participants and informed them that the reconstruction of Voskehat Secondary School will be financed by the grant from Japan Fund for Prosperous and Resilient Asia and Pacific which will complement ADB's SSIP and will be implemented by ATDF. He briefly outlined the agenda for the meeting, stating that after presenting the potential environmental and social impacts, a question-and-answer session would follow to address all queries related to the presented IEE. Mr. Oganezov further informed the participants about the innovative engineering and construction solutions planned for the school, focusing on seismic safety, inclusiveness for people with disabilities, compliance with 21st-century education standards, and the provision of community facilities/spaces after school hours. He assured that most adverse impacts would occur during the construction stage, remain site-specific, and be limited to the Right of Way, with effective mitigation measures outlined in the EMP.

Mr. Oganezov presented the potential environmental impacts that could arise during the project's implementation, emphasizing their limitation to the construction period, as well as their local and temporary nature. He highlighted the expected impact on ambient air quality due to dust generated by earthworks and exhaust emissions from operating machinery and equipment. To mitigate these impacts, the EMP includes measures such as regular water spraying of surfaces in construction areas. Construction equipment would also be a significant source of noise and vibration, as well as air emissions of harmful substances. Mr. Oganezov assured the attendees that the project footprint would be confined to the existing Secondary School territory, without expanding into new lands. He mentioned the importance of preserving topsoil within the allocated project footprint for future landscaping purposes and outlined the mitigation measures to prevent soil contamination from fuel, oil, and other liquid materials and waste.

Another environmental impact discussed was waste generation, which, if not properly managed, can lead to pollution, contamination, and aesthetic degradation. Mr. Oganezov detailed the types of waste generated during construction and presented the proposed management methods and mitigation measures.

The impacts on social systems are of paramount importance in this project, given their sensitivity. These impacts encompass any adverse disturbances or nuisances arising from the civil works involved in the reconstruction of Voskehat Secondary School. The project will directly affect the school's staff, teachers, and pupils, as well as the residents of Voskehat settlement within the Vagharshapat community. Additionally, the proximity of a few residential houses, agricultural land plots, and a cemetery near the school raises the possibility of temporary indirect impacts on the local population. Mr. Oganezov has outlined a comprehensive set of planned measures in the EMP aimed to address these concerns. These measures are designed to avoid, prevent, and mitigate any negative impact on the local population. By adhering to these plans, the project aims to minimize any adverse effects and ensure the well-being of the affected community members throughout the reconstruction process.

The reconstruction of the Voskehat secondary school will also increase the traffic on the adjacent local roads during the construction stage during the transportation of trucks, machinery, and construction materials to and from the construction area. Any long-term occupation and/ or blocking of the existing roads and pedestrian walkways is not envisaged. Nevertheless, some safety risks for the public and passers-by exist. Public safety might be endangered, and the access roads to the residential houses and businesses might be blocked and made difficult. Mr. Oganezov informed the residents that to minimize and avoid this impact the routine mitigations during the construction are focused on the safety of the public, minimization of congestion, and other disturbances to the traffic.

At the second part of the meeting the ATDF social specialist Mrs. Knarik Grigoryan presented the purpose and the methodology of social and resettlement impact assessment, the result of the survey conducted under the DDR exercise, the Project GRM structure, and the information channel to apply to the Project GRM.

Following the presentation, a question-and-answer session commenced, providing an opportunity for participants to engage and share their queries and suggestions. The following questions and suggestions were raised by the attendees:

✓ The teacher of military science expressed concerns regarding the poor condition of the building and questioned the feasibility of restoring the supporting structures.

In response, Mr. Oganezov acknowledged the concern and assured the participants that a seismic expertise assessment of the building would be conducted. Based on the findings of the assessment, a decision would be made regarding the raised issue.

✓ The Administrative head of the settlement inquired about the inclusion of an irrigation system in the school's design. This query was prompted by the current problems the school faces in irrigating existing trees. Additionally, it was mentioned that a deep well is present on the school premises, albeit currently unused.

Mr. Oganezov addressed this concern by stating that the design of the irrigation system would be based on the technical conditions specified by the Community and other responsible entities involved in the project.

✓ A proposal was made by the participants to restore the dilapidated shooting range.

Mr. Oganezov assured the attendees that their request would be duly considered within the framework of the sub-project's design.

A request was also put forward by the participants to construct a stone fence to demarcate the school and the cemetery. Additionally, they proposed placing the new school building on the opposite side of the land plot, away from the cemetery. Recognizing the importance of these suggestions, it was agreed that these matters would be further discussed and potentially included in the Detailed Design phase.

By actively addressing these questions and suggestions, the meeting fostered a collaborative environment where concerns were acknowledged, and participants were assured that their input would be considered during the decision-making process. The project team demonstrated a commitment to conducting necessary assessments and considering technical requirements to effectively address issues raised by stakeholders.

The project team recognized the importance of these suggestions and acknowledged the need to involve the engineering and design team in the discussion. Their expertise and insights will be invaluable in assessing the feasibility and practicality of incorporating the suggestions into the overall design of the project.

## List of participants

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Photos of the public consultation



