

SUPPORTING DOCUMENT I

Piloting Environmental and Social Sustainability (ESS)- Interim Guide

*Assessing Situations and Needs
at the level of individual UN entities*

Project Management	Inter-Agency ESS Drafting Group, with support of the EMG	
Duration	16 months (September 2014-December 2015)	
Budget	Cash	USD 242,000
	In-kind contributions	Staff time of the support team equivalent to an input of up to 20 % by 4-5 staff members during 16 months.

I. Context and rationale

In response to a request from the Senior Officials of the EMG, the Inter-Agency Environmental and Social Sustainability (ESS) Drafting Group of the Consultative Process on Environmental and Social Sustainability Measures developed an Interim Guide to support the implementation of “Framework for Advancing Environmental and Social Sustainability in the UN System”¹ (hereafter referred to as the Framework). The Guide is intended to raise awareness about environmental and social sustainability (ESS) measures that could be adopted at the individual agency level, and to sensitize staff about the implications of and options for implementing them.

To do this, a process and tools were developed for use by agencies in assessing the extent to which they have in place the minimum building blocks necessary to support the implementation of ESS measures as defined in the Framework.

¹ <http://www.unemg.org/index.php/a-framework-for-advancing-environmental-and-social-sustainability-in-the-un-system>

Some agencies already have considerable experience with the use of some of the ESS measures outlined in the Framework. However, few have in place structures that utilize/leverage all of them in a coherent and systematic manner.

In the process of developing the Guide it became clear that, irrespective of where each agency is vis-à-vis the Framework, all agencies would benefit from a more systematic sharing of lessons learned.

The Guide was considered “interim” as the process and minimum elements proposed within it have not previously been articulated. A pilot was proposed as an opportunity to “field test” the Guide and identify areas for improvement. The pilot testing would also generate some insights and lessons learned that could be useful in facilitating overall uptake and interest in the Guide and the wider ESS Framework. An inter-agency pilot support team would be constituted to advise and guide the organizations participating in the pilot, thereby leveraging experience and resources within the UN system.

This Project Concept Note has been developed by UNDP, WHO, WFP and UNEP in collaboration with the EMG Secretariat.

II. Project objective and the key outputs

The pilot project will support and guide the participating agencies in their efforts to initiate and implement Environmental and Social Sustainability measures internally, helping them to build capacity in this regard and facilitating information and experience sharing between UN entities at different stages of the process. The pilot will also help participating agencies recognize and understand the relevance and implications of moving towards sustainability in their institution, incorporating and implementing sustainability measures in their daily operations.

In support of the implementation of the ESS Framework, this pilot focuses to:

- Have a snapshot overview of interests, challenges, approach and tools that UN agencies have in implementing ESS in their own agencies;
- Determining strategic value of ESS with respect to organizational mandate and key priority areas for fast-tracking implementation;
- Identify opportunities for roll out, communications and buy-in of the ESS Framework among the UN entities.

The principle outcomes and associated outputs of the project are described in the table below.

Table 1: Result Framework

Objective	Increasing number of UN agencies institutionalize ESS measures
Outcome	<ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Demonstrated interest and commitment by UN agencies to implement ESS measures2. The Interim-Guide is employed by diverse UN agencies

	Outputs	Assumptions
Output 1	Project implementation strategy and management structure established	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Pilot support team receives backing from their own agencies to participate in the project
	<p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishment of an interagency pilot support team comprised of staff members of participating UN entities and representatives of agencies that already have substantial portions of an ESS frameworks in place, supported by the EMG Secretariat Hold an inception meeting to establish the overall approach to the stocktaking exercise, agree on a common set of tools for data collection and the conduct of key informant interviews and a communications network among the team members; Closely communicate with the EMG and arrange regular feeding into the relevant high-level consultation meetings. 	
Output 2	A balanced mix and range of UN agencies with significantly different governance structures and mandates apply the Interim Guide to conduct self-assessments to inform the development that implementation plans.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> There is sufficient interest to achieve the necessary diversity of UN agencies participating in the pilot. Participating agencies sustain their commitment to working with the pilot team throughout and develop tailored implementation plans. Participating agencies appoint a contact person with sufficient decision-making authority during and after the project period
	<p>Activities</p> <p>Prepare and disseminate an invitation to the agencies and develop a short memo to solicit interest of the potential agencies for the testing;</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Select agencies with diverse governance structures and operational mandates; Contract a consultant to facilitate and document the process Support each participating agency to analyze the current status of readiness (the extent to which the ESS building blocks are in place) and identify gaps against the Interim Guide; Support each participating agency to review the existing policy documents and administrative procedures to assess coverage of specific issues; Hold a series of interviews and other forms of consultations with key informants on the minimum elements and approaches; Have monthly video conferences among the team members to review/assess the progress made and challenges faced, and make suggestions as needed; Documentation of insights about the utility of the Interim Guide and related assessment tools based on the specific UN entity experience; Provide feedback to the participating agencies on gaps, opportunities and value for implementing appropriate ESS measures; Support participating UN agencies in the development of agency-specific implementation plans to take the initiative forward; Present the results to a group of key stakeholders within the participating UN entity 	

Output 3	Finalized Guide based on lessons learned in the pilot	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consideration and support from the senior members of the EMG and the wider UN system for implementing the recommendations arising from pilot testing
<p>Activities</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Conduct a survey on the agencies' concerns and ideas with regard to the use of the Interim Guide • Compile and analyze case-experiences to draw out lessons learned and experiences; • Hold consultation among participating agencies and the project team on the extent to which the Interim Guide is fit-for-purpose and where/if modifications or gaps need to be addressed and lessons learned drawn from the experiences; • Revise, edit and publish the Guide. • Capture practical tips on resources available and share the knowledge through the Consultative Process, and effectively communicate knowledge about the Guide and ESS measures; • Prepare a progress report to SOM21 on the progress, status and next steps of the project. 		

III. Criteria for participating UN entities

Mandates and operational modalities of UN entities are wide-ranging over peacekeeping and security, human rights, economic development, humanitarian assistance, and over specialized technical agencies, such as UNU, WMO, WIPO, UPU and so on. There are also differences in terms of their delivery mechanisms. Some are highly operational at the field level and some are normative and mainly feed assessment and knowledge to governments, UN agencies and other intergovernmental entities.

This pilot project, while fully recognizing the diversity, has limited time and resources available to assess the applicability of the ESS Guide to all UN agencies. Also, it will depend crucially on the interest and commitment of the participating agencies. While recognizing such constraints, the project management team will endeavor to respect the following criteria for selecting the participating agencies:

- Type of operational models and mandates, e.g. normative, operational, financial (e.g. those with lending or grant-giving portfolios), or a combination;
- Mix of agencies with explicit environmental mandates with agencies that have more explicit social mandates;
- Variation in the sizes of agencies so as to include the ones with significant/predominant field presence as well as some with a more concentrated/centralized presence;

- A mix of UN agencies with significantly different governance structures, e.g. programme based agencies versus specialize agencies
- Level of agency experiences with the use of ESS measures – should include those that have implemented ESS measures as well as those that have not

IV. Projected timeframe and budget

It is envisaged that around 6 entities would participate in the pilot, and that the activities would be conducted sequentially to allow for exchange of experiences and, where desired and appropriate, through cross-participation in agency specific activities.²

It is estimated that USD 242,000 will need to be mobilized mainly for the following activities:

Expert consultancy support (6 to 9 months to support the delivery of Outputs 2 and 3, i.e. for capturing the learning and feedback from the first round of pilots, facilitating and documenting the process, finalizing the Interim Guide and analyzing the implications of adopting the Framework at the agency level).

- Travel and per-diem for the expert consultant and one project team member to the participating agencies. Economic efficiency will be explored by designing the team's trips based on the geography of the agencies and scheduling of the visits;
- Inception and final meetings of the UN interagency working group participating in the pilot ;
- Printing and production costs associated with development of the situational assessment tools/materials

The proposed work-plan for the pilot task is shown in Table 2 below.

² Depending on resource availability, and if considered appropriate/desirable for the participating UN agency, interested members of the UN interagency working group can be set up to support the pilot could also participate in the stocktaking exercises conducted in other agencies.

Table 2: Work-plan

Output/Activities	Months							
	2	4	6	8	10	12	14	16
Establish the project management structure	■	■						
Inception meeting			■					
Solicit Agencies' interest and participation	■							
Select and finalize participating agencies		■						
Contract and manage a consultant		■	■	■	■	■	■	
Review of existing policy documents of the participating agencies and analyze the current status of readiness of each agency against the Interim Guide				■				
Interviews/consultation with participating agencies				■	■			
Survey and interviews on grievance and financial implication of ESS implementation					■	■		
Monthly video conference among the team	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Documentation of insights	■	■	■	■	■	■	■	■
Analyze the status & gaps and other findings					■	■		
Provide feedback to agencies on gaps, opportunities					■	■		
Present the results to a group of key stakeholders within the participating UN entity						■	■	■
Assess the Guide and other related tools						■	■	
Draw out lessons learned and experiences					■	■	■	
Consultation for finalization of the Guide							■	
Print and electronic publication							■	■
Develop Recommendations for wider roll out							■	
Knowledge management and communication							■	■
Subtotal								
Contingency budget (10%)								
Total								