

Semi-Annual Environmental and Social Safeguards Monitoring Report

PUBLIC

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Semi-Annual Report (December 2024- June 2025)
July 2025

Armenia: Climate-Adaptive Food Security Enhancement Project

Prepared by the Project Implementation Team for the Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Armenia and the Asian Development Bank (ADB)

ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

Acronym	Full Name
ADB	Asian Development Bank
AM	Accountability Mechanism
AP	Affected Person
CAFSEP	Climate-Adaptive Food Security Enhancement Project
CCoP	Construction Code of Practice
DDR	Due Diligence Report
EA	Executing Agency
EDDR	Environmental Due Diligence Report
E&S	Environmental and social
EIA	Environmental Impact Assessment
EOJ	Embassy of Japan
FI	Financial Intermediary
GAAP	Gender Assessment and Action Plan
GAP	Gender Action Plan
GRM	Grievance Redress Mechanism
GRC	Grievance Redress Committee
IDCBC	Institutional Development and Capacity Building Consultant
IEE	Initial Environmental Examination
IP	Indigenous Peoples
IRI	Involuntary Resettlement Impact
JFPR	Japan Fund for Prosperous and Resilient Asia and the Pacific
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
LHFSC	Logistics Hubs Feasibility Study Consultant
MOE	Ministry of Economy of the Republic of Armenia
MoM	Minutes of Meeting
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
OHS	Occupational Health and Safety
PAM	Project Administration Manual
PIT	Project Implementation Team
PPE	Personal Protective Equipment
PV	Photovoltaic
RDAC	Rural Development and Agriculture Consultant
REA	Rapid Environmental Assessment
RIPP	Resettlement and Indigenous Peoples Plan
RP	Resettlement Plan
SDDR	Social Due Diligence Report
SPS	Safeguard Policy Statement (ADB, 2009)
TA	Technical Assistance
TOR	Terms of Reference
WFP	World Food Programme

NOTE

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The Climate-Adaptive Food Security Enhancement Project (CAFSEP) supports climate-adaptive food security in Shirak and Tavush provinces of Armenia by targeting vulnerable communities through renewable energy solutions, climate-smart agriculture, and institutional capacity development. The project is classified as Category C for both environmental impact and involuntary resettlement and remains fully compliant with the Asian Development Bank's (ADB) Safeguard Policy Statement (SPS, 2009). No significant environmental or social (E&S) risks or impacts were identified during this reporting period.

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

1. The CAFSEP is funded by the Japan Fund for Prosperous and Resilient Asia and the Pacific (JFPR), administered by the ADB, and implemented by the Ministry of Economy (MOE) of the Republic of Armenia. The total JFPR grant financing is USD 3.00 million, covering equipment, materials, consulting and non-consulting services, project management, and contingencies. The Government of Armenia contributes USD 0.53 million in taxes, duties, and in-kind support such as office space for the Project Implementation Team (PIT).
2. The project aims to strengthen food security in Armenia through the promotion of climate-resilient agricultural practices, renewable energy technologies, and institutional capacity development. Targeting Shirak and Tavush provinces, the project focuses on improving the livelihoods of vulnerable communities by supporting small-scale solar photovoltaic (PV) infrastructure, introducing sustainable agricultural models, and enhancing community-level resilience to climate change impacts.
3. This Semi-Annual Environmental Compliance and Social Safeguards Monitoring Report covers the period from December 2024 to June 2025. It documents safeguard activities and compliance monitoring conducted during this reporting period under ADB's SPS, 2009. The project is categorized as Category C for both environmental and involuntary resettlement safeguards, indicating minimal or no significant E&S impacts are anticipated.

1.2 Project Scope and Salient Features

4. The CAFSEP aims to strengthen climate resilience in agriculture for Shirak and Tavush provinces via:
 - (i) **Output 1: Climate-resilient energy solutions established and further enabled.** The output will develop renewable energy solutions for at least 10 vulnerable settlements in Shirak and Tavush provinces. The cost savings gained by transitioning from non-renewable to renewable energy will facilitate the uptake of climate-resilient agricultural practices and climate adaptation measures by municipal authorities in both provinces. The output will include: (i) installation of solar stations with small-scale solar PV capacity to reduce grid dependency; (ii) establishing the revolving funds in selected communities for accumulating savings from the energy costs; (iii) developing a list of priority investments based on community needs, municipal and MOE priorities to support gender-responsive climate change adaptation and food security, that would be financed by revolving funds.
 - (ii) **Output 2: Climate-smart agricultural technologies for food security enhanced.** The output will mainstream climate-smart agriculture at the local level through community

engagements and planning. The output will include: (i) selection of approximately 230 beneficiary households for gender-responsive climate-smart interventions to support agriculture and income-generating livelihood subprojects; (ii) grant financing of supply and installation of climate-smart agricultural equipment and small-scale value chain inputs for selected households including women; (iii) trainings and capacity building of the selected households to support climate-smart agriculture, business planning, and financial management.

- (iii) **Output 3: The Capacity of the Ministry of Economy for climate-smart agricultural planning is enhanced.** The project will address MOE's capacity and knowledge gaps to scale up investments towards supporting climate resilience. The project will take advantage of synergies with the technical assistance on Improved Decision-Making for Climate-Resilient Development in Asia and the Pacific, which aims to scale up adaptation through investment planning and implementation of bankable projects. The capacity building will be anchored on sector needs and requirements to enhance climate adaptation investment planning. The output will include mainstreaming climate adaptation in agriculture investments.
- (iv) **Implementation of technical assistance (TA 10300-ARM).** The Asian Development Bank (ADB) directly engaged the consultants for the project implementation support. The World Food Programme (WFP) Armenia was engaged through the ADB-administered TA 10300-ARM (\$150,000) to serve as the project implementation advisor to the PIT of the MOE. WFP will provide five key staff to conduct capacity building activities to strengthen PIT on community engagement, selection of sites and household beneficiaries, asset identification and procurement, gender mainstreaming, and project monitoring and evaluation.

5. The project initially identified 10 public buildings in target settlements for potential solar PV installation. Parallel to this, approximately 230 vulnerable households will be shortlisted for participation in climate-smart agriculture activities, subject to safeguards screening and eligibility verification. The location maps for selected settlements within the two provinces are provided below.

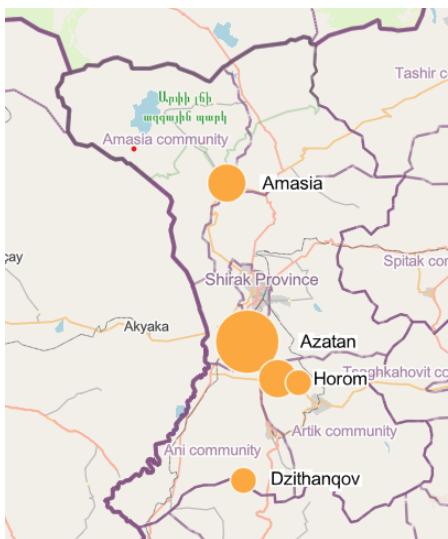


Figure 1: Map showing the Shirak Province

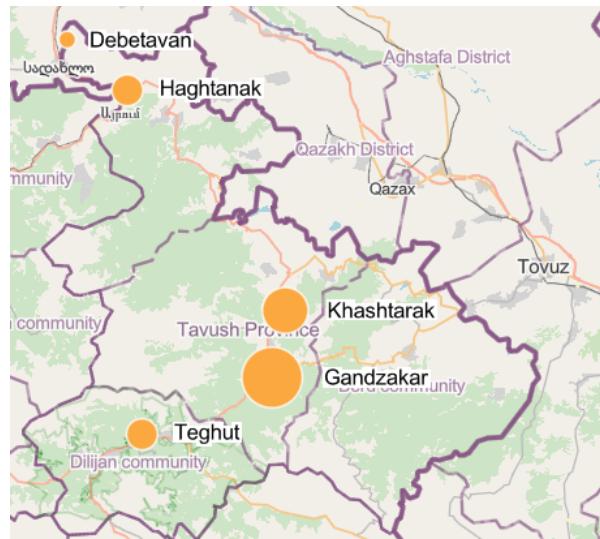


Figure 2: Map showing the Tavush Province

1.3 Overall Project Progress Status

6. During the reporting period from December 2024 to June 2025, the CAFSEP recorded substantial progress across institutional setup, community engagement, beneficiary selection, safeguards integration, and capacity building.

7. The PIT was fully established within the MoE, with the recruitment of key staff including the PIT Director, Procurement Specialist, Financial Manager, Disbursement Specialist, Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) and Gender Specialist, Office Manager/Translator, and the E&S Safeguards Specialist. The MOE provided office space for the PIT as part of its in-kind contribution, which became fully operational during this reporting period.

8. The settlements selection activities were launched in Shirak and Tavush provinces. Community responses were collected through an online self-assessment questionnaire platform. Based on the results, several joint field missions were conducted in March and April 2025 by the PIT, the WFP, and local authorities. Field visits assessed the technical readiness of settlements, particularly the condition of community-owned buildings suitable for solar PV installation, infrastructure accessibility, and initial E&S safeguards conditions. The selection process applied screening criteria such as roof condition and exclusion of asbestos (initial screening), accessibility and potential environmental risk, and availability of community-owned buildings suitable for project interventions. Based on this participatory and consultative process, a list of 10 target settlements was finalized. The Institutional Development and Capacity Building Consultant (IDCBC) initiated feasibility assessments for each of the selected community buildings to evaluate their technical suitability and prepare corresponding Terms of Reference (TORs) for upcoming procurement.

9. Additionally, on 2-4 and 9-11 June 2025, the project team organized 10 public consultations in selected settlements in Shirak and Tavush provinces to disclose project objectives, collect feedback, and introduce the safeguards approach. The ADB's social safeguard specialist also attended the meetings in Shirak province on June 3, 2025. The Rural Development and Agriculture Consultant (RDAC) and Institutional Development and Capacity Building Consultant (IDCBC) firms also launched field-level institutional commencement activities during this time.

10. To enhance implementation capacity, the ADB conducted multiple safeguards-related training sessions in January 2025 (both online and in-person) and June 2025.

11. A Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) was formally established, comprising clearly defined institutional responsibilities across consultants, the PIT, MOE, and ADB. GRM access channels such as dedicated phone lines, email addresses, and printed posters were disclosed in the selected communities. As of the end of this reporting period, no grievances have been received.

1.4 Consultant and Contractor

12. All consultant recruitments were conducted by ADB procurement guidelines. The TORs for these positions included specific roles and responsibilities related to safeguard measures, ensuring their early integration into project implementation.

- Rural Development and Agriculture Consultant (RDAC): Contract signed on 30 April 2025.
 - Contract awarded to Consortium "Avenue Consulting Group" LLC and EREK AR STRATEGY LLC.
 - "Avenue Consulting Group" LLC contacts

- Dr. Karen Martirosyan, Director and Shareholder
k.martirosyan@avenueconsulting.am
- EREK AR STRATEGY LLC
Mr. Mkrtich Ayvazyan, Director
erekarstrategy@yahoo.com
- Institutional Development and Capacity Building Consultant (IDCBC): Contract signed on 17 June 2025.
 - Contract awarded to "CIVITTA AM" CJSC
Mrs. Sona Grigoryan, Chief Executive Officer
sona.grigoryan@civitta@com
- Logistics Hubs Feasibility Study Consultant (LHFSC):
 - Contract will be awarded in July 2025 to JV "Avenue Consulting Group" LLC and Armenian Branch of "Agriconsulting Europa" LLC (Armenia)
 - "Avenue Consulting Group" LLC contacts:
Dr. Karen Martirosyan, Director and Shareholder
k.martirosyan@avenueconsulting.am
 - Armenian Branch of "Agriconsulting Europa" LLC (Armenia)
Mr. Lorenzo Grazioli, Head of the executive body
L.GRAZIOLI@aesagroup.eu

2. SAFEGUARD PROVISIONS

2.1 Safeguard Provisions in Bidding Document

13. During the procurement process for the RDAC firm, the PIT E&S Safeguards Specialist revised the TOR to ensure alignment with ADB's SPS, 2009, including the requirements for the Environmental Due Diligence Report (EDDR) with Construction Code of Practice (CCoP), and Social Due Diligence Report (SDDR). The project was confirmed as Category C for both environmental and involuntary resettlement impacts. All safeguard requirements were incorporated before the RDAC contract signing to ensure full compliance and to prevent any adverse E&S impacts during implementation.

14. In addition, safeguard requirements were embedded in the TORs for all consulting services engaged under the project. Consultant selection criteria prioritized firms with demonstrated experience in implementing ADB SPS 2009 requirements, conducting field-based due diligence, and applying participatory approaches.

2.2 Safeguard Provisions in the Contract Agreement

15. All contract agreements signed with consultant firms under the project include clearly defined safeguard obligations. These contractual provisions ensure full compliance with the ADB's SPS, 2009, and relevant national legislation. Consultant firms are contractually required to:

- Comply with ADB's SPS (2009) and applicable Armenian E&S regulations throughout the project.
- Support the PIT in screening community sites and beneficiary households for E&S risks.
- Prepare safeguards deliverables, including community scoring sheets and screening checklists in line with EDDR, with CCoP and SDDR.
- Provide safeguards training, awareness-raising sessions, and ongoing technical mentoring to PIT staff.
- Assist in the implementation and operationalization of the GRM, and support consultations and disclosure activities.
- Monitor safeguards compliance during beneficiary selection and subsequent implementation phases.
- Submit regular reports detailing progress on safeguards activities.

16. These contractual requirements ensure that safeguards considerations are fully integrated during the preparatory stages of project implementation. Physical works may only proceed once E&S safeguards due diligence is completed, documented, and approved. This approach helps maintain continuous compliance with ADB and national safeguards standards.

3. STATUS OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ASSESSMENTS

3.1. Requirements in PAM

17. According to the Project Administration Manual (PAM), the CAFSEP is classified as Category C for both environmental and involuntary resettlement safeguards. This categorization reflects the project's minimal or no adverse E&S impacts.

18. As outlined in PAM Section VI (Safeguards), the project does not require the preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment (EIA), Initial Environmental Examination (IEE), or Resettlement Plan (RP), as it has been confirmed as Category C for both environmental and involuntary resettlement impacts. The EDDR with CCoP and the SDDR have already been prepared and disclosed on ADB web site¹. Instead, the PAM requires Rapid Environmental Assessment (REA) and Involuntary Resettlement Impact (IRI) screening of the 10 selected community buildings for solar PV installation, as well as the screening of 230 households, to be completed before any procurement or physical works.

19. ADB and PIT will review these checklists before the commencement of any civil works, including the installation of solar PV. The due diligence process ensures that the project continues to meet its Category C classification criteria and that no significant environmental or involuntary resettlement impacts are triggered.

20. The PIT, with support from technical consultants, is responsible for ensuring that all safeguard requirements specified in the PAM are fulfilled before implementation of civil works.

3.2. Status of safeguard requirement implementation

¹ <https://www.adb.org/projects/57088-001/main>

21. According to the Consulting firms' deliverables from the table below, highlight the CAFSEP status deliverables of the safeguard requirements.

Table 2: Status of safeguard requirement implementation under the CAFSEP

No.	Deliverable	Milestone (counted from the first day after contract signing)	Status of safeguard requirement implementation
Rural Development and Agriculture Consultant (Contract signed on 30 April 2025)			
1	Inception report	1 month	Approved (Safeguard requirements incorporated)
2	Report with the details of selection and the list of selected (a) 200 households for backyard orchard establishment, and (b) 30 households for grant financing of income-generating projects in the 10 vulnerable communities	3 months	Ongoing (Selection of the 230 households' application form created with safeguard requirements)
3	Technical specifications for the procurement of similar packages of goods and services identified during the selection of households	Within 4 months after submission of the Inception report	Pending (REA and IRI screening checklists of all 230 households will be completed before procurement)
4	Report with details on the conduction of at least 2 trainings and the development of training modules/materials	9 months	Pending
5	Midterm report on previous work	11 months	Pending
6	Report with details on the conduction of at least 2 trainings and the development of training modules/materials	17 months	Pending
7	Draft final report	19 months	Pending
8	Final report	20 months	Pending
Institutional Development and Capacity Building Consultant (Contract signed on 17 June 2025)			
1	Inception report with proposed methodology for conducting the assignment	2 months	Ongoing
2	Quarterly Report on Armenia's renewable energy potential in rural areas and recommendations on developing the most promising renewable energy projects	3 months	Pending
3	Quarterly Report on the development of ToRs for the installation of a 40 kW solar station in each community and developing solar panel installation guides and training, as well as on the analysis of the current government strategies and priorities	6 months	Ongoing (Activities are based on the technical assessment of the initially selected community buildings, after which the REA and IRI screening checklists for all 10 selected buildings will be completed before procurement.)

4	Quarterly Report on Review of the climate financing opportunities and agricultural logistics	9 months	Pending
5	Quarterly Report on Review of the current food security situation and government strategies and interventions	12 months	Pending
6	Midterm report	12 months	Pending
7	Quarterly Report on Recommendations and support on climate-adaptation and food security planning, Support on developing investment projects, Support on developing logistics hubs	15 months	Pending
8	Draft final report	18 months	Pending
9	Final report	20 days (after the Client accepts the Draft final report)	Pending
Logistics Hubs Feasibility Study Consultant (Contract awarded)			
1	Inception report	1 month	Pending
2	Report on the identification of potential locations and a proposal for the scale (size, capacity, etc.) of potential logistics hubs.	3 months	Pending
3	Report on the preparation of preliminary designs and cost estimates for logistics hubs based on the proposed scale	6 months	Pending
4	Midterm report on previous work, including the preliminary financing plan(s) and economic analysis of each hub	12 months	Pending
5	Draft Final Feasibility Study Report	16 months	Pending
6	Final Feasibility Study Report	18 months	Pending

4. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENT

4.1. Safeguard Unit and Staffing in the Project

22. The PIT was fully established within the MoE, with the recruitment of key staff including the PIT Director, Procurement Specialist, Financial Manager, Disbursement Specialist, M&E and Gender Specialist, Office Manager/Translator, and the E&S Safeguards Specialist. The safeguards unit functions within PIT's structure, reporting directly to the PIT Director.

23. For ADB safeguards compliance, the following personnel are responsible:

- Ruzanna Voskanyan, PIT E&S Safeguards Specialist (Email: ruzanna.voskanyan@mineconomy.am) is responsible for reviewing project sites for E&S safeguards eligibility; ensuring the preparation and implementation of REA/IRI checklists; including the CCoP in bidding documents and contracts; conducting safeguards monitoring; preparing and disclosing safeguard reports and due diligence documentation; organizing public consultations; ensuring necessary clearances and permits; facilitating the GRM process; and ensuring full compliance with ADB's SPS, 2009 and national regulations.

- Eduard Anastasyan, PIT M&E and Gender Specialist (Email: eduard.anastasyan@mineconomy.am), is responsible for gender mainstreaming, monitoring implementation of the Gender Assessment Action Plan (GAAP), and ensuring the inclusion of gender-sensitive indicators and beneficiary participation across project activities.
- From the RDAC firm, Lilit Petrosyan is the focal person for environmental and social safeguards (Email: projectrdac@gmail.com).

4.2. Record of Safeguard Unit/Desk Meetings

24. During the reporting period, several meetings were held to coordinate E&S safeguards activities. These included consultations among the ADB, PIT, WFP, the MOE, and the consulting firms RDAC and IDCBC. Discussions covered screening procedures, inception deliverables, stakeholder engagement planning, and project implementation alignment. A summary of key safeguard-related meetings is provided below.

Table 3: Record of Safeguard Unit/Desk Meetings (December – June 2025)

Date	Participants	Purpose / Agenda	Remarks
19 Feb., 2025	PIT, WFP	Coordination meeting on project activities and safeguards integration	Joint review
14 March, 2025	ADB, PIT	Review of CAFSEP progress and safeguards planning	Online meeting
18–19 March, 2025	PIT, WFP, RDAC	Site visits to Shirak and Tavush; consultation with local administration authorities	Field verification
Apr., June 2025	PIT, RDAC	Inception report coordination, safeguards integration, and settlements selection strategy	Ongoing review
2–4 June, 2025	PIT, WFP, RDAC, IDCBC	Public consultations in Shirak Province	Completed
9–11 June, 2025	PIT, WFP, RDAC, IDCBC	Public consultations in Tavush Province	Completed
17 June, 2025	PIT, WFP, RDAC	Safeguards and inception report review meeting	Internal coordination

4.3. Safeguards Training for Environment and Social Safeguard Staff

25. During the reporting period, the PIT E&S Safeguards Specialist actively participated in several capacity-building events organized by the ADB. These trainings aimed to enhance institutional knowledge and ensure alignment with ADB's SPS, 2009. Key activities included:

- Participation on 15 January 2025, ADB online training on Construction Completion Environmental Audit and Reporting Procedures.

- Attendance at ADB's training sessions on E&S Safeguards Procedures in Project Implementation in January 2025.
- Participation in the Project Management Training Workshop held in Dilijan from 11 to 13 June 2025, facilitated by ADB.

26. In addition, the PIT E&S Safeguards Specialist conducted a targeted training session for the RDAC team. This training covered ADB safeguard requirements, project-specific E&S procedures, and staff responsibilities related to household-level screening and documentation (Refer to the Safeguards Training Minutes of Meeting in Annex 1).

5. STATUS OF GRANT COVENANT

27. All safeguard-related grant covenants outlined in the Financing Agreement have been fully complied with during the reporting period. Environmental and involuntary resettlement impacts, assessments have been integrated into the household and community-level screening process. A functioning GRM has been established and publicly disclosed. Safeguards monitoring and reporting have been carried out in compliance with ADB's SPS 2009 requirements.

Table 4: Status of Grant Covenant

Covenant	Compliance Status
Safeguard categorization confirmed (Cat. C)	Compliant
PIT safeguard staffing maintained	Compliant
GRM is established and functioning	Compliant
E&S Safeguards monitoring report	Ongoing

6. GOVERNMENT CLEARANCE

28. No physical construction activities were undertaken during the current reporting period. Accordingly, government clearances such as those related to spoil disposal, installation of Solar PV stations, or associated infrastructure were not required during this phase. All necessary permits and clearances will be secured before the commencement of any civil works. The PIT will ensure timely coordination with relevant national and local authorities to comply with all applicable regulatory requirements at each project site.

7. Public Participation and Consultation

29. During the reporting period (December 2024 – June 2025), public consultation meetings were conducted in the target provinces of Shirak and Tavush as part of the safeguards' information disclosure and early engagement process. A total of 10 consultation meetings were held across selected beneficiary settlements (please see Table 5 below).

30. These consultations took place in the following settlements. Participation figures were

gender-disaggregated to ensure compliance with ADB's inclusion requirements and to track the effectiveness of community engagement across both women and men.

Table 5: Public Consultation Summary by Settlement and Participant Breakdown by Gender

Province	Settlement	Date	Participants (Women/Men)
Shirak	Dzithankov	02 June 2025	22 women / 18 men
Shirak	Amasia	03 June 2025	20 women / 22 men
Shirak	Azatan	03 June 2025	59 women / 19 men
Shirak	Horom	04 June 2025	10 women / 45 men
Shirak	Nor Kyanq	04 June 2025	24 women / 18 men
Tavush	Teghut	09 June 2025	16 women / 17 men
Tavush	Khashtarak	10 June 2025	17 women / 17 men
Tavush	Gandzaqar	10 June 2025	20 women / 18 men
Tavush	Haghtanak	11 June 2025	8 women / 23 men
Tavush	Debedavan	11 June 2025	29 women / 16 men
Total			225 women / 218 men

31. The meetings aimed to inform community members about:

- The objectives and support components of CAFSEP.
- Environmental and social safeguards requirements under ADB SPS 2009.
- Key eligibility criteria and application procedures for household and agri-business support.
- The grievance redress mechanism (GRM).
- REA and IRI screening processes and land eligibility conditions (e.g., land ownership, irrigation access, prohibition of tree cutting, etc.).

32. The consultations were attended by PIT staff, WFP representatives, RDAC and IDCBC experts, and local authorities. The Environmental and Social Safeguard Specialist presented relevant safeguard measures and mitigation strategies. Community members raised questions regarding eligibility, co-financing, the use of existing orchards, and the availability of infrastructure support etc. These issues were clarified during the question-and-answer sessions.

33. Overall, the consultations were well-attended and inclusive, ensuring meaningful stakeholder participation and the dissemination of safeguards information at the early stage of project implementation. (Refer to the Public Consultations Minutes of Meetings attached in Annex 2).

8. GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM

8.1. GRM Established

34. The GRM has been fully established with a multi-tier structure involving the contractor (upon mobilization), PIT, MOE, and ADB. Responsibilities are clearly defined and documented.

35. Consultation during the construction period is a requirement under the ADB SPS, 2009. Key

requirements include:

- i) Communicating with the public to provide information and conduct consultations about the project; and
- ii) Establishing a GRM, to be implemented by the Contractor, which will allow affected persons to raise concerns related to the project's activities.

36. The Contractor shall be responsible for adopting the GRM requirements and for installing project informational boards that contain relevant details on how affected persons can access and use the mechanism. When necessary, the Contractor shall also participate in the GRM process by providing information on project requirements or addressing negative impacts arising during the construction phase.

37. A GRM, inspired by the problem-solving approach of ADB guidelines and policies, has been developed to facilitate continuous communication with affected persons throughout project implementation. The mechanism enables the receipt and resolution of concerns, complaints, and suggestions related to the project's environmental, social, and resettlement performance.

38. The GRM is designed to ensure that the Project's implementing parties address grievances in accordance with the following core principles:

- i. Prompt, timely, and effective resolution of affected persons' concerns and complaints;
- ii. A simple, transparent, and easily understood procedure; and
- iii. Accessibility to all segments of the affected population at no cost and without fear of retribution.

39. Various parties may be involved in addressing grievances, including the Affected Persons (APs), the Contractor, the local community, the PIT, the Executing Agency (EA), the Court, and/or the ADB. The grievance redress mechanism will be presented in detail to the public.

40. Affected persons were informed about the GRM during initial public consultations and participation activities, and this information will also be reinforced during subsequent consultations. Details about the GRM, including its existence and the steps that APs may take to submit suggestions or complaints, were also disclosed during community consultations, prior to the start of any project activities.

41. Additionally, the steps for filing grievances should be published on the Ministry of Economy's website to enhance accessibility.

42. The Contractor is responsible for adopting the GRM and installing informational boards at construction sites, providing clear instructions on how to access and use the mechanism.

43. The following section outlines the procedural steps for filing a complaint related to the project, including environmental, social, and other relevant concerns:

Step 1. An Affected Person (AP) may initially raise their suggestion, concern, or complaint with the Contractor's designated grievance staff, such as the Contractor Project Manager or the Contractor's social or environmental specialist. Every effort will be made to resolve the complaint promptly and locally at this first tier of the Project's overall GRM.

44. The grievance mechanism established by the Contractor shall include the following

provisions:

- a. The Contractor shall provide clear and accessible contact information (including field office location, operating hours, names and roles of responsible personnel, phone numbers, and email/mailing addresses) through posters and project informational boards displayed at the site.
- b. APs may approach the Contractor's representative on-site and/or record their suggestion or complaint in a grievance register maintained by the Contractor at the settlement level. The format and content of the grievance record will follow a template outlined in the Contractor's logbook, developed in coordination with the PIT.
- c. Upon receiving a grievance, the Contractor shall immediately investigate and implement appropriate mitigation measures. A formal written response will be provided to the AP within 15 calendar days, with a copy submitted to the PIT. The Contractor shall document all complaints and suggestions in their monthly report, which will be updated to reflect the current status and resolution of each case.

45. If the AP is not satisfied with the Contractor's response or if no response is received within the specified timeframe, the complaint may be escalated. The AP may submit the complaint to the Administrative Community, the Project Manager, or directly to the PIT within one month.

46. All submitted complaints will be categorized as either E&S/resettlement-related. Those related to safeguard issues will be handled by the PIT's E&S Safeguards Specialist. The PIT is responsible for responding to the complaint within 30 calendar days.

Step 2. If the Project Manager's response does not satisfactorily address the complaint, the Affected Person (AP) has the right to escalate the issue further. The AP may submit the complaint to the PIT, the MOE, and/or the ADB Accountability Mechanism (AM). During the construction stage, the complaint handling process at the PIT level will follow the same procedures established during the pre-construction phase.

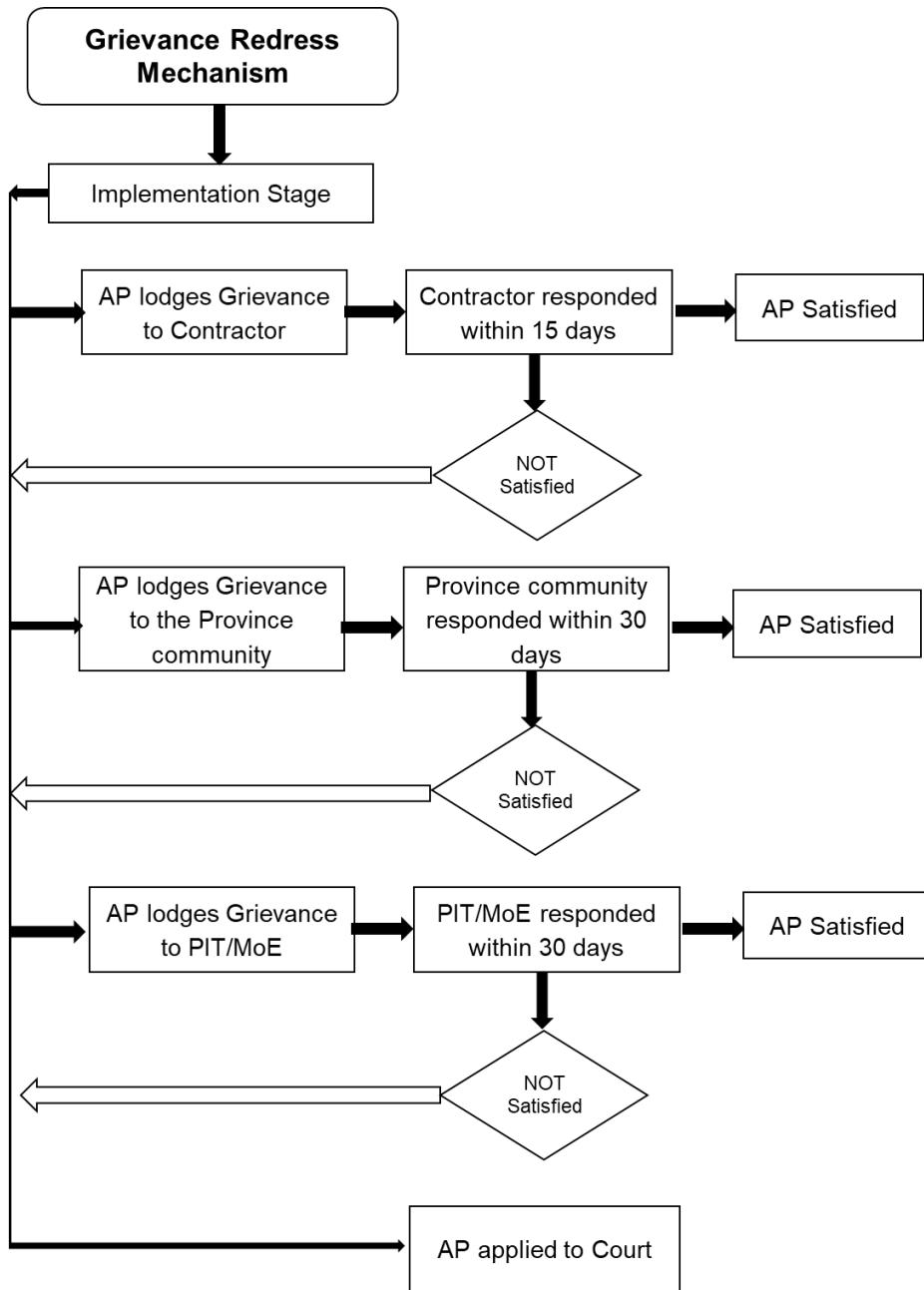
47. The Contractor is responsible for ensuring that all relevant contact information for these entities is clearly posted on project informational boards and in public notices. As the initial point of contact, the Contractor will provide necessary explanations and assistance to the AP in filing complaints with the appropriate authorities. This support may include facilitating personal meetings with the AP, if required.

48. Ultimately, the AP retains the right to seek redress through legal channels, including the courts. However, every effort will be made to resolve grievances at the Contractor and PIT levels. If resolution is not achieved, the MOE will attempt to address the complaint before legal escalation becomes necessary.

49. If, after exhausting all levels of the GRM, the AP remains unsatisfied, they may submit their complaint directly to the ADB. It is important to emphasize that all complaints, regardless of the outcome, will be fully documented and made available for review, monitoring, and evaluation.

50. It is also important to note that any person may access the court system independently at any stage, regardless of the GRM process.

Grievance Redress Mechanism Flow-Chart



51. All complaints, regardless of their outcome or resolution, will be properly documented by both the Contractor and the PIT and made available for review, monitoring, and evaluation purposes.

8.2. Information Dissemination

52. GRM information has been publicly disclosed in all participating communities through visual posters, community consultation sessions, and informational materials distributed during field visits.

53. Public consultations were conducted before the implementation phase of the project. Appropriate awareness-raising measures were taken to ensure the meaningful participation of all relevant stakeholders, including women, vulnerable groups, and local authorities.

8.3. Status of Grievances

54. No grievances have been received as of the end of this reporting period.

9. SAFEGUARDS MONITORING RESULTS AND FINDINGS

55. During the reporting period (December 2024 – June 2025), CAFSEP maintained full compliance with the ADB's SPS 2009, consistent with its Category C classification for both environmental and involuntary resettlement safeguards. As no civil works were undertaken during this phase, the safeguards monitoring activities focused on screening procedures, institutional arrangements, stakeholder engagement, and early implementation of grievance redress mechanisms.

56. E&S safeguard monitoring findings are summarized in the tables below:

- Table 3: Environmental Safeguards Monitoring – Findings Matrix summarizes the key environmental safeguard parameters, benchmarks, implementation status, and observations as of June 2025.
- Table 4: Social Safeguards Monitoring – Findings Matrix presents the social safeguards progress, including screening, consultations, grievance redress, and vulnerability inclusion.

Table 3. Environmental Safeguards Monitoring (December 2024 – June 2025)

Monitoring Parameter	Intended Outcome / Benchmark	Actual Status (as of June 2025)	Remarks / Gaps
Environmental Categorization	The project is classified as Category C (minimal or no adverse environmental impact)	Category C confirmed	Compliant
Environmental Screening	Completion of REA checklists before procurement	Screening will be conducted for 10 selected community buildings for solar PV installation, as well as the screening of 230 households will be conducted by RDAC using application forms that incorporate environmental criteria, as per the approved EDDR.	To be completed before procurement

EIA/IEE/EMP Requirement	Not required for Category C projects; EDDR with CCoP required	EDDR with CCoP approved by ADB, which will be included in the bidding documents	To be completed during procurement
Community Consultations	At least one round of consultations in each target province	Conducted in 10 settlements across Shirak and Tavush provinces during June 2025	Compliant
Government Environmental Clearance	Secure relevant clearances (spoil disposal) before physical works begin	Not required yet no construction activities during this period	Will be initiated before works commence
Integration in Procurement & TORs	Safeguards roles and CCoP are embedded in bidding documents	Safeguards, conditions, and CCoP requirements are included in the consultant TORs	Compliant
Field Visits and Site Verification	Environmental due diligence and initial screening at target sites	Joint field visits conducted in March–April 2025 with PIT, WFP, and consultants	To be completed during the next reporting period
Training on Environmental Safeguards	PIT E&S Safeguards Specialist trained on ADB SPS 2009 and safeguards processes	Trainings held for PIT staff in January 2025	Compliant
Institutional Safeguards Arrangement	PIT E&S Safeguard Specialist onboard and trained	PIT E&S Safeguard Specialist onboard and conducted training for RDAC	Compliant
GRM	Established, accessible, and functional	GRM established and publicly disclosed; no environmental complaints received	Compliant
Mitigation Measures	Develop site-specific measures as per EDDR/CoCP before solar PV installation. Screening of 10 buildings and 230 households will be conducted using E&S criteria based on the approved EDDR and SDDR.	Initial screening supported the selection of 10 buildings; feasibility assessments are ongoing. RDAC will screen 230 households using application forms incorporating E&S safeguards.	Mitigation measures will be finalized and integrated before procurement.
Accident/Incident	Maintain a zero-incident record	No environmental incidents or accidents were recorded during the reporting period.	Compliant No incidents recorded; a grievance and incident log is maintained.

Table 4. Social Safeguards Monitoring (December 2024 – June 2025)

Monitoring Parameter	Intended Outcome / Benchmark	Actual Status (as of June 2025)	Remarks / Gaps
Safeguard Categorization	The project is classified as Category C (no IR/IP impacts)	Category C confirmed	Compliant
Social Safeguards Screening	Completion of IRI checklists before procurement	Screening will be conducted for 10 selected community buildings for solar PV installation, as well as the screening of 230 households will be conducted by RDAC using application forms that incorporate social criteria, as per the approved SDDR.	To be completed before procurement
Land Acquisition / Displacement	None	None reported	Compliant
Community Consultations	At least one round of consultations in each target province	Conducted in 10 settlements across Shirak and Tavush provinces during June 2025	Compliant
GRM	Established, accessible, and functional	GRM established and publicly disclosed; no environmental complaints received	Compliant
Gender and Social Inclusion (<i>monitored by PIT M&E Gender Specialist</i>)	Ensure women and vulnerable groups are included in beneficiary selection	Gender-responsive criteria have been integrated into the household application forms for beneficiary selection by the RDAC team.	Gender-related monitoring is the responsibility of the PIT's M&E Gender Specialist. The E&S Safeguards Specialist has been informed to ensure proper coordination.
Training on Social Safeguards	PIT and consultant teams trained on ADB SPS 2009 and safeguards processes	Training held for PIT staff in January 2025	Compliant
Institutional Safeguards Arrangement	PIT E&S Safeguard Specialist onboard and trained	PIT E&S Safeguard Specialist onboard and conducted training for RDAC	Compliant
Information Disclosure	Safeguards info shared with stakeholders	Shared via meetings, posters, and consultations	Compliant
Community Feedback Incorporated	Stakeholder views reflected in screening/design	Community comments documented in Minutes of Meetings (MoMs) and reviewed by teams	Compliant

57. These monitoring results show strong alignment with project commitments and ADB safeguard requirements during this preparatory stage. Screening processes for both the 10 selected community buildings (REA/IRI) and 230 beneficiary households (based on application form criteria) have been initiated and will be completed prior to procurement and civil works. Mitigation measures will follow the screening results and be embedded in TORs and implementation procedures.

10. IMPLEMENTATION OF MITIGATION MEASURES

58. No construction-related mitigation measures were implemented during this reporting period, as no physical works have commenced. The selected community buildings are currently under feasibility assessment for the preparation of Terms of Reference (TORs), and final building suitability is still under review. Once the TORs are finalized, REA and IRI screening will be carried out for all 10 selected community buildings before procurement.

59. In parallel, the selection of 230 beneficiary households is ongoing. The RDAC team is applying E&S screening criteria embedded in the household application forms, including land eligibility, absence of tree cutting, irrigation access, and ownership documentation. This screening process is being conducted in accordance with the project's approved EDDR and SDDR.

60. Mitigation measures will be developed based on the findings of both the building-level and household-level screening and will be guided by the project's safeguard instruments. These site-specific mitigation actions will be integrated into project implementation procedures and included in contractual obligations before civil works begin.

61. The CCoP will serve as the primary reference document for environmental, health, and safety requirements during the installation of solar PV systems and associated infrastructure. To support readiness, safeguards clauses have already been embedded in consultant TORs, and initial capacity-building measures such as safeguards training have been conducted.

11. ACCIDENT REPORT

62. No environmental accidents or incidents were reported during the monitoring period. A grievance log and monitoring mechanism have been established and maintained by the PIT to ensure that any future incidents or complaints are promptly documented, addressed, and monitored in accordance with ADB procedures.

12. ISSUES AND CHALLENGES

63. There have been no major safeguards-related issues or cases of non-compliance during the reporting period. However, close coordination with local authorities and households is still important to complete the E&S screening before procurement.

13. RECOMMENDATION AND FOLLOW-UP ACTION PLAN

64. It is recommended to continue safeguard training and capacity-building activities for both PIT and consultant staff to ensure effective implementation. Site-specific REA and IRI screening checklists should be prepared and completed before any procurement or civil works. Stakeholder engagement is expected to remain ongoing, and the GRM should be maintained in a functional and accessible manner for all affected persons/Project beneficiaries. As implementation progresses, safeguards compliance should be closely monitored, particularly the application of site-specific mitigation measures. In line with ADB's disclosure policy, this report is expected to be published on the MoE website to ensure transparency.

14. CONCLUSION

65. The project remains fully compliant with the ADB's E&S safeguards requirements under the SPS, 2009. During the reporting period (December 2024 – June 2025), no civil works were initiated, and the safeguards activities focused on early-stage due diligence, such as the development of screening checklists, consultation with communities, institutional coordination, and initial training of implementing partners.

66. Early integration of safeguards into site selection and procurement processes has established a strong foundation for continued compliance. The environmental and involuntary resettlement categorization of Category 'C' remains valid, with no significant impacts identified to date.

67. Once the TORs are finalized, REA and IRI screening will be carried out for all 10 selected community buildings, and screening of the 230 selected households will also be finalized before procurement. The project will also continue safeguards training, ensure the functionality of the GRM, and strengthen field-level documentation and monitoring efforts to ensure full safeguards compliance throughout future implementation stages.

ANNEXES

ANNEX 1 Safeguards Training Minutes of the Meeting

Below are attached the Training Minutes of the Meeting for full details.



ENVIRONMENTAL
AND SOCIAL SAFEGU

ANNEX 2 Public Consultations Minutes of Meeting

Province	Settlement	Date	Public Consultations Minutes of Meeting
Shirak	Dzithankov	02 June 2025	 Dzithankov Public Consultation Minutes
Shirak	Amasia	03 June 2025	 Amasia Public Consultation Minutes
Shirak	Azatan	03 June 2025	 Azatan Public Consultation Minutes
Shirak	Horom	04 June 2025	 Horom Public Consultation Minutes
Shirak	Nor Kyanq	04 June 2025	 Nor Kyanq Public Consultation Minutes
Tavush	Teghut	09 June 2025	 Teghut Public Consultation Minutes
Tavush	Khashtarak	10 June 2025	 Khashtarak Public Consultation Minutes
Tavush	Gandzaqar	10 June 2025	 Gandzaqar Public Consultation Minutes
Tavush	Haghtanak	11 June 2025	 Haghtanak Public Consultation Minutes
Tavush	Debedavan	11 June 2025	 Debedavan Public Consultation Minutes