

Factsheet: Proposed¹ Environmental and Social Standard 4:

Community Health and Safety

What is the proposed ESS 4 about?

Large projects, such as factories or roads, can have an impact on the people living close by and on their land. If communities are exposed to risks and adverse impacts because of a World Bank project, these must be addressed. This is particularly important if vulnerable groups are affected. Among the vulnerable groups are those that are already experiencing impacts from climate change. Under the proposed ESS4, borrowers would need to avoid or minimize these impacts. Community health and safety would need to be considered for the design and manufacturing of infrastructure, equipment and provision of services. Traffic and road safety would be addressed. Borrowers would be required specifically to endeavor to avoid any exposure of the community to health issues.

Under the proposed World Bank Environmental and Social Policy, the World Bank's responsibilities would include reviewing the assessments conducted by the Borrower; assisting the Borrower in developing measures and actions required for the project to comply with ESS4; and agreeing with the Borrower on the measure and actions they would take in the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP). Throughout implementation, the World Bank would monitor the environmental and social performance and provide support and capacity building, as needed, in accordance with the legal agreement, including the ESCP.

What's new?

- **Protecting communities from adverse project impacts:** If approved, the requirements for Borrowers to protect project-affected communities would be consolidated and clarified in a dedicated Standard. This proposed Standard would cover a wide range of aspects of community health and safety through infrastructure and equipment design and safety, services safety, traffic and road safety, hazardous materials, and other aspects.
- **Emergency preparedness and response:** Emergency plans need to be in place before a fire, explosion, or leak or spill happens. This proposed ESS would require Borrowers to conduct a risk hazard assessment for projects that could potentially cause such an emergency. This assessment would be part of the environmental and social assessment mandated in the proposed ESS 1. Borrowers would also need to prepare an emergency response plan where the potential risks dictate this approach. Appropriate information on emergency response would be disclosed publicly and made accessible for project-affected communities.
- **Responsible security personnel:** In some cases, Borrowers hire security personnel to protect workers or property. This security arrangement cannot be a threat to the communities close to the project. Under the proposed ESS4, borrowers would ensure that security personnel has not been involved in past abuses, that they are properly trained, and that they behave appropriately toward workers and affected communities.

¹ The content of the proposed Standard is for consultation purposes. It has not been endorsed by the Executive Directors of IBRD/IDA. The Board of Executive Directors will make the final decision on the content.

To review the proposed framework, including the full text of all ten standards, and provide feedback, please visit <http://consultations.worldbank.org/consultation/review-and-update-world-bank-safeguard-policies>

What stays the same?

- This proposed ESS would incorporate key provisions of the current World Bank policy on Safety of Dams.
- The proposed ESS4 would capture more explicitly many of the current World Bank's provisions regarding the design and safety aspects of infrastructure, equipment, services, traffic and hazardous materials.