

## **Approach to Public Consultations (Preparation Stage)**

In accordance with the World Bank operation policy (OP 4.01), as a Category “A” project the Ayeyarwady Integrated River Basin Management (AIRBM) is required to hold two sets of safeguards consultations during the project preparation phase; one set of consultation at the draft Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) Terms of Reference (TOR) stage and another at the draft ESMF stage. The objectives of these consultations are to ensure communities’ social and environmental concerns and objectives have been properly considered in the project design and decision making processes from the beginning. In addition, consultations will serve as a screening tool to identify any potential risks from project investments and ways to mitigate them.

The consultations will be led by the project implementation agency, the Directorate of Water Resources and Improvement of River Systems (DWIR) under the Ministry of Transportation. Consulted group will be made up of a wide range of stakeholders and project beneficiaries, including CSOs, NGOs and the River User’s Association. The structure of the consultations may range from small informal meetings to large public events, as deemed appropriate by the DWIR. Prior to any formal consultation, relevant documents will be available through the DWIR and the World Bank websites, both in the Myanmar and the English language.

The first round of safeguard consultation at the draft ESMF TOR stage was carried out in Mandalay and Yangon on May 16 and 19, 2014. A summary of the consultations can be found in the next section. Moving forward, the second round of safeguard consultations, at the draft ESMF stage, is planned for July/August 2014.

In addition to the ESMF related consultations, once the AIRBM becomes active and specific project sites are identified, more extensive consultations will be conducted by the Government as a part of the Environmental and Social Impact Assessments, as well as to formulate specific impact management and mitigation plans. Moreover, the AIRBM will establish a Stakeholder Forum to support project implementation and ensure engagement and consultation with key stakeholders from the public sector, private sector, NGOs and CSOs throughout the life of the project.

Comments and feedback can be sent to the AIRBM Project Director (U Sein Tun [theinaung07@gmail.com](mailto:theinaung07@gmail.com)) and task team leader from the World Bank (Claudia Sadoff, [csadoff@worldbank.org](mailto:csadoff@worldbank.org)).