
Initial Environment Examination (IEE) report for Retrofit of Government Working Women's Hostels at Tirunelveli

Final Report

(Strictly confidential for controlled circulation)

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1. PROJECT OVERVIEW

The Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Fund Management Corporation Limited (TNIFMC) is an Asset Management Company (AMC) promoted by the Government of Tamil Nadu (GoTN) for the purpose of raising and managing alternative asset funds focused on sectors like infrastructure, affordable housing etc. TNIFMC is currently managing two Alternative Investment Funds (AIF), viz., Tamil Nadu Infrastructure Fund (TNIF) and Tamil Nadu Shelter Fund (TNSF). Tamil Nadu Shelter Fund (TNSF) is registered as a Category I (Social Venture) Alternative Investment Fund, with a mandate to invest in affordable housing in Tamil Nadu. TNSF invests in affordable housing projects in the private, PPP or Government and/or its agencies. The primary focus of TNSF is:

- Affordable housing – housing for the economically weaker (EWS) and low-income groups (LIG),
- Hostels - for working women from all sections of the society
- Industrial accommodation for workers in SIPCOT Industrial Complexes/ Parks
- Senior and assisted living

Tamil Nadu Working Women’s Hostels Corporation Limited (TNWWHCL) is a Special Purpose Vehicle (SPV) established in 2019 and incorporated on 6th February 2020 as per Companies Act 2013 by Department of Social Welfare and Nutritious Meal Programme under Government of Tamil Nadu in order to handle the social infrastructure projects in the state such as Working Women’s Hostel, Senior Citizen Homes, Inclusive Living, etc. Owing to the huge demand for safe and affordable accommodation for working women, the TNWWHCL has initiated the process of retrofitting existing Working Women Hostel so as to provide affordable accommodation and protection to working women. TNSF is planning to invest in TNWWHCL for the retrofitting of existing Working Women Hostel at eight locations (Salem, Tiruppur, Perambalur, Villupuram, Vellore, Tirunelveli, Thanjavur and Chennai).

This Initial Environment Examination (IEE) report is for the proposed retrofit of working women hostel in Tirunelveli. The description of proposed site is provided in table below:

Table 1. Description of proposed site

Parameters	Description
Project details	The project aims to retrofit the existing hostel for working women in Tirunelveli, Tamil Nadu. The hostel will be retrofitted with environmentally friendly interventions suited to the needs of the



	occupants.
Location	The hostel is located in Veeramanikapuram, Tirunelveli District Latitude: 8°42'20.0"N, Longitude: 77°43'20.7"E
Total area	Total land area of the site is 899 sq.m and build up area is 677.8 sq.m
Present and Past land use	The site is presently being utilized as a Government Welfare hostel for working women
Adjoining area	The hostel is surrounded by Government Primary School to the South, New Colony Road to the West, Vacant land to the East and Residential Unit to the North. The hostel is surrounded residential developments on all the sides. SIDCO Pettai industrial estate is located within 30-40 minutes travel time from the site.
Access road	The hostel can be accessed via the New Colony Street from Ambai Road which further connects to roads and highways in the city.
Building	Own building Structure (number of floors) – Ground +2 floors Number of Rooms -21
Operational Since	2017
Present Strength (as on 15.10.20)	Total 21 Rooms with 46 Beds. The hostel is currently 89% occupied 4seater - 2 rooms, 2 seater -19 rooms.
Present Staff Details	1 Night watchman, 1 Hostel warden, 1 Cook, 2 Assistant cooks and 1 sweeper.

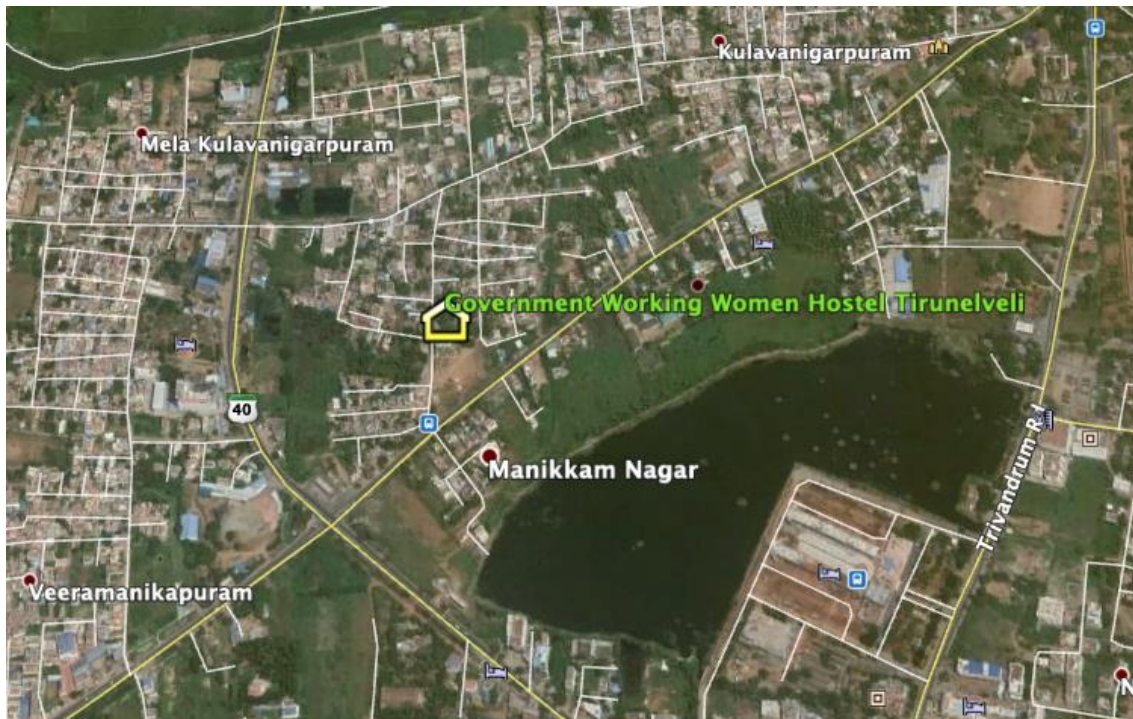


Figure 1. Location of project site on Google earth

The feasibility report prepared by Cushman and Wakefield details out the present status of the Tirunelveli Working Women Hostel, requirements of retrofitting and proposed enhancements.

The retrofitting plan is proposed for all the hostel floors. As per the plan, a covered parking for two wheelers will be built in the hostel premise. A security cabin will also be provided with a toilet. A separate laundry area will also be provided. The layout of the 2 bedded rooms and 4 bedded rooms will be retrofitted to include foldable study units. Additional storage will be provided in 4 bedded rooms.

CCTV camera, RO water dispenser, one Garbage bin per room and common bins in the corridor will be provided along with fire extinguishers as part of the retrofitting process.

The summary of proposed retrofitting is mentioned in the table below:

Table 2. Summary of proposed retrofitting

S. No	Proposed Retrofitting
-------	-----------------------



Site Level Retrofitting	
1	2-Wheeler parking to be increased
2	Facade treatment with standardization scheme
3	Laundry area
4	Laying of pavers (from entrance up to security room)
5	8 shape walkways
For Existing 2 Bedded Room	
6	Closure of toilet wall above door
7	Foldable Study Unit
8	Cupboard shutters
For Existing 4 Bedded Room	
9	Foldable Study Unit
10	Closure of toilet wall above door
11	Additional Storage Units
12	Cupboard Shutters

This Initial Environment Examination (IEE) report is prepared as per the requirement of ADB's Safeguard Policy Statement. The information collection for preparation of this report includes collection of secondary information, site observation by EVI team, meetings with TNIFMC, TNWWHCL, Department of Social Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu and District Social Welfare Officer, Tirunelveli.

2. EXISTING ENVIRONMENT

2.1 Physical Environment

a) Topography

The project site is in Veeramanikpuram area of Tirunelveli district. The district is in the south-eastern part of the State and is surrounded by Western Ghats² in the west and Kanyakumari² district in the south. Its total geographical area⁶ is 6,693 Sq. km. It has diverse physical features, from mountains and low plains to rivers, sea-coasts and forests. It is described as microcosm of the State. Its average elevation lies at 154ft¹.

The site is located at 8°42'20.0"N and 77°43'20.7"E. It is surrounded by residential area on all sides, Government Primary School to the South, New Colony Road to the West, Vacant land to the East and Residential Unit to the North. The SIDCO Pettai industrial estate is also located within 30-40 minutes travel time from the site.

b) Meteorology and Climate

The district has a subtropical climate. The average temperature lies between 22.9-33.5°C.² Maximum temperature can reach till 45°C.² The coastal regions are cooler than the interior parts by about a degree in summers during daytime². The average annual rainfall³ over the district is 879 mm. It rains from October to Mid-January. November³ receives the highest rainfall.

c) Hydrology and drainage

The District is blessed with the Western Ghats from which all the perennial rivers⁴ follow and drain towards the east. The surface water of the District is drained into major river basin viz. Thamiraparani, Vaippar, Nambiar and Hanumanathi⁴. Thamiraparani⁴ is the major river basin in the District. The other streams which are seasonal in nature are Servallar, Manimuthar, Ramanathi, Pachayar, Chittar and Uppodai rivers which drain into the Tamiraparani basin⁴.

d) Water supply and sanitation

The water supply for the site will be supplied from bore-well water sources.

¹<https://en-gb.topographic-map.com/maps/edv1/Tirunelveli/#:~:text=Tirunelveli%20is%20located%20at%208,quarter%20and%20the%20Palayamkottai%20area.>

²http://www.tnenvs.nic.in/WriteReadData/UserFiles/file/30_TIRUNELVELI_TEMPERATURE.pdf

³http://www.tnenvs.nic.in/WriteReadData/UserFiles/file/30_TIRUNELVELI_RAINFALL.pdf

⁴https://www.tn.gov.in/district_details/1562

e) Air Quality & Noise

The AQI⁵ of the district is 72 as on 13th April 2021. At times, it can be unhealthy for sensitive people.

2.2 Biological Environment

a) Forest and Land Use

The proposed project site is currently utilized as a welfare hostel for working women and girls and is situated in a residential area. There is no established forest however, some scattered trees, shrubs and bushes are present. There are urban green spaces present nearby.

b) Flora and Fauna

The project site has bushes and shrubs. Based on the biodiversity screening of the area using IBAT (Integrated Biodiversity Assessment Tool) no rare, endangered and threatened species found in the project area.

2.3 Socio-Economic & Cultural Environment

The project site is situated at Veeramanikapuram in Melapalayam locality in Tirunelveli district, Tamil Nadu. The district has a total of 8, 15, 528 households⁶.

The district is the 8th highest⁶ in terms of population and has a total population⁶ of 30, 77, 233 out of which 15, 20, 912 are males⁶ and 15, 56, 321 are females⁶. The population of children (age 0-6) is 3, 21, 687 out of which 1, 64, 157 are males⁶ and 1, 57, 530 are females⁶. The sex ratio⁶ of the district is 1023 which is higher than the state average⁶ of 996.

The district has an overall literacy rate of 82.5%⁶ which is higher than the state literacy rate of 80.1%⁶. The male literacy rate is 89.24%⁶ while female literacy rate is 75.98%⁶. The Scheduled Caste (SC) constitutes 18.51%⁶ while the Scheduled Tribe (ST) constitutes 0.33%⁶ of the total population in the district.

It is connected via Ambai road and is in a good proximity to the public transportation system. The bus stop is located within a distance of 1.1 km from the site. The railway station and Tuticorin airport is at 4.8 km and 40km respectively. The hospitals are located at a distance of 2.6-3.4 km. The educational institutions are located at 2.9-4.7 km from the site. There are no cultural or heritage site present in and around the site.

⁵https://air-quality.com/place/india/tirunelveli/36e92e4c?lang=en&standard=aqi_us

⁶https://censusindia.gov.in/2011census/dchb/3327_PART_B_DCHB_TIRUNELVELI.pdf

3. POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

The proposed retrofitting requirements include minor changes in the furniture, painting and layout of the hostel. It doesn't involve the structural changes i.e. no civil construction is anticipated in the project implementation. Based on the ESG due diligence study conducted by EVI, there were no major environmental and social risks identified in the retrofitting project implementation. Few minor risks were identified and the proposed mitigation plan against them is motioned in the table below:

S. NO	Material Risk	Related Key findings	Mitigation action plan
1	Consumption of water	Records of consumption of water are not maintained.	A monitoring mechanism shall be developed to record the daily and monthly consumption of water. The hostel staff i.e. security guard may be assigned this responsibility. Water meter may be installed to monitor and record the ground water withdrawal.
2	Health, Safety and security	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The security guard is not available at all. Scope of retrofitting includes installation of security cameras and fire extinguishers which will enhance safety and security. 	A 24/7 security guard should be appointed for the hostel premises.
3	Corporate governance level policies	As TNWWHCL is in early stage the corporate policies i.e. prevention of sexual harassment, anti-	As TNWWHCL is a Government owned company registered under the Company Act 2013, it would be good to have company's corporate

		<p>bribery & corruption etc., have not been developed so far. However, the company is owned and operated by Government of Tamil Nadu, the government regulation and guidelines shall be applicable.</p>	<p>policies on following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prevention of sexual harassment • Anti-bribery and corruption, • Child labor and Forced labor • Whistle- blower • Environment health and safety policies
4	Grievance Redressal Mechanism	<p>At present, grievance redressal is done through District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO).</p> <p>Evidence of documented records of grievances is not available.</p> <p>Grievance redressal system for the company needs to be put in place before start of retrofitting of hostels.</p> <p>However, GRM of TNIFMC as a Fund Manager will be in effect. This further requires company to appoint field level GRO. GRM guidelines should be displayed and communicated to women staying in hostel.</p>	<p>A Grievance Redressal Mechanism (GRM) may be put in place with clear process of grievance receiving, documenting, closure and contact details of GRO.</p>
5	Monitoring and Reporting	<p>At present, Monitoring and reporting of hostel is through DSWO. A</p>	<p>A periodic inspection or monitoring mechanism may be developed. The mechanism can include the key ESG</p>

		periodic monitoring and reporting system specific to company as well as project sites needs to be prepared before start of retrofitting of hostels.	risk i.e. floods, GRM, Contractor management etc. inspection/audit template for each ESG risk shall be prepared.
6	Contractor management	Contractor for retrofitting work will be appointed through tender process. Guidelines of the Government of Tamil Nadu (Tamil Nadu Tender Transparency Act) will be followed to the extent applicable	Company may ensure that site specific ESG aspects are integrated in tender and contractor's agreement. This should include monitoring and reporting system, system to ensure non ethical practices, anti-bribery and anti-corruption measures, guidelines for prevention of sexual harassment, system to handle grievances of contractor, ensuring presence of designated officer at the time of retrofitting done by workmen

4. ANALYSIS OF ALTERNATIVES

As the proposed project is to retrofit the existing government working women hostel in Tirunelveli, the alternative analysis is not applicable. Moreover, the proposed retrofitting activities have minimal or no impact on environment and social aspect. It can be concluded that the proposed retrofitting options are the best suited environment and social friendly options hence, alternative analysis is not required.

5. INSTITUTIONAL ARRANGEMENTS

Project is being developed by Tamil Nadu Working Women's Hostels Corporation Limited (TNWWHCL), a SPV established by the Department of Social Welfare and Nutritious Meal Programme (DSW) under Government of Tamil Nadu. TNWWHCL was incorporated on 6th February 2020 as per Companies Act 2013. The purpose of the SPV is to oversee construction, maintenance and operations of selected Government Hostels. The Chairperson and Directors of the company are from Government Departments. TNWWHCL shall be the key institution with the responsibility to implement the Environment and Social recommendations at the site.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL MONITORING & MANAGEMENT PLAN (EMP)

As the proposed retrofitting project has no major environmental and social impact, a separate environmental monitoring and management plan is not required. There are few minor impacts which are easily manageable with the suggested mitigation actions. However, due care will be taken to follow 'Good Engineering Practices' to ensure least pollution (air, noise, etc.) during the retrofit works. Company may develop guidelines for the contractor to ensure good engineering practices. Some onetime changes in the governance structure of the TNWWHCL have been suggested for the implementation of mitigation plan.

7. PUBLIC CONSULTATION & DISCLOSURE MECHANISM

As the proposed retrofitting project involves only cosmetic changes in the layout of the hostel and the rooms and there are no structural changes suggested as part of retrofitting hence, no additional construction activity shall take place. The complete project implementation shall be done within the hostel premises. Hence, this proposed retrofitting project doesn't warrant public consultation. Regarding disclosure mechanism, there is a provision of notice board to share the information regarding the retrofitting project with the residents.

8. GRIEVANCE REDRESSAL MECHANISM

As the overall responsibility lies with Department of Social Welfare, Government of Tamil Nadu, the grievance redressal is done through District Social Welfare Officer (DSWO). However, evidence of documented records of grievances is not available. GRM of TNIFMC as a Fund Manager will be in effect. This further requires company to appoint field level GRO. It is suggested in the mitigation plan that TNWWHCL may develop a company level Grievance Redressal Mechanism detailing out the process of grievance receiving, addressing, documenting and closure along with contact details of GRO. The GRM guidelines should be communicated to women staying in hostel.

9. CONCLUSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

This Initial Environment Examination (IEE) study reveals that there are no major environmental and social impacts of the proposed retrofitting project. There are few minor possible impacts, but these are very much understood and manageable i.e. Impacts can be completely avoided, or minimized.

The proposed project site is not located in environmentally or culturally sensitive areas. The hostel complex is Government owned, so no further land acquisition is anticipated; hence no physical and/or economic displacement of people shall be required for project implementation.

Based on the findings of the IEE, the classification of the project as **Category C** is confirmed i.e. it is likely to have minimal or no adverse environmental impacts. Hence no further special study or detailed EIA needs to be undertaken to comply with ADB SPS (2009).

10. ANNEXURES

Annexure1: Documents received and reviewed

1. Detailed feasibility report
2. TNWWHCL - Certificate of Incorporation
3. GO's stating TNWWHCL Under SPV- formation
4. GST Certificate TNWWHCL

Annexure 2: Site Photographs



Hostel Facade



Hostel Entrance



Hostel Premise



Hostel Premises



Hostel Facade



Adjoining area



Staircase



Office



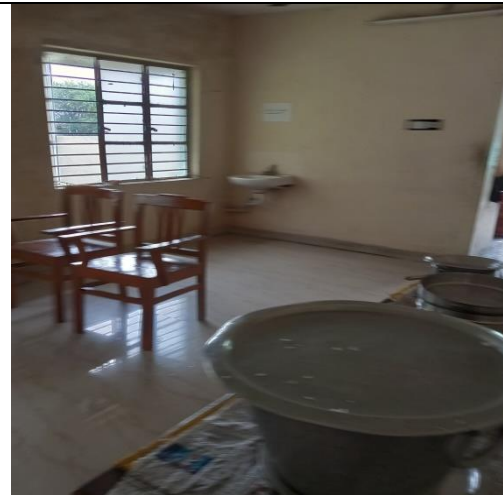
Storage



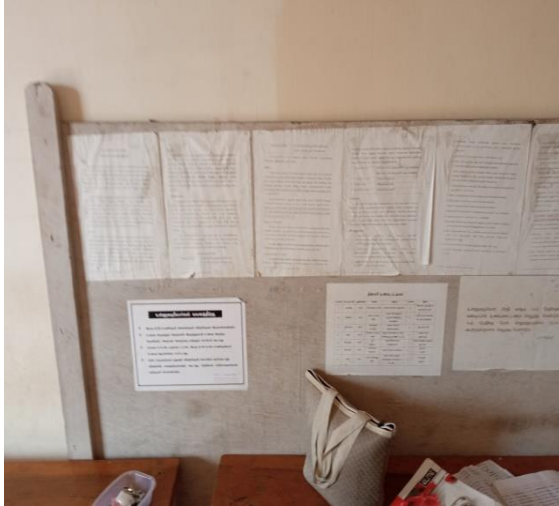
Kitchen Storage



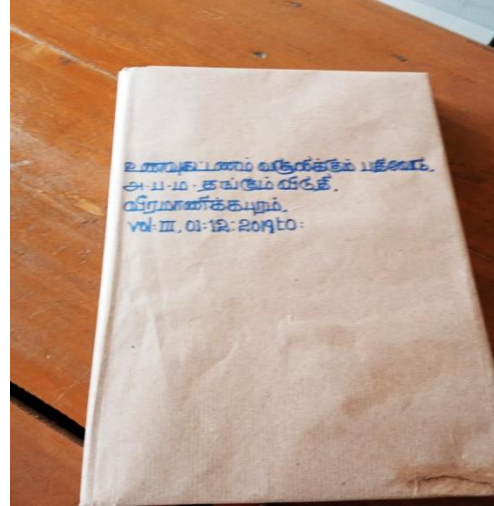
Cylinder Storage



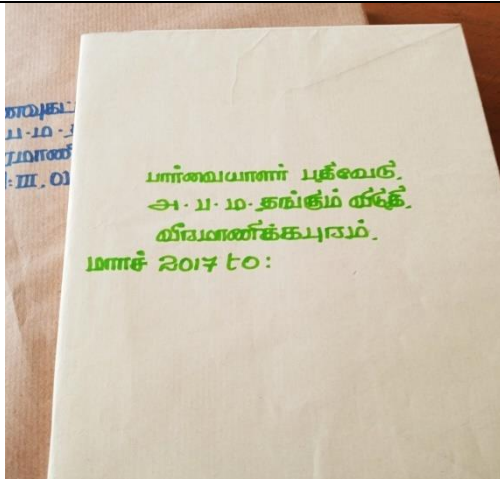
Hostel premises



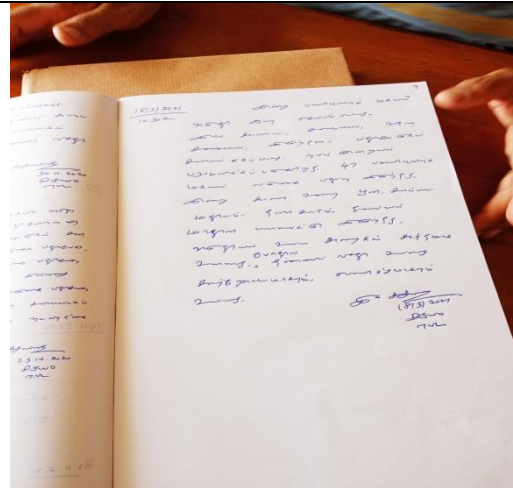
Notice Board



Documentation Register



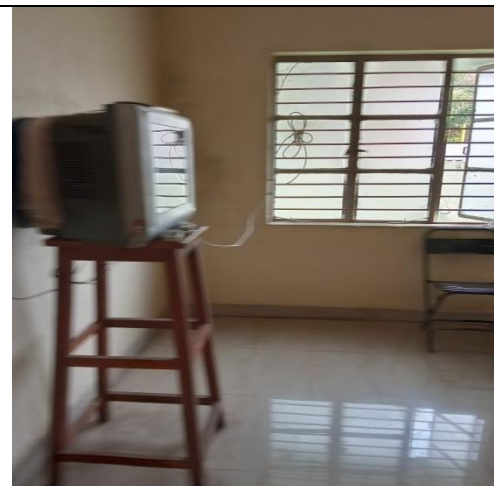
Documentation Register



Documentation Register



Hostel Premises



TV Room