



Project Information Document (PID)

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 09-Dec-2021 | Report No: PIDC32909

**BASIC INFORMATION****A. Basic Project Data**

Country Western Africa	Project ID P175235	Parent Project ID (if any)	Project Name Central Africa Regional Waterways Project (P175235)
Region AFRICA WEST	Estimated Appraisal Date Jun 15, 2022	Estimated Board Date Oct 25, 2022	Practice Area (Lead) Transport
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Ministere de l'Economie du plan et de la Cooperation	Implementing Agency Minister of Equipment and Public Works, Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation, Ministère du Transport, de l'Aviation Civile et de la Marine Marchande	

Proposed Development Objective(s)

The Project Development Objective is to improve regional connectivity and trade between CAR and ROC along and across the Congo/Ubangi rivers and the selected road corridors.

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)**SUMMARY**

Total Project Cost	300.00
Total Financing	300.00
of which IBRD/IDA	300.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS**World Bank Group Financing**

International Development Association (IDA)	300.00
IDA Credit	60.00
IDA Grant	240.00



Environmental and Social Risk Classification

High

Concept Review Decision

Track I-The review did authorize the preparation to continue

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

Regional Context

- The Central African countries¹ are facing major economic, social, political, and security challenges that are undermining their economic development.** The region's economies, largely based on the production and export of extractive raw materials (oil, minerals, etc.) and forestry, are highly vulnerable to exogenous shocks. Consequently, annual growth of GDP fell to 2.2 percent in 2018 (from 5.9 percent in 2014), compared with higher rates of growth in East Africa (5.7 percent), North (4.3 percent) and West Africa (3.3 percent). Only the Southern Africa region recorded lower growth rates in GDP in 2018.
- The region's social context is characterized by persistent poverty, high inequality, and high unemployment, especially among women and youth.** Low access to basic social services (health, education, and access to water), limited economic opportunities for women and youth, as well as the poor distribution of, and limited access to land and natural resources, exacerbate the high inequality in the region. Almost 48 percent of the region's population lives below the poverty line, slightly higher than the 46 percent for the continent. However, as agricultural sector accounts for 70 percent of employment poverty is much higher in rural areas (61.5 percent) than in urban areas (34.4 percent).
- The humanitarian situation in the region remains worrying.** In Central Africa's conflict affected areas, including the Central African Republic (CAR), the Lake Chad region, and the DRC, poverty rates reached 70 percent in 2018. Conflicts caused by armed groups in the region have created more than 200,000 refugees and forcibly displaced about 2.6 million people, including 1.5 million children.
- Effective regional integration is essential for promoting the economic development of Central African countries; however, it is being undermined by several challenges.** The vicious cycle of instability and fragility compounded by large economic and socio-economic infrastructure deficits (transport, energy, information and communication, transboundary

¹The current members of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS) are Angola, Burundi, Cameroon, Central African Republic (CAR), Chad, Republic of Congo (ROC), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Equatorial Guinea, Gabon, Sao Tome and Principe, Rwanda. ECCAS was created on October 1, 1983 to support the economic, social, and cultural development of central Africa.



waters) themselves are barriers to the movement of goods and services and have contributed to the extremely high costs and slow transportation. The bulk of the cost is incurred when transporting goods on inland roads.²

Country specific context, Central African Republic

5. Sparsely populated and landlocked in the heart of the continent, CAR is one of the poorest countries in Africa.

The country's 623,000 km² area includes enormous endowments of arable land, large mineral deposits, and dense tropical forests. The economy is naturally dominated by agriculture, employing 80 percent of the active population and accounting for half of the country's GDP. Still, with a GDP per capita of \$775, CAR faces enormous development challenges including a near-bottom ranking for both the Human Development Index (HDI) and the Gender Inequality Index (GII); enormous infrastructure deficits; widespread gender-based violence (GBV); low and weak public services delivery; weak governance; and supply chain deficiencies. Half of the CARs population is 15-years old or younger even as it ranks the lowest in the world on the 2020 Human Capital Index (HCI). In fact, poverty increased from 66 to 71 percent between 2008 and 2019.

6. Along with its wealth in natural resources, CAR carries a history of political instability and conflict.

Cyclic violence since the major civil war in 2013 put a halt to its development. The country's first democratic elections were held in 2016, followed by the Khartoum Peace Agreement signed then in February 2019, between 14 major armed groups and the Government. Peace-building efforts slowed down however, with the violence and turmoil that erupted across most of the country after the December 2020 presidential elections. the President of the Republic declared a unilateral ceasefire on October 15, 2021, based on the political dialogue with, and mediation of, the international community. State control has improved since, but security is still fragile in most parts of the country. As of 2021, CAR's population of nearly 5.4 million includes almost 750,000 internally displaced persons with close to 650, 000 refugees in surrounding countries.³

7. The long crisis and multiple conflicts that have emerged highlights CAR's extreme fragility.

For example, following the post-election crisis of December 2020, rebel groups blocked the Douala-Bangui trade corridor for about three months, leading to a significant disruption in the supply of major consumer products, a shortage of fuel and gas, and an increase in prices throughout the country and in Bangui. CAR's complete dependence on the Douala-Bangui corridor, underscores the importance of revitalizing the alternative, multimodal import axis of Pointe-Noire-Brazzaville/Kinshasa-Bangui-Ndjamen through the Congo and Ubangi rivers.

8. The COVID-19 pandemic further aggravated the vulnerability of CAR's population and its already fragile system.

With currently around 325,000 people vaccinated, the country has registered 11,579 confirmed COVID-19 cases and 100 deaths as of October 27, 2021,⁴ Transport sector workers, suffered from trade interruptions and travel limitations. To support efforts to mitigate the negative impacts, a \$7.5 million COVID-19 response project was prepared was provided to the Government of CAR.

² Road transport costs and prices across Central Africa are about US\$0.12 per ton-kilometer, above the global benchmark of rates of between US\$0.01 and US\$0.04 per ton-kilometer. Moving a ton of freight along corridors in the Central African region costs twice as much (between \$230 and \$650) as it would in Southern African countries (between \$120 and \$270). As well, exporting or importing a container in CAR costs around \$5,500 per container (the second highest after Chad) and the time to export and import goods averages 54 and 62 days, respectively.

³ UNHCR. March 31, 2021. Accessed April 2021 [<https://data2.unhcr.org/fr/situations/car>]

⁴ <https://www.worldometers.info/coronavirus/>



Country specific context, Republic of Congo

9. **The Republic of Congo (ROC)**'s covers 342,000 km² and has a population of 5.61 million. Most of the population (56 percent) is below 20 years old, and over half (52.5 percent) live below the national poverty line. About 65 percent of the country's poor reside along the Brazzaville-Pointe Noire corridor and in the main cities of Pointe Noire and Brazzaville. Congo is a fragile state with risks of recurring violence (notably in the Pool region) resulting from unresolved exclusion and grievances, displacement, youth unemployment, and the potential spillover effects of conflicts in neighboring countries

10. **The economy has been in recession since 2014, driven by the country's high dependence on oil exports and eventually oil price shocks.** With the oil sector representing more than 90 percent of exports, the country is vulnerable to market fluctuations. The reduction in oil prices since mid-2014 triggered a profound economic crisis, with deep output losses, large fiscal and current account deficits, and a steep increase in public debt that was in 2019 confirmed by the IMF-World Bank Debt Sustainability analysis. The analysis confirmed that the ROC's debt unless restructured, is unsustainable even as GDP growth reached 5.4 percent that year.

11. **The COVID-19 pandemic has taken a modest toll on human lives in the Republic of Congo but has exacerbated an already fragile Congolese economy.** As of April 12, 2021, the ROC had 10,084 confirmed cases and 137 deaths. While the Government took early measures to prevent the spread of the coronavirus by restricting mobility across the country to essential goods and services the economy is estimated to have contracted by almost 8 percent in 2020.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

Waterways' sectoral and institutional context in the region (CAR and ROC)

12. **The Congo basin is the world's second largest river basin.** It covers about six countries: the ROC, the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC), the CAR, western Zambia, northern Angola, and parts of Cameroon and Tanzania⁵. The main trunk corridor Brazzaville-Kinshasa-Bangui is an important link in the multimodal corridor Matadi – Kinshasa / Pointe-Noire – Brazzaville – Bangui – Ndjamena, connecting Chad and CAR to the ROC and the DRC. It is divided into two sections: (a) from Pool Malebo on the Congo River (near Brazzaville) to the confluence of the Ubangi River (600km) and (b) from the confluence of the Ubangi River with the Congo River to Bangui. (610km). The total river length is navigable for only about four months in a year⁶, but the trunk Brazzaville-Zinga is navigable for a longer period of about 300 days.

13. **Many ports located along the Congo and Ubangi rivers need support for managing operations and rehabilitation activities.** At least 35 ports are located along the river corridor from Kinshasa to Bangui and playing a substantive role in enabling trade across and along the river. The port of Pointe-Noire⁷ has been an autonomous landlord-type port since

⁵ As much of the basin is covered with a dense and ramified network of tributaries, sub-tributaries, and small rivers, the Congo river, and its tributaries total over 24 thousand km. of navigable waterways, including 6,200 km. in the CAR; about 1,000 km. in the ROC; and over 16,800 km in the hinterland of the DRC

⁶ Currently, there is a 220-days break in navigability from Brazzaville to Bangui per year compared to about 40 days in 1980 (*Annales de l'Université Marien NGOUABI, 2009*). Improved navigation on the mainstem (the inter-state section) is estimated as having a direct positive impact on more 60 million people from ROC, DRC, and CAR, with another 150 million benefiting indirectly

⁷ The Autonomous Port of Pointe Noire (*Port Autonome de Pointe Noire - PAPN*) was strengthened thanks to a large infrastructure development investment totaling 400 million euros undertaken by the port operator "Bollore Logistics". More than 40 percent of the cargo handled by the port is destined for markets in the DRC and CAR via the Congo River, and for certain oil markets in the Angolan enclave of Cabinda.



2000 with its deep-sea port (15-meter draught) and plays an important role providing alternative route to sea for CAR and Chad (Annex 9, Figure 3)

14. **The Congo and Ubangi rivers has been the principal trade route for CAR and Chad since the 1960s.** The Congo-Ubangi corridor also facilitates 70 percent of intra-regional trade and plays a substantial role in opening upstream markets in at least 11 out of 26 provinces in western DRC, northern Congo, and CAR. In addition, intercountry trade between "twin" city pairs on either side of the corridor is significant. The best-known links are Brazzaville (ROC) - Kinshasa (DRC); Bangui (CAR) - Zongo (DRC) and the numerous links between each capital city and the hinterland with many berths along the rivers. As such, trade along the river is also critical for the livelihood of the small-scale entrepreneurs and traders that live and operate along the river.

15. **However, the substantial decline in the navigability period for the river corridor has deviated traffic to the Bangui-Douala corridor.** The river corridor performance along the waterway has decreased due to the decline in Ubangi River's water levels, and the poor maintenance performance of the Congo Ocean Railway (CFCO). There has been inadequate investment and maintenance in ports and docking/berth points⁸ leading to (ii) long processing times for the flow of goods, poor storage conditions and extended turnaround times for ships, (ii) a lack of handling equipment in the ports (cranes, bonded warehouses, sheds, platforms, and quays) and (iii) inadequate coordination among regional and national institutions with purview over the Congo River. Security challenges in ROC and DRC, have exacerbated the disruption from the corridor to Port of Douala by the landlocked countries CAR and Chad.

16. **The means of transport on the river are very rustic, and generally in very deteriorated conditions, with regular accidents resulting in a high rate of fatality.** A range of vessels are used, including non-motorized pirogues, motorized pirogues, and other local boats (*baléinières*) as well as more modern means of transport such as fast canoes, ferries, and pushers. The fatal accidents that have been registered are mostly due to frequent wrecking of barges that are overloaded and obsolete, and navigating by night and in harsh weather conditions. There is poor signage and a lack of enforcement of navigation rules.

17. **Two joint venture companies manage the ports and handle freight along the river.** "*Société Centrafricaine de Transport Fluvial, SOCATRAF*" manages the port of Bangui and water transport logistics. Created in 1980, SOCATRAF, is partially owned by Bolloré Group and is operated by Bolloré Logistics. In 1996, Bolloré Africa Logistics (SOCATRAF is an affiliated company) was awarded the concession for operating the container terminal at the port of Bangui. SOCATRAF has focused mainly on importation of fuel for CAR from Pointe Noire through Brazzaville. In addition to SOCATRAF, a new company named "*Mercure Logistics Centrafrique*" was created as a Public and Private Partnership (PPP) in 2020 to take over the handling of non-oil freight and for the equipment and the management of the ports of Bangui and ZINGA. An important mandate of this company is to finance the rehabilitation of the two ports' infrastructures of ZINGA and Bangui.

18. **Three public institutions oversee the development and maintenance of navigability on the Congo mainstem, and the Ubangi and Sangha rivers in the Congo basin.** These include the national waterways authority in DRC (*Régie des Voies Fluviales - RVF*), the economic interest group for common waterways maintenance (GIE-SCEVN) in CAR and ROC, and the International Commission of the Congo-Ubangi-Sangha Basin (CICOS). RVF in DRC and GIE-SCEVN in CAR and ROC oversee the maintenance and rehabilitation of the Congo, Ubangi, and Sangha rivers waterways. GIE-SCEVN, is tasked with carrying out periodic hydrographic and geodesy studies; installing and maintaining river markings; and buoying, dredging and obstacles removal works on the Congo, Ubangi, and Sangha rivers. CICOS, created in 2000, has responsibility

⁸ At least 35 ports are located along the river corridor from Kinshasa to Bangui. The ten key ports are in Kinshasa, Brazzaville, Bolobo, Kwamouth, Ngombe, Liranga, Bétou, Mongoumba, Zongo, and Bangui (five ports in the DRC, three are in ROC and two in CAR)



that covers the entire Congo river basin in the territories of its six member states with the mandate of ensuring sustainable development of water resources and promoting navigation on the Congo, Ubangi, and Sangha rivers. All three companies require considerable capacity building to fulfill each of its mandate.

Roads and transport sectoral and institutional context (CAR)

19. **The transport sector remains a key enabler for CAR's economic development, facilitating intra-community trade and its connection to neighboring countries but vastly underperforms its role.** As a landlocked country, internally and regionally, roads are the main mode of transport, but road density is low, and in poor condition, hindering CAR's integration with the region⁹. CAR only has one paved international corridor that links the capital city of Bangui to Douala, Cameroon and there are no functional roads linking CAR with other neighboring countries, (Sudan, Chad, DRC, and ROC). Local trade between communities is carried out through the secondary and tertiary road network. High transport costs, lengthy delays in transporting goods from the port to landlocked CAR, inefficient customs and transit operations, security issues along corridors, multiple customs, police, and road safety checkpoints, non-official practices such as illegal roadblocks and payments (about CFA1000 to CFA5000 at each checkpoint per trip), and inefficient transport administration practices, frustrate road users. In addition, CAR has one of the highest road fatality rates in the world.¹⁰

20. **The road and transport sector in CAR is managed by two main ministries while the Road Maintenance Fund (RMF)¹¹ oversees financing for road maintenance** The Ministry of Public Works, and Road Maintenance (*Ministère de l'Équipement et des Travaux Publics - METP*) is responsible for the road network, including rural roads and the management of barges on internal rivers. The Ministry of Transport and Civil Aviation (*Ministère des Transports et de l'Aviation Civile, MTAC*) oversees transport infrastructure, services, and logistics, including navigability. The Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (*Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Développement Rural - MADR*) is responsible for designing, implementing, and evaluating agricultural, pastoral, and rural development programs. The road fund (*Fonds de l'Entretien Routier-FER*) was created on November 15, 2005 and was to be financed from a portion of fuel levies transferred directly to FER's accounts, but the financial conditions of the road fund deteriorated, making it difficult to undertake road maintenance activities¹². Road fund governance and coordination between with the Ministry of Public Works responsible for planning (METP) is also needed.¹³

Regional trade context

21. **Increasing external and domestic trade is a critical driver of growth, for CAR and the ROC but severe inefficiencies along the corridors and at the borders limit intra-regional trade.** It is, in fact, more costly to trade between these two countries than to import goods from overseas. There is also a low production of tradable goods, a range of tariff and non-tariff barriers, as well as difficulty in implementing reforms for the free movement of goods and people. The

⁹Road density estimated at only 1.5 kilometers per 100 km² (about one-tenth of the average for Sub-Saharan Africa), CAR is under equipped. The main road network is 24,137 km of which 855 km. (4 percent) are paved making traffic conditions very difficult.

¹⁰ According to the World Health Organization (WHO), there were 1,543 road fatalities in 2016 or 33.6 deaths per 100,000 people, higher than the 26.8 average for all of Africa World Health Organization (WHO). Global Status Report on Road Safety 2018. Geneva: WHO.

¹¹ Through a decision taken by the Ministry of Finance in 2018, the government has decided to abolish the direct transfer of road user fees and fuel levy to the road fund account. Also, the commitment to transfer XAF 350,000,000 per month to RMF has not been properly enforced: this puts the road fund in a situation of fund scarcity.

¹² The road fund was implemented and worked properly until 2019 when a reform (IMF and the country) stopped the direct transfer of the fuel levy and redirected the funds to the public treasury.

¹³ Based on findings from an audit of the RMF under the CEMAC-TTFP project



situation is exacerbated by the fragility and landlocked nature of some countries in the region coupled with the huge deficits in infrastructure subsectors like transport (roads, railways, inland waterways, seaports, and air transport), energy, and information and communication technology.

22. **In addition, improvements in the logistical performance along the route, both for international as well as local trade are needed.** The current customs system is not transparent and provides significant opportunities for corruption and capture and is not conducive to small-scale traders. As a gateway Central Africa, ROC ranked 115 out of 167 countries in the World Bank's Logistic Performance Index (LPI) in 2018 and has since then launched a series of initiatives to move from paper based to electronic customs transactions. CAR on the other hand, now ranks 150th out of 167 countries in the LPI, after already falling from a ranking of 98 in 2012 to 134 in 2014. Customs have also introduced some, more limited improvements in the digitation of customs transactions.

Relationship to CPF

23. **The proposed project supports the World Bank Group's (WBG) Regional Integration and Cooperation Assistance Strategy updated in 2020¹⁴.** Three thematic pillars will be supported: (1) *Building Regional Connectivity*, through the renewed navigability of the Congo-Ubangi river corridor and the rehabilitation of key road corridors in CAR opening up access to Bangui and the border of Chad; (2) *Promoting Trade and Market Integration*, through tailored trade facilitation assistance to better align processes and harmonize regulations, and by providing for the safe crossing of the Ubangi river between DRC and CAR; and (3) *Reinforcing Resilience*, through the improved management of transboundary waters and natural resources of the Congo basin.

24. **The proposed project also supports the CPF CAR Country Partnership Framework FY21-25 (CPF) and is aligned with CAR's transport strategy.** Focus areas I of the CPF, emphasizes human capital development and connectivity to boost stabilization, inclusion, and resilience. This focus area aims at investing in people's access to basic services, infrastructure, and connectivity through efforts to "Build Resilient Infrastructures for Improved Connectivity" through the rehabilitation of key road and river corridors (Objective 1.5). At the same time, CAR's transport strategy aims to "reduce dependence on the Douala-Bangui trade corridor and improve connectivity with DRC and ROC" through better access to Kinshasa and Brazzaville gateways, and to connect rural transportation to remote areas.

25. **The ROC CPF FY20-24 emphasizes "interventions to strengthen natural resources management."** The CPF aims to help ROC improve the management of its economy, create a business climate that is conducive to economic diversification, strengthen its human capital, and improve the delivery of basic public services such as health, education, and social protection. The proposed project will not only support water resource management in ROC and the region, but also improve transport and logistics performance (CPF Objective 1.4).

26. **The project supports the WBG Strategy for Fragility, Conflict and Violence (2020-25) and aligns with the Region's operational framework for responding to the COVID-19 pandemic and global crisis.** The project's proposed areas of intervention mirror similar FCV drivers as the neighboring Lake Chad and Great Lakes region, which are among the four FCV sub-regional priorities of the WBG's regional integration program. ROC and CAR epitomize the resource-rich countries with a high prevalence of extreme poverty and armed conflicts. In terms of crises response, proposed project activities reinforce the logistical preparedness of CAR and ROC to deal with the global crisis and contribute to five out of the six areas of intervention in the framework, including ensuring the continuation of lifeline mobility and connectivity (Area 5d)

¹⁴ World Bank Group December 2020. Supporting Africa's Recovery and Transformation: Regional Integration and Cooperation Assistance Strategy Update for the Period FY21- FY23



through its intervention on key road corridors and international waterways. By putting in place a GBV prevention and management mechanism (Area 1f), the project will support the prevention and redress of domestic and gender-based violence.

27. **The proposed project also supports the range of strategies to address climate change.**¹⁵ The country's NDC has set the adaptation objective of improving and developing basic infrastructure through improved standards, and the development of structures that are adapted to climate change. The proposed project aims to enhance the climate resilience of transport infrastructure through the integration of climate and natural hazard considerations in transport asset management systems, infrastructure maintenance practices, and the rehabilitation of road infrastructure.

The proposed project complements other ongoing or planned World Bank and donor interventions in the country. It complements an AfDB project that is currently under preparation on the same multimodal Pointe Noire-Brazzaville-Kinshasa-Bangui-N'Djamena route¹⁶. It will ensure that actions are coordinated in the common zones of World Bank projects: Coordination will also take place with a range of World Bank financed projects in the two countries.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Note to Task Teams: The PDO has been pre-populated from the datasheet for the first time for your convenience. Please keep it up to date whenever it is changed in the datasheet. **Please delete this note when finalizing the document.**

The Project Development Objective is to improve multimodal regional connectivity and trade on the Congo/Ubangi corridor.

Key Results (From PCN)

The following indicators have been selected to measure the progress towards achieving the PDO.

- a. Reduced travel time from ports to landlocked countries (number of days)
- b. Reduced transport costs for users (percentage).
- c. Enhanced accessibility to basic socio-economics infrastructure (number of health centers, schools, markets).
- d. Increased trade volume along economic corridor (\$US), across-borders and by river (% increase).

D. Concept Description

28. **The proposed project would address challenges identified along river/road corridor, including rehabilitating missing physical links, facilitating trade, and enhancing socio-economic infrastructure.** The works would include road rehabilitation and paving in CAR (500 km), and ROC (53 km), river navigation improvements on the Ubangi and Congo rivers from Bangui to Brazzaville (approximately 1,200 km), and the rehabilitation of ports along Congo and Ubangi rivers.

¹⁵ *Next Generation Africa Climate Business Plan*, The World Bank's broad framework for supporting green, resilient, and inclusive development (GRID), *The Climate Change Action Plan* which highlights the urgency to ramp up climate-smart development, and CAR's nationally determined contribution (NDC) to the *United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change* (UNFCCC).

¹⁶ The African Development Bank (AfDB) and other donors are positioned to finance the "Pointe Noire-Brazzaville-Bangui-N'djamena Multimodal Transport Corridor Development Project" with 391.55 million of UC. For CAR, it involves paving road (Gouga-Mbaiki-Bangui, 221 km), building the port of Mougouba. For ROC it involves paving the road of Ouesso-Pokola, 50 km and constructing a bridge of 660 meters. It will also support GIE-SCEVN to buy dredging equipment and undertake a study to determine a sustainable maintenance system of the rivers and will provide technical assistance to CICOS to better accomplish its mission



On the Congo-Ubangi corridor, the project would support the maintenance of infrastructure with the aim of improving navigation conditions between Kinshasa/Brazzaville and Bangui. The roads rehabilitation will be combined with digital connectivity investments to connect agglomerations with well-developed economic activity.

29. **The theory of change seeks reduced travel time and lower transportation costs to *inter alia* increase connectivity and raise the volume (i) international, (ii) bilateral and (iii) domestic trade in goods** Regional integration will be improved thus increasing CAR and ROC's access to domestic and international markets and input suppliers as well as their trade, productivity, and growth prospects while generating environmental co-benefits. In addition, improved roads will increase access to basic socio-economic infrastructure such as health centers, schools, and markets. The riparian's livelihoods improve from the economic opportunities the project will provide to them through components 1, 2 and 3. (Annex 1).

30. **The proposed project will have five components:** (i) Waterways and road infrastructure improvements program (US\$235 million), (ii) support to waterways sector governance, road, and trade facilitation (US\$20 million), (iii) creating economic opportunities for riparian communities and providing better access to markets and social services (US\$30 million), (iv) project management, training, institutional strengthening, technical assistance and implementation support (US\$15 million) and (v) Contingent Emergency Response (US\$0).

31. **Component 1: Waterways, ports, and road infrastructure improvement program (US\$235 million of which US\$ 195 million for CAR and US\$40 million for ROC).** The objective of this component is to improve waterway navigation conditions, reduce risks of entrenchment and delays, increase the annual turnover of boats, and help improve the profitability of waterway operations. The project will finance waterway navigability improvements and road rehabilitation or paving works, covering (i) the Brazzaville-Bangui river corridor spanning 600 km of the Congo river (ROC) and 610 km of the Ubangi river (CAR)¹⁷, and (ii) several ports rehabilitation and (iii) road rehabilitation/pavement work on the Bangui-Bossemebe-Border of Chad and Bossemebe-Bossemptele corridors to improve physical connectivity, reduce travel time, and enhance road user safety. Specifically, this component will include:

- **Sub-component 1.1: Congo-Ubangi waterways improvement investments (US\$11million, of which US\$8 million for CAR and US\$3 million for ROC).** This component will finance the operations of maintenance through GIE-SCEVN for: (i) navigation improvement works comprising the campaigns for installation of river markings and buoys, the removal of obstacles and navigation hazards, the acquisition and or rehabilitation of navigation equipment's, all aiming to reduce the navigation time from the port of Brazzaville to Bangui¹⁸ and (ii) support to regional waterways management agencies for the continuous monitoring of rivers, water levels and flows and the production of navigation maps through the rehabilitation of the hydrometric network.
- **Sub-component 1.2: Congo-Ubangi ports infrastructures improvement investments (US\$19 million, of which US\$12 million for CAR and US\$7 million for ROC).** This component will finance (i) ports and quays rehabilitations or

¹⁷ The navigation improvements will focus on the mainstems of (i) the Congo river (from Brazzaville/Kinshasa to Liranga, the confluence of Congo and Ubangi; and (ii) the Ubangi river (Liranga to Zinga, 100 km, from Bangui).

¹⁸ Achieving perennial navigation from Brazzaville to the port of Bangui under the existing flow regime will require significantly more complex and costlier interventions to remove natural rock ledges that exist in the river channel at Zinga. The proposed project does not include such interventions but will include the improvement of existing multi-modal transport hub at Zinga. The project will finance further detailed assessment to analyze the conditions under which the excavation of Zinga rock would be possible along with the likely impacts.



upgrades¹⁹; (ii) a pre-feasibility study to identify suitable options for increasing navigability period on the Ubangi river beyond 120 days/year observed currently; and (iii) support to national waterways management agencies in the two countries for the continuous monitoring of navigability conditions on the rivers.

- **Sub-component 1.3: Key road infrastructure investments program in CAR and ROC (US\$195million of which US\$165 million for CAR and US\$30 million for ROC).** In CAR, the project will finance (i) roads construction, namely the road sections Bossembele-Bossangoa-Beboura/Border of Chad to connect Bangui with Chad (350km), (ii) rehabilitation of the Bossembele- Bossemptele road section (140 km), a portion of the corridor Bangui-Douala to ensure continuity with the already rehabilitated Baoro-Bouar road, and (iii) a selected feeder road to connect basics services to the rehabilitated main road. In ROC, the project will rehabilitate the road section Bétou-Gouga (53 km) to connect with the section that the AfDB will rehabilitate from Gouga to Bangui. The team will support the government with updating its road network maintenance strategy to ensure the rehabilitated roads will benefit from a sustainable maintenance to avoid premature deterioration.
- **Sub-component 1.4: Digital connectivity support (US\$10 million for CAR).** This component will finance selected digital connectivity investments along the roads to connect agglomerations with well-developed economic activity. The chosen investments in digital connectivity should ideally be aligned with the existing broadband infrastructure development plan, funded by the AfDB, and operationalize under the Digital Governance project (P174620). Specifically, these road works will also be combined with the installation of a fiber optic along the road corridor based on prioritized backbone segments to socio-economic benefits and to connect with the country' neighbors and strengthen international connectivity and redundancy.

32. **Component 2: Support to waterways sector governance, road, and trade facilitation (US\$ 20 million of which US\$11 million for CAR and US\$9 million for ROC).** The river network is a critical trading avenue for the region, supporting a wide range of types of trades, each facing unique challenges: (i) international transit through the port of Pointe Noire, (ii) regional trade within a Customs union, either CEMAC for trade between CAR and Roc, or within ECCAS with DR Congo, and (iii) domestic, linking cities from the same country along the river. Adding a layer of complexity to the challenges is the fact that a large proportion of the regional and domestic trade is informal. That diversity of challenges required diversity in the applied solutions. For formal international and regional trade, enhanced harmonization and simplified customs and border crossing processes will be fundamental to enhance trade fluidity and efficiency along the corridors and in the region. At the same time, to support improved economic and social cohesion while reducing regional disparities, the project will address needs of smaller scale traders along the rivers and roads who are engaged in local trade. Specifically, this component will include:

- **Subcomponent 2.1: Technical assistance on trade facilitation (US\$3 million of which US\$2 million for CAR and US\$1 million for ROC).** The project will finance activities that support harmonization of trade and customs operations among the countries, including the improvement of procedures relating to trade, immigration, standards, etc. and a deepened use of risk based digital processing of customs transactions. For the intraregional and domestic trades, simplified regimes for small scale traders in the two countries will be investigated. To improve governance and services, the project will support improved regulatory transparency along with an authorization system for the public and private sector actors that officially provide regulatory and trade related services along the

¹⁹ The project will finance works to improve the accosting conditions at the ports of Ipfondo, Bangui (TBC) and Brazzaville (TBC). Small ports will benefit from works to support local small trading conditions. (see component 3).



river. Training, capacity building and citizen engagement will seek to raise the professionalism of the public officials and private actors that serve the traders, large and small.

- **Subcomponent 2.2: Technical assistance to GIE-SCEVN to manage waterways maintenance (US\$6 million of which US\$3 million for CAR and US\$3 million for ROC).** This project will support priority actions to enhance SCEVN capacity to undertake maintenance of the Congo basin waterways. The project will finance capacity building and technical assistance to GIE-SCEVN for carrying out periodic hydrographic and geodesy studies, installing and maintaining river markings, and buoying, as well as dredging and obstacles removal on the Congo, Ubangi, and Sangha rivers.²⁰
- **Subcomponent 2.3: Technical assistance to CICOS for improving water resources and waterways management (US\$6 million of which US\$3 million for RCA and US\$3 million for ROC).** The project will support priority actions for improving the regional management of water resources and waterways in the Congo basin. The activities financed under this subcomponent will include strengthening the institutional, technical, and financial capacity of CICOS by (i) supporting the priority measures identified in its PAS (Navigation Strategic Action Plan) and in the SDAGE (River Basin Management Plan); and (ii) supporting a multi-sectoral water needs and options assessment for the Ubangi river, covering the critical challenges.
- **Subcomponent 2.4: Road and river navigation safety, road asset management, and climate resilience (US\$5 million of which US\$3 million for ROC and US\$2 million for CAR).** The project will support the design and implementation of a gradual approach to building resilient, safe, and sustainable road infrastructure and navigation. The following activities will be financed: (i) road safety sensitization campaigns, (ii) navigation safety sensitization campaigns (iii) the preparation of a road asset management strategy, (iv) the preparation of a sustainable maintenance of river corridors strategy with a strong emphasis on climate resilience, (v) piloting sustainable multimodal internal navigation to extend the network (connecting the main river/road to a secondary road/tertiary river for communities isolated from socio-economic facilities), and (vi) capacity building on the climate resilience of road infrastructure and river crossings.

33. **Component 3: Creating socially inclusive investments to support livelihoods, provide economic opportunities to riparian communities, and improve access to markets and social services (US\$30 million of which US\$25 million for CAR and US\$5 million for ROC).** This component will finance socio-economic infrastructure along the river and road corridors. These investments will be identified by the riparian communities after a sensitization campaign presenting the project, its objectives, and activities. The project will finance small scale works and systems to specially support small scale traders at key ports along the river. Such works may include storage facilities, internet access, boat launching. Improvements to the ports themselves, to enable extended hours, more capacity and better conditions may be required. Specifically, the project will look at local ports such as the ports of Bolobo, Kwamouth, Ngombe, Liranga, Bétou, Zongo, Ipfondo, and Bangui and many other small ports located along the rivers to undertake small works to improve the accosting conditions after a technical study. The ports of Bolobo, Kwamouth, Ngombe, Liranga and Zongo, even though located in DRC that is not part of project are playing an important role in the logistical and trade along and across the rivers.

²⁰The activity will reference lessons learned from the European Union project “*Programme d’Appui à l’Amélioration de la Navigabilité des Voies fluviales et lacustres en, 2010-2020*” and DRC’s inland waterways (World Bank Multimodal Transport Project, 2008-2018).



34. **Component 4: Project management, training, institutional strengthening, technical assistance, and implementation support (US\$15 million of which US\$9 million for CAR and US\$ 6 million for ROC).**

- **Sub-Component 4.1: Project management, operating costs, and implementation support (US\$11 million of Which US\$ 7 million for CAR and US\$4 million for ROC).** Activities to be financed under this sub-component include staff salaries and travelling expenses as well as the operating costs and equipment of the Project Management Units and implementation agencies.
- **Subcomponent 4.2: Compensation (US\$2 million of which, US\$ 1 million for CAR and US\$1 million for ROC).** This sub-component will finance compensations in the event of involuntary resettlements and paid by the Government for ROC and the Bank for CAR.
- **Sub-Component 4.3: Capacity building (US\$2 million of Which US\$1 million for CAR and US\$1 million for ROC).** This subcomponent will finance efforts to build the capacity of staff from the project implementation agencies, coordination units and line ministries experts that support the project implementation.

35. **Component 5: Contingent Emergency Response (US\$0).** Known as the Immediate Response Mechanism (IRM) Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC), this component can be activated should there be a need to redirect some project resources to respond to an emergency. These resources would be pooled with those coming from other projects financed by the World Bank in the country. An Immediate Response Mechanism Operational Manual will have to be prepared separately and approved by the World Bank, in line with guidance provided under OP10.00 paragraph 12. In case this component is activated, the project will be restructured to reallocate funds, revise the PDO and indicators, and detail the implementation arrangements.

36. **A Project Preparation Advance (PPA) will be set up to fund key preparatory studies and activities.** For a total amount of US\$ 3 million, the project advance will complement EICRP activities and be used to support, among other things: (i) the update of environmental studies; (ii) the update of detailed feasibility studies; and (iii) the recruitment of staff for the project preparation and implementation unit and a PPP specialist to look at options for road maintenance and river maintenance through PPP.

Note to Task Teams: The following sections are system generated and can only be edited online in the Portal. *Please delete this note when finalizing the document.*

Legal Operational Policies	Triggered?
Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	Yes
Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60	No
Summary of Screening of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts	



Note to Task Teams: This summary section is downloaded from the PCN data sheet and is editable. It should match the text provided by E&S specialist. If it is revised after the initial download the task team must manually update the summary in this section. *Please delete this note when finalizing the document.*

The key environmental issues that need to be managed during the planning, implementation and operation of the project infrastructure are grouped into the following categories: ? Last mile connectivity ? Terminal Facilities and Land Use Planning ? Air Quality ? Surface Water and sediment quality ? Soil and groundwater quality ? Dredging impacts ? Noise impacts ? Energy and climate change mitigation ? Climate change adaptation ? Habitat and species health ? Public health and safety ? Ship-related Waste Management ? Construction waste management ? Spread and contamination with Covid 19.

Some of the risks and impacts associated with the categories below may be:

- Last mile connectivity: Access roads to the existing terminals are either narrow or not fully developed. The advantages of inland water transport are being compromised by the poor connectivity to the terminal facilities.
- Terminal Facilities and Land Use Planning: lack of accessibility to the port facilities due to narrow approach roads that remain congested with unplanned and unregulated residential and commercial development surrounding the port areas, and local and port related passenger and cargo movement; lack of parking areas for the passenger and cargo vehicles and they occupy the access roads to the ports.
- Air Quality: Air pollution may be caused by emissions from construction related traffic and machinery. A lot of dust will be produced by earth works, other machinery, concrete mixing, and traffic from trucks and vehicles. These emissions could deteriorate the ambient air quality and affect public health, densely populated areas and crowded markets being also particularly vulnerable. Dust generated from these activities could also impact crops and livestock.
- Surface Water and sediment quality: Bank protection works, and instream construction works (dredging related impacts are covered in a separate section) may cause local increase in water turbidity, Construction camps, offices and warehouses will generate substantial quantities of wastewater.
- Soil and groundwater quality: During construction period, soils in the construction area and nearby agricultural lands will be prone to pollution from construction activities and facilities. Storage sites for fuel and hazardous materials and their handling are also potential sources for soil and ground water pollution.
- Dredging impacts: Dredging activities may cause several negative impacts on the aquatic habitat and fauna due to generation of high sediment flows, disturbance of benthic habitat, noise and emissions from construction machinery, and accidental spillage of fuels.
- Noise impacts: During construction on the land, noise levels produced by vehicles, machinery, concrete mixing, and other construction activities will exceed the applicable standards and may cause nuisance to local community and disturbance to birds. Instream construction activities such as piling will generate underwater noise levels that have a potential to impact fish. Dredging activities will also create noise and vibration under water, which may cause disruption to fish migration and disturbance to dolphins.
- Climate change mitigation and Adaptation: During port operations and even road construction, greenhouse gases such as carbon dioxide will be released from terminal operations, shipping and transport of materials, equipment, and personnel, thus contributing to global climate change.
- Habitat and species health: Construction works both on land and in the river (bank protection, piling, dredging) may generate sediment load in the river. Erosion from the construction works and material storage sites also increases the sediment load to the river. Sediment concentrations above natural levels can cause mortality of plankton and fish; for fish, damaged gills and sediment clogging of gill chambers eventually leads to death, which in turn will influence the availability of dolphin's diet and its habitat.
- Public health and safety : Occupational Health and Safety: Construction activities may pose health and safety hazards to the workers at site during use of hazardous substances, lifting and handling of heavy equipment, operating machinery



and electrical equipment, exposure to dust and hazardous materials that may be present in construction materials and demolition waste, hazardous materials in other building components; working near water or at height and more Inappropriate handling or accidental spillage/leakage of these substances can potentially lead to safety and health hazards for the construction workers as well as the local community.

- Community Health and Safety: During the construction phase, the population living in close proximity to the construction area, the construction workforce and individuals drawn to the area.

the overall social impacts are expected to be positive, the anticipated social risks and impacts include:

SEA/SH: The project will recruit many workers for construction/rehabilitation of roads, quays, ports and ITC installation which will affect the risks of SEA/SH on women and young girls; the project will also recruit many workers for labor-intensive public works (LIPW) with exposure to SEA/SH risks to vulnerable community members. Recent experiences in other Bank-financed projects have shown that despite the improved project capacity to address SEA/SH, risks remain in infrastructures projects. Therefore, to mitigate this risk, procedures such as an SEA/SH assessment and action plan will be required.

Regarding inadequate compensation processes, although the funds to compensate the PAPs could be the IDA funds, this means being available on time, stakeholders may suffer from the short project preparation time, due to insecurity issues, and some may be forgotten as a result. In addition, there may be limited capacities of client for effective stakeholder engagement which is the key element for a successful resettlement process. Furthermore, the district compensation rates for crops may not be adequate, as they do not always reflect market rates. Therefore, these rates should be adjusted in the RAPs.

The social risk classification also considered the following aspects:

Risks of exclusion of vulnerable groups: As this roads project foresees the recruitment of local workers and the compensation of PAPs where vulnerable groups exist, strategic approaches should be developed through the SEP to ensure that there is no exclusion or marginalization of any vulnerable groups especially among IDPs, ethnic minorities, young people, women, persons with disabilities, etc.

Insecurity risks: The project intends to implement certain activities in specific districts of CAR or Congo crossed by the rivers. Unfortunately, there are non-state army groups who are not under control. This means that the risks of attacks on project workers as well as workers' living quarters, machinery and beneficiaries should be considered. A project security assessment and management plan will be developed to define the mitigation measures. New wave of COVID-19 risks: Current COVID-19 related risks of dissemination, and uncertainties about new waves, in relation with community mobilization activities.

Community and workers risks to increase HIV/AIDS transmission: Labor influx in different cities may lead to the spreading of communicable diseases and a number of other safety and health risks to communities, especially risk of transmission of STI and HIV/AIDS cases. The client should incorporate awareness raising sessions and preventive materials into the workers' health and safety plan and the ESMP.

Note: To view the Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts, please refer to the Concept Stage ESRS Document.

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