Combined Project Information Documents / Integrated Safeguards Datasheet (PID/ISDS)
### A. Basic Project Data

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Project ID</th>
<th>Project Name</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Western Africa</td>
<td>P169064</td>
<td>Second Africa Higher Education Centers of Excellence for Development Impact</td>
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<tr>
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<th>Estimated Board Date</th>
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<td>10-Oct-2019</td>
<td>Education</td>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Financing Instrument</th>
<th>Borrower(s)</th>
<th>Implementing Agency</th>
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**Proposed Development Objective(s)**

To improve quality, quantity and development impact of postgraduate education in selected universities through regional specialization and collaboration.

**Components**

- Establishing New and Scaling up Well-performing existing Africa Centers of Excellence for Development Impact
- Fostering Regional Partnerships and Scholarships
- Enhancing National and Regional Level Project Facilitation, and Monitoring and Evaluation
- Unallocated

### PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US$, Millions)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>SUMMARY</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Total Project Cost</td>
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<td>Total Financing</td>
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### Funding Details

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<td>FRANCE: French Agency for Development</td>
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### Environmental Assessment Category

**B-Partial Assessment**

**Decision**
The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

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**B. Introduction and Context**

**Regional Context**
1. **Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA)** is home to the largest share of the global poor and demonstrates the widest poverty gap. Of the 767 million people, globally, living below the extreme poverty line in 2013, 389 million (51 percent) were in SSA. Although the overall global number of the extremely poor is decreasing (dropping to 736 million in 2015) and is expected to continue to decrease, the share of the global poor residing in SSA is expected to be about 87 percent in 2030, should economic growth over the next 12 years follow historical growth patterns. Three of the predominant attributes of the profile of the poor are that they are poorly educated, young, and employed in the agricultural sector. The common drivers of inequality which need to be addressed to reduce the poverty gap are: slow human capital accumulation; disparities in access to jobs and income-generating opportunities; and unsuccessful government interventions that attempt to address market-based inequalities (such as taxes and transfers).

2. Between 2003 and 2013, SSA experienced remarkable economic growth with an average annual real gross domestic product (GDP) growth rate of 5.3 percent, largely driven by a commodity price boom. This growth, however, did not translate into significant poverty reduction, partly due to high population growth, limited creation of jobs and an unequal distribution of the benefits of such economic growth. The pace of economic growth in SSA has increased recently – rising from 1.5 percent in 2016 to 2.6 percent in 2017, although this remains the lowest level of economic growth observed in the region in more than two decades. While SSA has tremendous potential for growth, recent trends and a modest outlook moving forward reflect, in part, insufficient progress on structural reforms.

3. To achieve strong economic growth and reduce poverty, increased productivity across key economic priority sectors, economic diversification, and implementation of structural reforms are needed. Human capital development is essential for increasing productivity and promoting economic diversification. Currently, SSA economies are highly dependent on unskilled labor and natural resources, preventing the region from moving up the value chain and becoming more specialized in knowledge-intensive, and high value-added activities. An additional challenge relates to low institutional capacity in the region to train sufficient numbers of professionals with the technical and critical thinking skills (such as high-order cognitive skills) required to incorporate new knowledge and technologies into products and services.

4. A range of priority economic sectors face shortages in workers with high-level (postgraduate level) skills as well as limitations in applied research which is needed to increase productivity. The skills and applied research shortages in priority sectors include: in the energy sector (skills and applied research for power generation, transmission, and renewable energy); within extractives (skills for mining, oil, and gas); skills for sustainable urban planning, transport, sustainable agriculture, health and environment (coastal resilience, climate change, and assessments related to infrastructure and mining); in education (skills in teacher training in science, technology, engineering and math (STEM) education); and in the information and communication technology (ICT) sector - both in the ICT sector and cross-cutting areas (advanced digital skills). Other important areas where high-level skills are needed are those fields focusing on more policy-relevant research on Africa’s development challenges that can inform policymakers and public debate, for example, the fields of statistics and quantitative economics. The region also faces technical skills shortages in the areas of procurement, financial management (FM), and safeguards (environmental and social), affecting the design and implementation of development projects financed

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1 The operation is focused on five countries: Benin, The Gambia, Niger, Nigeria and Togo. The French Development Agency will solely finance a complementary project in Cote d’Ivoire.
by governments and development partners. In development projects, this results in an overreliance on expatriates and international consultants for the design and implementation of projects.

5. **Human resource capacity in SSA remains particularly low in the science and technology (S&T) fields.** A survey of executives shows that for the indicator “Availability of scientists and engineers”, Nigeria and Mauritania rank 79th and 137th, respectively, out of 137 countries globally. In 2010, the share of researchers in Senegal and Ghana engaged in engineering and technology-related research was 2 and 13 percent, respectively, compared to 62 percent (2013) in Singapore. In 2014, the number of researchers per one million inhabitants in South Korea was 6,899 compared to only 88 per one million inhabitants in SSA. While it is home to 14 percent of the world’s population, SSA’s share of global expenditure on research and development (R&D) was only 0.8 percent in 2014, and this figure had remained unchanged for the prior five years.³

6. **Improved productivity can be achieved by equipping the workforce with relevant S&T skills and ensuring they have the competencies necessary to develop, adapt and apply solutions to sectoral challenges in Africa** (e.g., in supporting industries in producing higher value-added products and services). If African higher education institutions are transformed to deliver international-quality training and applied research, becoming more dynamic and internationally connected, such training and research could be increasingly undertaken in Africa. Thus, African talent would be more likely to stay in the region and in turn increase institutional capacity in the region to adopt more technology, deliver innovative services and support evidence-based policy making.

**Sectoral and Institutional Context**

7. **The education systems in SSA face important challenges at all levels.** While significant gains have been observed in increasing access to primary education in the region, major efforts are still needed to ensure that all children have access to quality basic education – as this provides the foundation for an individual’s success in post-basic education. Continued and increased efforts are also needed to increase access to and improve the quality and relevance of secondary, technical and vocational education and training (TVET) and higher education, to combat youth unemployment and underemployment and to build overall capacity in the region.

8. **Key challenges facing the higher education sector in the region include the following:**

   (i) **Low quality of higher education programs.** Global higher education rankings provide some indication of the quality of universities and the programs they offer. The most widely used rankings show that, in SSA, only a few South African universities feature in the top 500.⁴ International accreditation assessments of education programs in engineering undertaken in the context of the World Bank-financed Africa Higher Education Centers of Excellence Project (ACE I) (P126974) highlight the following as key drivers of poor quality programs: (a) the educational objectives of programs and student learning outcomes are not clearly stated nor are they assessed; (b) there are no periodic reviews of the competencies of graduates that are in demand by employers; (c) programs provide few hands-on practical projects/opportunities, placing an emphasis on

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² Data from The Global Competitiveness Report 2017-2018.
³ World Bank Open Data and UNESCO Institute for Statistics.
⁴ The rankings consulted are Times Higher Education, QS World University, and the Shanghai Rankings. An exception is Makerere University, from Uganda, which placed 401-500 in the Times Higher Education Ranking.
Theoretical knowledge; (d) student admissions processes do not adequately capture the preparedness of students for technical fields such as engineering; (e) weak processes exist for selecting and determining the basic coursework for various fields of study; and (f) no mechanisms exist to ensure that teaching and assessment procedures are followed. These shortcomings are found to be more important than, inter alia, limited qualifications of the faculty and limitations in the teaching and learning environment (for example, limited internet connectivity, and insufficient and inadequate equipment and laboratories for teaching and research).

(ii) **Limited impact of postgraduate education (including linkages with labor-market needs of the priority sectors) and applied research on economic development.** Key sector stakeholders, such as companies and line ministries in the region who stand to benefit significantly from the availability of skilled graduates and relevant research outputs, are usually not active participants in the education or research programs and activities of most SSA universities. Their absence contributes to a mismatch in the demand for and supply of skills, and a misalignment of applied research with priority sector needs. As a result, graduates and research outputs of these academic programs have only a limited impact on addressing challenges that the priority sectors face. There is inadequate engagement on the part of industry stakeholders in, for example, curricula development, advisory boards at universities, the identification of research topics and the provision of internships to students. Without steering postgraduate programs and applied research towards development impact, the continent will not maximize its benefits from its human resources.

(iii) **Limited supply (quantity) of higher education graduates, particularly from master’s and Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programs in priority sectors.** The region has experienced a massive expansion in student enrollment in higher education, with many public universities in Africa experiencing increases in enrollment far beyond what they were designed to accommodate. In the region, higher education enrollment increased from 2.5 million in 2000 to 7.4 million in 2015. Despite this significant expansion in enrollment, gross higher education enrollment rate remains low at 9 percent (compared to 74 percent in the developed world). There is a noticeable gender gap with 10.5 percent of men in the relevant age-cohort enrolled compared to only 7.5 percent for women. Further, only six percent of total enrollment is in master’s degree programs and one percent in PhD programs. In West Africa, the share of higher education students enrolled in Science, Technology, Engineering and Math (STEM) programs, which are critical fields for economic growth and development, is as low as 9 percent in some countries, according to available data. The share of female enrollment in STEM fields with respect to the overall enrollment of higher education students in STEM programs is also extremely low – accounting for just 5 percent in Niger and 8 percent in Ghana. Such low higher education enrollment rates, coupled with a shortage of skilled labor, points to the significant need for a strategic expansion of the higher education sector.

9. **Other major challenges observed which limit the quality and relevance of higher education include:**
(i) **Limited regional higher education integration:** Regional higher education integration – which to date has been limited – is advantageous as no one country can afford to fund quality higher education in all the areas required for the development of their economies and challenges they face. As such, it is inefficient and a missed opportunity if knowledge and skills acquisition are not generated as public goods to solve common regional problems. Further, the limited demand for higher education at a national level results in little competition among higher education institutions, and hence there is lower value-for-money (whether public or private). To date, there has only been limited regional coordination in higher education, leading to the unnecessary duplication of efforts and inefficient public investments. Governments and most institutions are yet to develop a regional vision, strategy and capacity to support the development of a competitive regional market for higher education. A practical issue stemming from the lack of regional integration is the cumbersome nature of mutual and international recognition of accreditation.

(ii) **Ineffective governance and inefficient management of higher education institutions:** Weak institutional governance is often manifested in internal conflicts between faculties and departments, faculty and student strikes, and non-merit-based appointments. Weak governance stems from: a lack of pro-active, transparent, and professional leadership; political interference; and decisions motivated by other non-academic (including personal and political) objectives. The lack of a consistently maintained academic calendar with timely admissions and exams – combined with limited management information systems (MIS), weak FM and procurement at the institutional level – often lead to low quality programs and, hence, graduates with low competency levels. Specifically, the lack of reliable and timely data results in poor planning, lack of accountability of institutional leadership, an inefficient use of resources, and difficulties in assessing institutional performance.

(iii) **Inadequate financing for higher education:** The provision of quality higher education cannot be sustained without additional contributions from affluent households and the private sector. Public funding for higher education is scarce across the region – and, by itself, is insufficient to finance the expansion of and improvements in higher education. With the exception of countries such as Senegal, Sierra Leone, Ghana, Côte d’Ivoire, and Gabon, government investments in higher education are less than 1 percent of GDP in most countries in West and Central Africa. Most students enrolled in higher education in SSA come from relatively affluent households that can contribute more towards covering the costs of higher education particularly at the postgraduate level. Currently, public funding in SSA targeting low-income students is insufficient. Further, public funding is not specifically channeled to strategic areas of higher education where private investments are not forthcoming (such as STEM). Moreover, institutions do not give adequate attention to supplementing public funding through non-budgetary services (e.g., student fees, consultancies, private donations, and international R&D competitions).

10. **As a result of these challenges facing the higher education sector in SSA, programs offered at the postgraduate level are generally not responsive to the region’s needs for skills, training and knowledge.** Limited provision of high quality and market-relevant academic programs and the small number of
graduates with skills critical for the priority sectors consequently lead to many students from the region seeking postgraduate degrees to make the decision to obtain them outside of SSA. Available data indicate that in 2016, of the almost 200,000 higher education students from West and Central Africa studying outside their countries, fewer than 20 percent were studying in SSA. For example, out of the 23,000 Cameroonian students pursuing their studies abroad, only 8 percent are doing so in SSA. Similarly, in 2016, 50,000 of Nigeria’s 65,000 outbound students were pursuing their studies outside of SSA.

11. While the tuition and living costs of these outbound students is expensive for the region, the loss of talent has even more significant implications. It costs the region an estimated US$3.6 billion per year to cover the costs of these students pursuing their studies abroad. When these students do not return to the region but choose to work abroad upon graduation, the region suffers a further talent deficit. Without a timely expansion of quality postgraduate programs, the future quality and relevance of higher education in the region will be undermined through a lack of qualified faculty. The student population in higher education institutions in West and Central Africa is expected to double every ten years over the next 30 years which will increase the stress on these institutions and further negatively impact quality and relevance.

12. Addressing the challenges in the higher education sector will require interventions at the national and regional levels. A number of such efforts have been undertaken or are currently underway. At the national level, the World Bank is supporting national higher education programs in several SSA countries. For example, in West Africa, there are currently International Development Association (IDA)-funded higher education projects in Senegal (P123673), Mali (P151318), Burkina Faso (P164293) and Côte d’Ivoire (P160642). These projects aim to address key challenges faced by the national higher education system - related to employability, access and equity, and the quality of higher education - with a focus on the undergraduate level and government capacity for accreditation and financing. At the regional level, the World Bank launched its first regional higher education intervention in SSA through a series of ACE Projects. The ACE I project (P126974), was launched in 2014 in West and Central Africa, with additional financing (P153111) in 2016 for Côte d’Ivoire and supports 22 centers in total. This was followed by the ACE II project (second phase - P151847), which was launched in 2016 in East and Southern Africa and supports 24 centers.

13. The Africa Higher Education Centers of Excellence for Development Impact (ACE Impact) projects target West and Central African countries (including Djibouti) and consist of two projects. The projects are: (i) the First ACE Impact Project (P164546), which is across 5 countries was approved on March 27, 2019, and will close on December 31, 2023; and (ii) this proposed Second ACE Impact Project, which will be across 5 countries. Both projects will have the same technical design, including common evaluation and selection schedule and processes, project operational manual (POM)\(^5\), as well as implementation arrangement structures. The regional facilitation unit (RFU), which is hosted at the Association of African Universities (AAU), will be responsible for regional coordination and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) activities for both projects (AAU is financed under both ACE Impact projects through regional grants).

14. The primary differences between the First ACE Impact and the proposed Second ACE Impact projects are: the list of participating countries; and the preparation schedule. The First ACE Impact project is supporting 16 ACE centers (referred to as ACEs) and two Emerging centers of excellence.

\(^5\) The POM prepared under the First ACE Impact has been updated to include elements relevant to the Second ACE Impact
Emerging centers are centers (non-ACE centers) that are selected through a non-competitive process to receive support to strengthen their programs mostly at the undergraduate and master’s degree level in a priority field. The First ACE Impact project countries were selected based on the following criteria: (i) country readiness, (ii) expressed interest – countries that expressed interest in participating in the project first were prioritized; and (iii) planned elections – those countries with planned elections in February – March 2019 were also prioritized. Countries that did not meet these criteria were added to the Second ACE Impact project. The proposed Second ACE Impact project will support 23 ACE centers and three Emerging centers in Benin, Niger, Nigeria, The Gambia and Togo. In addition, the French Development Agency (AFD) will solely finance 4 ACEs from Cote d’Ivoire and a project implementation unit from within the Ministry of Higher Education of Cote d’Ivoire for national level coordination. Figure 1 below provides an illustration of the key differences between ACE I, ACE II and the First and Second ACE Impact projects.

Figure 1. ACE I, ACE II and ACE Impact (First and Second) and the key features

Note: The arrows show the duration between start and expected end dates of project implementation.

15. **The ACE projects aim to build regional capacity to deliver high quality postgraduate courses and to conduct and disseminate international caliber applied research focused on addressing development challenges in SSA.** Given the limited resources available to support postgraduate training and applied research in SSA, the ACE projects are designed to increase specialization and excellence of higher education. This will build regional capacity essential to Africa’s development. The ACE projects leverage institutional and national strengths to serve regional needs. To achieve results, the ACE projects use a regional model with the following elements: transparent and competitive selection of centers; a strong focus on regional collaboration, networks and student recruitment; strong government and institutional
ownership; results-based financing (RBF) with independent verification of results; a robust M&E protocol; intensive implementation support using regional and international subject matter experts; and the development of partnerships across institutions, private sector/industry actors and academics. Results from ACE I and II projects are encouraging (see Boxes 1 and 2 below).

16. Each ACE center contributes to the broader regional project goal of strengthening and regionalizing higher education in SSA. An ACE center consists of a group of faculty members from multiple academic departments led by a recognized center leader and with a network of external sectoral and academic partners. The education and applied research activities of the center focus on a single thematic area that is critical for development, for instance, climate change, maternal and infant health, and Information technology. ACE centers aim to recruit a high-quality regional student body and work towards: producing a highly trained workforce with skills tailored to the needs of the sector(s) they serve; partnering with industry and sector stakeholders to identify regional needs; and disseminating research results both in international publications and through appropriate regional channels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 1. ACE I Results</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Centers supported under the ACE I project have achieved strong results over four years of implementation: (i) 35 programs have attained international accreditation (&gt; 200 percent of the target of 15 programs) and several top-performing ACEs have emerged; (ii) 16,000 short-term, 9000 master’s and 2,000 students have enrolled in postgraduate programs, including 8,200 regional students (92 percent of the target of 8,900 regional students (a regional student is an African student from a country outside of the country of study); (iii) 4,945 students and faculty have participated in an internship in a company relevant to their field of study (72 percent of the target of 5,900 internships); and (iv) US$50.6 million has been generated by the 22 ACE I centers through competitive R&amp;D grants, scholarship competitions as well as student fees and testing services (633 percent of the target of US$8.0 million).</td>
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</tbody>
</table>

Progress made on the part of ACEs confirms that targeted applied research contributes substantially to development outcomes. For instance, the ACE Center for Genomics of Infectious Diseases in Nigeria tested in 2014 the first Ebola patient in the country within six hours of receiving the individual’s blood sample. This proved to be critical and timely for the successful containment of Ebola in the country.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Box 2. Preliminary Results from ACE II</th>
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<tr>
<td>Under the ACE II project, preliminary results from the Centers demonstrate good progress: (i) more than 1,300 master’s students and 553 PhD students have enrolled in the ACEs of which over 715 are female; (ii) US$11 million has been generated in external revenue within the two years of implementation; and (iii) 228 Memoranda of Understanding (MoUs) on research and training collaboration have been entered into by the ACEs with regional and international universities and research institutions. The Center for Innovative Drug Development and Therapeutic Trials for Africa at Addis Ababa University, Ethiopia, for example, obtained two grants with its partners, King’s College London (US$1.5 million), and University of Sussex (US$1 million) funded by the National Institute of Health (UK) for their research and to support PhD students and post-doctoral fellows.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

17. The proposed Second ACE Impact project builds on lessons learned from the ACE I and II projects and emphasizes the largest remaining challenge, which is increasing it’s the impact of these efforts on development. With the success of the established model, the proposed project will scale up the impact on production of quality, employable graduates and applied research in well-performing
existing centers, and support new centers, including in Western and Central African countries that did not participate in the ACE I and the First ACE Impact projects. Further, the project represents an evolution by targeting a larger impact on development through: (a) specific targeting of pre-identified skills and knowledge gaps for the region (power engineering, ICT, environmental sciences, etc.); (b) ensuring mandatory upfront and continuous engagement with the key economic sector/industry players; (c) increasing focus on institutional change at the university level, beyond one center of the university, including a focus on strengthening engineering and technology schools; (d) allowing less competitive (Emerging) institutions to benefit from regional networking with the more competitive ACE centers; (e) directly linking with a series of other World Bank and government supported regional initiatives; and (f) building the project into a multi-partner platform for enhancing Africa’s higher education sector.

18. By adding the First and Second ACE Impact projects to the existing ACE I and II centers, the World Bank would be supporting a total of about 70 unique centers of excellence across SSA (where 14 new ACEs will be from this proposed Second ACE Impact project). This support will serve as a needed catalyst for building a highly skilled workforce and generating the applied research skills and knowledge required to drive SSA’s economic transformation. In developed and emerging economies, universities continue to be pivotal in driving change through similar centers of excellence concepts, although often in larger quantities. For example, the Government of India supported 135 engineering colleges to improve the quality of their programs/training offered under the World Bank-financed Technical Education Quality Improvement Program (P102549). Further, it is common to find many specialized centers in a single world-class university. For example, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, a top-ranked Swedish university, currently has more than 50 such centers.

19. The proposed Second ACE Impact project is aligned with the Partnership for Skills in Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (PASET), which seeks to build – from the technical/vocational level to higher education and research – a technical and scientifically skilled labor force to support priority sectors in SSA. Two of the main initiatives under PASET are the Regional Scholarship and Innovation Fund (RSIF) and the Regional Benchmarking of SSA Universities. The ACE I and II projects have provided the framework within which PASET’s regional scholarship fund has been nurtured and is now supported as a World Bank-financed project - Africa RSIF for Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology (P165581) – the RSIF project. Under the proposed Second ACE Impact project, participating countries may allocate up to US$2 million of the Second ACE Impact IDA envelope to the RSIF.

20. Most higher education systems in the region lack accountability in the performance of their higher education institutions. However, under PASET’s Benchmarking initiative, a strong momentum has been generated from several governments and universities in the region to strengthen the availability of data which can be used for performance assessment. About 31 universities (most of which host ACE centers) across 12 countries participated in the PASET Benchmarking exercise in 2016. The benchmarking exercise compared universities on 60 indicators including those related to access, gender, quality of faculty, governance, financing, research, graduate outcomes and technology transfer. Benchmarking exercises coupled with student engagement surveys and graduate tracer study tools currently under development could help to establish greater accountability and improved performance in higher education institutions in the region.
C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Development Objective(s) (From PAD)

21. To improve quality, quantity and development impact of postgraduate education in selected universities through regional specialization and collaboration.

Key Results

PDO-Level Indicators

22. The PDO-level indicators are:

- Number of students (national and regional) enrolled in specialized master’s, PhD and short-term professional courses/programs in the ACEs (Quantity of Education & Regional Specialization)
- Number of ACE programs and ACE host institutions that obtain international accreditation (Quality of Education)
- Percentage of ACE host institutions with a comprehensive strategic plan for regionalization (Regional Specialization and Collaboration)
- Number of ACEs that have had substantial development impact (as measured by an independent evaluation of each center’s impact on development at mid-term and end of project)
- Number of students and faculty participating in internships in relevant institutions (Development Impact of Education)

D. Project Description

23. The proposed project consists of three Components: Component 1: Establishing new and scaling-up well-performing existing ACE centers for development impact; Component 2: Fostering regional partnerships and scholarships; and Component 3: Enhancing national and regional level project facilitation and M&E. Component 1 will aim to strengthen capacity in 23 ACE centers and their host institutions (supply-side). Component 2 will aim to strengthen 3 non-ACE institutions in the region and allow students to benefit from the capacity in the ACE centers (demand-side) as well contribute towards the RSIF. Centers under Component 2 will be known as Emerging centers. Component 3 will aim to support national and regional level facilitation of the project and M&E related activities. Financing for Component 1 and Sub-component 2.1 will be results-based, while financing for Component 3 will be input-based.

24. In both Nigeria and Benin, the Second ACE Impact Project will be appraised jointly by the World Bank and AFD. Funds from AFD for Nigeria (EUR 35.6 million; equivalent US$ 40 million) and Benin (EUR 10 million; equivalent US$11.2 million) will be available later in FY20 (to be confirmed by AFD). In both

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6 Support for national level coordination will be provided in Nigeria and the Gambia.
countries, AFD and the World Bank will jointly contribute to the funding of the results in select centers, according to the proportion of their overall funding to each of those centers. The World Bank and AFD had signed a co-financing framework agreement on June 13, 2018, setting forth the basis on which they intend to co-finance projects. Further, the World Bank and AFD will negotiate and sign a co-financing agreement specific to the proposed Second ACE Impact Project, which would aim to define, among others, services related to the project implementation that the World Bank would provide to AFD and the related fees to be paid by AFD to the World Bank. The Project Appraisal Document provides detailed information on the arrangements, including the role of each financier in the implementation of the ACE Impact Project in the two countries.

25. In Cote d'Ivoire, a complementary project which will support 4 ACEs (3 of which have been supported by the World Bank under ACE I) has been prepared by and will be solely funded by AFD in the amount of EUR 18 million (US$21 million equivalent). However, Cote d'Ivoire will be invited to participate in the regional activities and will be able to benefit from select technical services provided by the RFU to the ACE Impact Projects.

### Table 1. Overview of Second ACE Impact Project Components and Sub-Components

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Component 1</th>
<th>Component 2</th>
<th>Component 3</th>
</tr>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Establishing new and scaling-up well-performing existing ACEs for development impact</td>
<td>Fostering regional partnerships and scholarships</td>
<td>Enhancing national and regional level project facilitation, and M&amp;E</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-component 1.1</strong> Support to establish new centers of excellence</td>
<td><strong>Sub-component 2.1</strong> Support to emerging centers (non-ACEs) for networking, regional technical assistance and improving learning environment</td>
<td><strong>Sub-component 3.1</strong> Support for project facilitation and M&amp;E at the regional level</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sub-component 1.2</strong> Support to scale-up well performing ACE I centers</td>
<td><strong>Sub-component 2.2</strong> Support for PhD scholarships through the PASET Regional Scholarship &amp; Innovation Fund</td>
<td><strong>Sub-component 3.2</strong> Support for national level coordination (Nigeria and The Gambia) by government designated national higher education agencies</td>
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</table>

**Component 1:** Establishing new and scaling up well-performing existing Africa Centers of Excellence for development impact (Total: US$256 million equivalent of which IDA is US$76.8 million equivalent, AFD co-financing is US$51.2 million equivalent and government contribution is US$128 million equivalent)

26. **Component 1 aims to build and strengthen the capacity of 23** competently selected centers and one (1) School of Engineering located in higher education institutions across West and Central Africa. Component 1 has two sub-components: Sub-component 1.1 will establish 14 new ACE Impact centers for skills development and knowledge generation (through applied research) to address development

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7 AFD is solely funding ACEs from Côte d’Ivoire that are not included in this count: 3 ACEs under sub-component 1.1 and 1 ACE under sub-component 1.2
challenges that are not addressed under the ACE I project. Sub-component 1.2 will provide additional support to 9 well-performing ACE centers participating in the ongoing ACE I project (these ACE Impact centers will be referred to as *renewal centers*) to scale-up impact on development challenges, to strengthen regional collaboration, and to ensure that these ACE centers are fully fiscally sustainable. Additional funding will support five engineering and technology institutions hosting ACE centers from Sub-components 1.1 and 1.2, to broaden capacity, and to enhance the potential for long-term sustainability and strengthen institutional impact.

27. **Each ACE Impact center (new and renewal) supported through Component 1 will focus activities on a specific regional development challenge.** Each of these centers is targeted in scope and will deliver postgraduate education and applied research programs developed in coordination with relevant stakeholders. While the center work plans are focused, a multidisciplinary approach will be essential to achieving the goals of each center.

28. Provided below are details on key aspects of establishing the new ACEs and scaling up the renewal centers: (i) strategic objectives and activities; (ii) strategic and competitive selection process; (iii) pre-identified (targeted) regional development challenges; and (iv) funding of the ACE Impact centers and the institutions in which they are hosted:

   (i) **ACE’s strategic objectives and activities:** Each center under Component 1 will scale-up postgraduate education, applied collaborative research and outreach to address regional development challenges. This will be achieved through: higher quality postgraduate education addressing the skills gap and tackling priority applied research questions; leading regional education networks; and delivering short-term courses, for example, a two-week course for mid-career professionals. In consultation with stakeholders, the centers will update and/or launch new postgraduate (master’s and Ph.D.) degree programs that are accredited to meet international quality standards. The centers will offer curricula that ensure that students have the in-demand competencies upon graduating from their degree programs, including analytical, digital skills, and entrepreneurial competencies. Partnerships with national, regional, and global sectoral actors will ensure that the ACEs focus their activities on education and research to solve specific problems associated with development challenges. Centers will disseminate their research findings to policymakers and companies and also through international peer reviewed journals. Further, each center will be required to have policies backed by specific interventions in place to: (a) increase the number of females within their student body, faculty and academic leadership. The activities include additional training, mentoring, and funding of female students and faculty as well as regional peer learning among centers, as described in a guidance note to centers on promotion of women in STEM; and (b) ensure an overall positive well-being of their students. Under this project, greater emphasis will be placed on ensuring ACE host institutions are incentivized to undertake several activities, including those that promote: good governance; data collection and management; and regionalization of their institutions towards making their institutions regionally (and globally) competitive.

   (ii) **Strategic and competitive selection of ACEs:** The evaluation and selection process which covered
proposals from all countries aiming to participate in both the First and Second ACE Impact projects was rigorous, transparent, merit-based and consistent with international standards for higher education and research funding organizations. The evaluation process consisted of a two-stage desk evaluation (individual expert evaluations and a panel evaluation) and site visits that were performed by several independent evaluation experts from SSA, the diaspora and across the globe. The selection process was designed to ensure that selected ACE Impact centers will collectively address many of the region’s specific development challenges and promote a balanced portfolio of ACEs in terms of new and renewal centers and their focus areas, countries and language groups participating in the project. Of the 105 eligible proposals submitted, the Ministerial level (see Section E for the description of the two-level PSC) of the Project Steering Committee (PSC) selected 44 ACEs (further reduced to 43 ACEs). Out of the 43 ACEs, 23 of them are supported under the proposed Second ACE Impact project based on the recommendations of evaluation experts, using objective rules.

(iii) **The pre-identified (targeted) regional development challenges:** Although all centers will address a regional development challenge, 15 of the original 44 First and Second ACE Impact centers were selected to address critical pre-identified regional shortages of skills and knowledge. In consultation with regional governments, the private sector, and other regional stakeholders, a set of Terms of Reference (ToRs) with expected educational and applied research outcomes were prepared for each of the following 11 pre-identified thematic areas: water, digital development (ICT), power and renewable energy (energy), urban design, coastal degradation, social risk management (includes environmental science and applied Impact assessment), education, transport-logistics, quantitative economics, procurement and nursing/health professionals. At least one proposal was selected within each area with the exception of procurement (the lone proposal was of low quality) and social risk management (no proposals submitted). However, one of the selected centers will receive add-on funding to offer programs in social risk management.

(iv) **Center funding:** The governments, selected universities, AFD (co-financing Benin and Nigeria) and the World Bank have defined the allocation of funds to the centers based on the funding needs of each center (taking into consideration the thematic area) and the host country’s priorities. Each center’s funds have been distributed across a set of disbursement-linked indicators/results (DLIs/DLRs). These DLIs are pre-identified indicators that once achieved by the center and independently verified, the center will qualify for disbursement of a pre-determined amount for each specific DLI. The disbursements will be made against the center’s eligible expenditure program (EEP) which is part of the annual budget of its host institution. The EEPs consist of salaries, scholarships and operating costs. Each university will sign a performance and funding agreement (PFA) with its government. These agreements will include the following stipulations:

- New centers may allocate up to 25 percent of funding for civil works;
- At least 15 percent of the funds will be invested in partnership activities. Partnership agreements between ACEs and their partners will include a detailed work plan, budget and agreed results;
• Between 10 -20 percent of the amount of funding will go towards the ACE host institution’s activities - focused on institutional impact - which will be included in the implementation plan and annual work plans of the ACE. Heads of the host institutions will be encouraged to undertake activities that link to the sustainability of the centers they host;

• Government and institutional contributions (in-kind, staffing and financing) for the center’s establishment and long-term sustainability beyond ACE Impact project funding are expected; and

• Based upon performance, the amount of funding provided to each center and usage of the funding can be adjusted by the World Bank in consultation with the respective ACE host government. At mid-term, expected to be two years after signing the performance contract, there will be a thorough evaluation of performance and the grant supporting each center will be reviewed. In particular, it is expected that poor performing centers will have their grant reduced by 50 percent of the uncommitted amount that is above half of their grant. This additional funding will be made available to institutions that are performing well. These gradual and automatic reductions in grant amounts seek to reduce the risk of having large funds committed to institutions that are slower in achieving results and implementation.

Sub-component 1.1: Support to establish new centers of excellence (Total: US$161 million equivalent of which IDA is US$51.5 million equivalent, AFD co-financing is US$29 million equivalent and government contribution is US$80.5 million equivalent)

29. Sub-component 1.1 aims to support the establishment of 14 new ACE Impact centers and increase the number of quality centers and relevant programs offered in the region and to introduce new thematic areas that do not exist in ACE I. All Second ACE Impact countries, except The Gambia, will have at least one new ACE. This sub-component will fund new centers between US$5 million- US$6 million to each center to fund its activities. The funding allocation to each center depends on the thematic area, the overall funding needs indicated in the center’s proposal, the funding envelope of the center’s government and the government’s priorities (see Component 1 above for the detailed description of the expected activities). The release of IDA funds will be linked to the achievement of seven DLIs: (a) Institutional readiness results (DLI1); (b) development impact of the ACE Impact Center (DLI2); (c) quantity of students with focus on gender and regionalization (DLI3); (d) quality of education and research through international accreditation, research publication and improved teaching and research infrastructure (DLI4); (e) relevance of education and research through externally generated revenue internships and entrepreneurship (DLI5); (f) timeliness and quality of fiduciary management (DLI6); and (g) Institutional impact- to be accomplished by the ACE host institution (DLI 7). The disbursement amount by result is uniform across centers and countries for DLI1, DLI4, DLI5, and DLI 7, because a unit cost can reasonably be established for these results, for instance, unit cost for a student or a research publication. Disbursement amounts for DLI1, DLI2, and DLI6 differ by center because they are relative to the center’s funding envelope, because the results are related to the overall performance of the center, notably implementation readiness, impact of center and fiduciary management.
Sub-component 1.2: Support to scale-up well performing ACE I centers (Total: US$95 million equivalent of which IDA is US$25.3 million equivalent, AFD co-financing is US$22.2 million equivalent and government contribution is US$47.5 million equivalent)

30. Sub-component 1.2 aims to provide additional funding and support to 9 existing ACEs (currently supported under ACE I) to enable them to scale-up their activities and deepen their development impact. All participating ACE I countries except The Gambia (i.e., Benin, Nigeria and Togo) in the Second ACE Impact project have at least one of their ACE I centers participating in this sub-component as a renewal center. Funding under this sub-component will help these centers to: strengthen productive partnerships with industry, sectoral stakeholders, ministries and policymakers; boost their regional leadership of regional networks; allow centers to lead efforts in the training of quality postgraduate students and maintain their international accreditation; and act as drivers of applied research solutions to development challenges in the region. The funding to renewal centers is from US$4 million – US$5 million. This is equivalent to approximately half the amount of funding previously provided under ACE I, with the expectation that most of these centers will not require capital intensive civil works at the levels they needed in ACE I. Further, these ACEs will be supported to increase their fundraising efforts to become fully sustainable after this round of funding. The allocation to each center will depend upon the thematic area, overall funding needs indicated in the center’s proposal, the funding envelope of the center’s government, and the government’s priorities. While the release of IDA funds will be linked to the achievement of the same seven DLIs listed under Sub-component 1.1 above, the DLI amounts for each center under Sub-component 1.2 will vary between ACEs to allow for customization of expected results to each center’s specific objectives. The specific amounts for each center are provided in the POM.

Additional support to engineering and technology ACE host institutions

31. Five institutions that are selected to host an engineering or technology-focused centers with capacity in other engineering disciplines will receive additional funding in IDA support. Benin has one institution that fits the profile. This funding will support an institution-wide strengthening of the engineering and technology programs within their College or School of Engineering (CoEngg). The CoEngg are expected to meet the same seven DLIs just as its ACE/Emerging center to incentivize the scaling-up of enrollment of undergraduates (including enrollment of females); achieving international quality standards; introducing new academic programs; promoting project-based learning and innovative pedagogy; establishing new laboratories; enabling technology transfer and business/entrepreneurship; building linkages to business programs; enhancing teaching and research capacity; and promoting institutional transformation in terms of policies and operations. These activities are expected to strengthen the capacity at the CoEngg, and enhance the potential for long-term sustainability of the Center and the broader CoEngg. This type of support did not exist under ACE I or ACE II.

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8 The term College/School of Engineering (CoEngg) is used generically here, and may refer to a Faculty, a Polytechnic within a university, or other similar organizational structure.
Component 2: Fostering Regional Partnerships and Scholarships (Total: US$42 million equivalent of which IDA is US$24 million equivalent and government contribution is US$18 million equivalent)

32. Component 2 seeks to expand the regional impact of the ACEs funded under Component 1 by providing demand-side funding for partnering institutions and regional students to purchase training and consulting services from the ACEs that are most relevant to their teaching and research goals. Component 2 has two sub-components: Sub-component 2.1 will finance regional institutional partnerships through support to Emerging centers, while Sub-component 2.2 is optional and will finance governments’ contribution towards the PASET RSIF.

Sub-component 2.1: Support to Emerging centers (non-ACEs) for networking, regional technical assistance and improving learning environment (Total: US$36 million equivalent of which IDA and government contributions are 50 percent each)

33. Sub-component 2.1 will support three (3) Emerging centers to develop regional institutional partnerships with ACEs (under Component 1) and other relevant international partners to strengthen the capacity of their higher education institutions. These Emerging centers will be in the form of a department/school or a multidisciplinary center within an institution. Participating countries eligible for support under this sub-component are those that did not receive support to establish ACE I centers, notably Niger (two centers - one in Mining environment and the other in Teaching-Learning of Mathematics and Sciences) and The Gambia (one center in Science, Technology and Engineering for Entrepreneurship).

(i) Strategic objectives and activities: Supported institutions will receive funding to strengthen, through partnerships, both undergraduate and postgraduate (focus is more on master’s level than PhD) education programs that will provide training to their students and develop in them the skills which will be useful in addressing national development needs of the country hosting the center. Emerging centers to be established under this sub-component will receive support for activities including: regional technical assistance (TA) to strengthen academic programs and curriculum design; faculty scholarships and training; costs of visiting faculty; TA for institutional policies and practices; improving teaching and research resources; and other regional engagements.

(ii) Strategic and non-competitive selection of Emerging centers: The three Emerging centers, selected non-competitively, will receive funding based on their strategic importance for achieving national development objectives (see Table 2 for thematic distribution of centers). Although non-competitive, these institutions, in conjunction with national higher education authorities, were required to submit strong proposals with specific strategic targets in order to receive financial support under this sub-component as Emerging centers. They received upfront proposal writing support. To strengthen the academic support base of these two centers, they will each be mapped to the regional network of an ACE Impact center supported under Component 1, that is focusing on a similar thematic area.

(iii) Emerging center funding: The government, selected Emerging center institutions and the World Bank will discuss the allocation of funding to the centers based on the funding needs of each center and the priorities of the host country of the centers. Each center’s funds will be distributed across
the relevant DLIs/DLRs. These centers will be expected to meet the same seven DLIs as ACE Impact centers, with a large share of the DLIs to incentivize results for improved undergraduate and master’s programs. Similar to disbursements under Component 1, up to a capped amount will be disbursed against specific EEPs (salaries, scholarships and operating costs) in the annual budget of each center and its host institution, conditioned on the achievement of the specified DLIs. Each institution will sign a PFA with its government. These agreements will include requirements stipulating that:

- At least 30 percent of funding for each center under this sub-component will be invested in regional partnerships (with new or renewal ACEs that have been selected to receive support under Component 1) and international institutional partnerships (with other institutions outside the ACEs and the region - especially for sectors for which no ACE Impact center exists). Funds can be used to cover regional TA to strengthen academic programs, curriculum design, institutional policies and practices; faculty scholarships and training; and costs of visiting faculty; and

- The remaining 70 percent of the funding will support investment in teaching, learning and research equipment and other hardware necessary for regional partnerships and supporting institutional transformation.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Thematic area</th>
<th>Benin</th>
<th>The Gambia</th>
<th>Niger</th>
<th>Nigeria</th>
<th>Togo</th>
<th>Total</th>
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<td>1*</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>12</td>
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<td>-</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>1</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
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<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Applied Social Sciences/Education</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>-</td>
<td>1*</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
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<td>1</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *These cells denote Emerging centers. **AFD’s funding in Côte d’Ivoire covers 2 ACEs in STEM, 1 ACE in Agriculture and 1 ACE in Applied Social Sciences

**Sub-component 2.2: Support for PhD scholarships through the PASET Regional Scholarship & Innovation Fund (RSIF) (Total: US$6 million equivalent IDA)**

34. **Sub-component 2.2** will finance regional scholarships through the PASET RSIF to support primarily the training of the next generation of faculty for higher education institutions in the region. Two countries, Benin and Nigeria, will contribute US$2 million and US$4 million, respectively, to the RSIF. This sub-component will build institutional capacity to support improvements in the quality and quantity of academic staff in the region’s higher education institutions, ultimately increasing academic capacity of these institutions.

35. **The RSIF**, a competitive pan-African Scholarship program, provides PhD scholarships to top-performing master’s students with the aim of creating a strong pipeline of faculty and researchers in applied sciences, engineering and technology fields. Five countries (Côte d’Ivoire, Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda and Senegal) have taken the lead in committing US$2 million each to the RSIF established by
African governments in 2015. The World Bank-financed Africa RSIF for Applied Sciences, Engineering and Technology Project (RSIF Project, P165581), approved by the World Bank in 2018, received US$15 million and US$10 million from the World Bank and South Korea, respectively. Under the First ACE Impact Project, Burkina Faso, Ghana and Senegal will contribute US$2 million each to the RSIF. The RSIF seeks to serve as a pan-African platform that will scale-up the African-led fund to finance the continent’s top students in S&T to pursue their studies in Africa, while providing them with opportunities through a sandwich program\(^9\) to carry out part of their research at top international partner institutions. Under the Second ACE Impact project, the funds allocated to the RSIF will be disbursed directly to the RSIF established and managed under the World Bank-financed RSIF project, pursuant to subsidiary agreements signed between each contributing country and the implementing entity of the Fund (the International Center of Insect Physiology and Ecology- icipe). The RSIF project will be responsible for supervision (including technical, fiduciary and safeguards) of all funds transferred to the Fund from the Second ACE Impact project. The RSIF team will provide information/data on key indicators to report on progress and outcomes in the Second ACE Impact project’s Implementation Status and Results Reports (ISR) and Implementation Completion and Results Report (ICR).

**Component 3:  Enhancing National and Regional Level Project Facilitation, and Monitoring and Evaluation (Total: US$12.5 million equivalent IDA)**

**Sub-component 3.1: Regional-level project facilitation and monitoring and evaluation (Total: US$5 million equivalent IDA)**

36. Through a regional IDA grant of US$5 million, Sub-component 3.1 will fund the AAU, which is the RFU for the ACE I and the First ACE Impact projects, to also serve as the RFU for the proposed Second ACE Impact project. The RFU will facilitate the regional activities under the project including: M&E activities such as development of an online M&E database platform, verification of results, benchmarking of ACE host universities, and graduate tracer studies; site supervision visits of ACEs by independent experts; communications, safeguards support, capacity-building; and knowledge-sharing and networking among ACEs and governments. The RFU will also liaise with ongoing regional and national initiatives in order to strengthen the ACE regional networks, including through digital networking platforms.

**Sub-component 3.2: National-level project facilitation (Total: US$7.5 million equivalent IDA)**

37. This sub-component will finance project implementation support at the national level, specifically in Nigeria, where the Second ACE Impact Project investment exceeds US$25 million (17 ACEs) and in The Gambia, where the Emerging center needs additional support from a coordinating agency. Nigeria will receive US$6 million and The Gambia US$1.5 million under this sub-component. The National Universities Commission (NUC) of Nigeria and the Project Coordination Unit (PCU-Gambia), will serve as the national-level facilitator in Nigeria and The Gambia, respectively. The NUC has played this role successfully under ACE I. The PCU-Gambia is currently managing a couple of other World Bank projects, including the ACE I project in The Gambia. The objective is to provide national-level support to the centers within Nigeria.

\(^9\) RSIF scholars will have the opportunity to carry out their PhD work in both their host institutions and in a partner institution abroad.
Performance of these national-level facilitation agencies will be measured by the degree to which the ACE Impact centers in the respective countries achieve the project objectives, including adherence to fiduciary, safeguard and anti-corruption guidelines. The activities will include supervision and training related to educational, research, implementation, fiduciary and safeguards aspects, as well as national M&E and minor TA. In the case of The Gambia, the PCU’s key role would be to provide fiduciary support to the participating institution in The Gambia.

**Unallocated (Total: US$17.7 million equivalent IDA)**

38. **An amount of US$17.7 million will be designated as unallocated funds.** At the mid-term review (MTR) of the ACE I project; a restructuring of the project was necessary in order to allocate funding from less-performing centers to better-performing ACEs in the same country. In this case where there was one ACE I center in a country and the center was low performing, a partial cancellation of funds took place due to low performance. This process was difficult. To avoid this process of removing or cancelling funds from poor performing centers, a varying amount of each country’s funding envelope will remain unallocated. The funds will remain within each country. These unallocated funds will be allocated during project implementation to either: (i) centers and host universities that are producing strong results to further improve overall impact; or (ii) unforeseen but necessary activities critical for the achievement of the PDO. Following an evaluation of the performance of ACE centers at the MTR under the proposed project, the World Bank in discussion with governments will decide which ACE centers will receive the unallocated funding within each country’s funding envelope.

39. **The proposed project will use an Investment Project Financing (IPF) lending instrument with RBF for Sub-components 1.1, 1.2 and 2.1 following the successful experience of this approach under ACE I.** Component 3 will, however, use the standard disbursement approach. RBF through DLIs has been an effective and innovative tool under ACE I to focus university teams around the expected results of the project. In particular, the significant resources linked to the attainment of international accreditation, internships, regional students’ recruitment, and revenue generation constituted an important incentive towards achieving these results. Further, the RBF approach necessitates a stringent verification process of students, learning infrastructure and equipment, etc. which disciplines all partners in the reporting and attainment of the results. The expected results under the Second ACE Impact are similar to the expected results of ACE I and II, but with some improvements.
E. Implementation
Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

40. Project implementation will draw heavily on the successful experience of ACE I and II, where established implementation and supervision structures have been developed over the last four years. The ACE I project ISRs show a continuously satisfactory performance on progress towards achievement of the PDO and overall implementation progress. This is due to a working implementation model established through the project that incorporated several lessons along the way. Key elements of this working model are: (i) direct responsibility for implementation of the selected ACE center proposals led by the ACEs; (ii) strong regional coordination and TA at the regional level through the AAU; and (iii) consistent accountability and implementation support through the national and regional project steering committees. The implementation arrangements for the proposed Second ACE Impact project will build upon these working structures and further strengthen the implementation arrangements for the additional three new countries to ensure that the project is not adversely affected by the increase in number of centers and participating countries.

41. The project’s organogram is presented below.

Figure 2. Organogram of the proposed Second ACE Impact Project

![Organogram of the proposed Second ACE Impact Project](image)

*Note: Solid lines represent reporting lines; For Nigeria, NUC will coordinate at the national level.*

42. Each selected higher education institution – whether benefitting from Component 1 or Sub-component 2.1 - will implement its own ACE Impact sub-project. Each ACE Impact center will have an implementation team established to manage the project on a day-to-day basis. Each center will be responsible for its own strategic and implementation plans, fiduciary and M&E activities. The team will be led by the center director, who will be a recognized educator/researcher with expertise in the academic focus area of the center. The center director will be supported by a deputy director and faculty from all
departments contributing to the center. Each center team will also consist of key staff members specializing in procurement, FM, M&E, communications and industry engagement who will support the center’s day-to-day operations and assist with fiduciary tasks. The host university will provide to the centers administrative support and assistance on the safeguards tools to be developed by the centers. The center team will be advised by a SAB (composed of high-level representatives from the center’s industry/sector partners) and an International Academic Advisory Board (IAAB) (comprised of leading academics from around the world). Both the SAB and the IAAB will contribute to the development of the education programs of the center, and will also provide advice, insight and oversight for the applied research program. A student representative (non-staff) will be designated to represent the students of the center and will participate in the center’s staff meetings. ACE Impact centers supported under Component 1 will also lead regional networks in their areas of specialization (i.e., serve as research hubs). Each center will sign a partnership agreement with each of its partners with a detailed work plan, budget and expected outcomes. Annually, and based on a consultative approach, each center will develop a work plan (aligned with its implementation plan) that describes the education, research and operational activities that will be accomplished.

43. **Each national government participating in the Second ACE Impact project will establish a National Steering Committee (NSC) facilitated by the Ministry or agency responsible for higher education.** The Committee will be tasked with undertaking a semi-annual review of implementation performance, and implementation planning and support. The NSC will review the FM and procurement annual audit reports (follow-up on recommendations in audit and review adherence to national procurement and FM guidelines), implementation plans, annual work plans, annual budgets, unaudited Interim Financial Reports (IFRs), and results (achievements of DLRs and fund utilization) of the center(s) and national facilitation agency (in the case of Ghana and Burkina Faso). The NSC will be the national level advocate for the center(s) and will foster linkages between the center(s) and government bodies and line ministries. The NSC will not be tasked with day-to-day implementation of the centers’ sub-projects at each institution. While the composition of the NSC will be at the discretion of each participating country, it is anticipated that the Minister or head of agency in charge of higher education will designate a chair who will convene the committee, which will include members from the Ministry of Finance (MoF) as well as the relevant line ministries for the focus areas of each ACE Impact center in that country (e.g., health, water, transport, energy, etc.).

44. **The ACE Impact PSC will provide overall guidance and oversight for the project.** The PSC is responsible for ensuring that the PDOs are achieved. The PSC will be comprised of two levels: Ministerial and government representative. The Ministerial-level PSC will be comprised of the Ministers in charge of higher education in the participating countries, whereas the representative-level PSC will be comprised of representatives (senior advisors) appointed by these Ministers. Representatives from the ECOWAS Commission and UEMOA, other relevant regional bodies where necessary, recognized African and international academicians, vice chancellors (2), sector representatives, and key private sector stakeholders will be selected to participate in the PSC meetings. The Ministerial-level PSC will be the highest decision-making body within the institutional structure of the project. The representative level PSC will oversee the implementation of the decisions of the Ministerial level. An ACE Impact focal point may also be appointed to support their respective PSC representatives in their duties. The Chair of the PSC will rotate to the government hosting the meeting.
45. **Under Component 3 of the proposed Second ACE Impact project, AAU (also the RFU for the First ACE Impact project) will receive a regional grant for facilitating support to Component 1 and Sub-component 2.1.** This funding builds upon the AAU’s experience in a similar role for ACE I. The work plan for AAU will be determined annually between the World Bank and the PSC. The AAU coordinated the Call for Proposals and the evaluation and selection of the centers. During implementation, AAU will: (1) facilitate semi-annual project meetings; (2) promote partnerships among centers and between centers and partners (academic and sectoral) outside of the ACE networks; (3) coordinate TA and support to centers from subject-matter experts and other capacity-building activities; (4) coordinate project M&E and support related activities, including benchmarking exercises and graduate tracer studies; (5) facilitate verification of achievement of DLRs; (6) serve as the secretariat of the PSC and facilitate and fund its meetings and functions; and (7) develop key documents such as the POM and ToRs for consultants hired to work on project related activities.

46. **A small project team in place at the NUC (Nigeria) and the PCU-Gambia will facilitate implementation of the Second ACE Impact project in Nigeria and The Gambia, respectively.** In Nigeria, this is necessary given the larger number of centers that Nigeria will host which will require a consolidated facilitation at the national level. In the case of The Gambia, the fiduciary capacity of the emerging center needs to be built and hence this added national level support to the center. These countries also have the funding to support these entities in this regard. The NUC is playing a similar coordinating role for the ten ACE I Nigerian centers and serving on the ACE I PSC and will do the same for the proposed Second ACE Impact project. The PCU-Gambia is currently implementing other World Bank-financed projects and so is familiar with World Bank processes and procedures.

47. **Africans in the diaspora will be heavily integrated into project implementation.** A significant number of the proposal evaluators for the project were academic researchers and administrators from the diaspora who currently work in reputable institutions outside Africa. Several international subject matter experts recruited to work alongside their local counterparts in providing implementation support are drawn from the diaspora. Under the ACE I project, several center directors and other members of the center leadership teams have extensive and successful career experiences in Europe and North America, and many of the academic partnerships that the centers have secured involve members of the diaspora. The proposed Second ACE Impact project will continue to reap the benefits of the diaspora through partnerships, visiting professorships, consultancies, and advisory bodies.

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**F. Project location and Salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)**

The Project will be in multiple countries in West and Central Africa region at some institutions of higher learning. The project has selected these centers from existing institutions within the participating countries. The project aims to focus on quality enhancements of these institutions, where majority of the funding will be on "softer items" such as faculty development, curriculum update, scholarships, and learning resources. A fraction of the project funding will involve construction, rehabilitation and extensions of the selected
institutions of facilities as well as equipment of facilities. There will be no new land acquisition for these centers because the extension, rehabilitation and construction will be on existing sites.

G. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Joseph Ese Akpokodje, Environmental Specialist
Olukayode O. Taiwo, Social Specialist

SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safeguard Policies</th>
<th>Triggered?</th>
<th>Explanation (Optional)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01</td>
<td>Yes</td>
<td>The project is categorized as Environmental Assessment category B (Partial Assessment) and Environmental Assessment (OP/BP4.01), and Physical Cultural Resources (OP/BP4.11) are triggered. Adverse environmental and social impacts of construction of new buildings, or other facilities within the current boundaries of university campuses of the selected centers; or extensions of current buildings and facilities; or rehabilitation of old buildings and facilities, including repair of buildings that do not meet current building standards in the 5 participating countries are expected. The potential negative environmental impacts associated with soil and water pollution, liquid and solid waste, occupational health and safety and community safety are expected to be moderate and limited in time and space. There are appropriate mitigation measures which are defined for managing these negative impacts that will be implemented during construction and maintenance phases. Although the academic institutions are now known, the specific sites within these institutions and also the proposed reconstruction and rehabilitation activities are not known. Therefore, in order to successfully identify and manage potential site specific and adverse environment and social impacts resulting from sub-project activities, stand alone Environmental and Social Management</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Frameworks (ESMFs) have been prepared, reviewed, consulted upon, approved and disclosed according to the National and World Bank policies as due diligence to provide clear process including action plans to integrate and mitigate environmental and social concerns in the project’s operations. Following the indication of the specific locations within the selected institutions for project activities at implementation, an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) or an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) will be prepared for each participating institution to manage potential environmental and social impacts. Any non-hazardous and hazardous wastes from the laboratories associated with the project will be dealt with appropriately according to the ESMP/ESIA. Candidate institutions will each prepare, review and disclose an ESIA or an ESMP before commencement of project activities, for each eligible investment. The approved ESIAs/ESMPs would be disclosed in-country and on the World Bank's website.

| Performance Standards for Private Sector Activities OP/BP 4.03 | No | NA |
| Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04 | No | Natural habitats will not be affected by project activities. |
| Forests OP/BP 4.36 | No | The project will not involve forestry activities. |
| Pest Management OP 4.09 | No | The project will not involve the use or purchase of pesticides. |
| Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11 | Yes | The project may carry out activities in areas of cultural significance and heritage that could impact and/or lead to the discovery of ancient antiques and other physical resources. As part of the ACE Impact project, this will also concern buildings of historical value and which would be the subject of rehabilitation works. To mitigate these risks, contracts for civil works involving excavations should incorporate procedures for dealing with situations in which buried physical cultural resources (PCR) are unexpectedly encountered. Specific procedures (such as chance finds procedures) are included in the ESMF and will be included in the subsequent ESIA/ESMPs as required. |
| Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10 | No | The project might involve Indigenous Peoples. |
| Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12 | No | The project will not finance activities that involve land acquisition leading to physical and economic |
displacement including access to resources. However, prior to commencement of rehabilitation work, site-specific ESMPs will prepared, consulted upon and disclosed.

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<table>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>The project will not involve dams.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>The project is not on International Waterways.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>The project is not in Disputed Areas.</td>
</tr>
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**KEY SAFEGUARD POLICY ISSUES AND THEIR MANAGEMENT**

**A. Summary of Key Safeguard Issues**

1. Describe any safeguard issues and impacts associated with the proposed project. Identify and describe any potential large scale, significant and/or irreversible impacts:

The project is categorized as Environmental Assessment category B (Partial Assessment) because potential adverse environmental and social impacts of construction of new buildings or other facilities within the current boundaries of university campuses of the selected centers; or extensions of current buildings and facilities; or rehabilitation of old buildings and facilities, including repair of buildings that do not meet current building standards in the 5 participating countries. The potential negative environmental impacts associated with soil and water pollution, liquid and solid waste, occupational health and safety and community safety are expected to be moderate and limited in time and space. There are appropriate mitigation measures which are defined for managing these negative impacts that may occur during construction and maintenance. However, the specific locations for potential rehabilitation, reconstruction or extension activities within the selected universities are not yet known, standalone environmental and social management framework (ESMF) documents have been prepared according to the National and World Bank policies as due diligence to provide clear process including action plans to integrate and mitigate environmental and social concerns in the project operation. The ESMFs were reviewed, consulted upon and disclosed in-country and at the World Bank before appraisal. Following the indication of the specific locations of project activities within the selected universities, an ESIA or ESMP will be prepared for each candidate institution to manage potential environmental and social impacts before commencement of project activities for each eligible investment. Any non-hazardous and hazardous wastes from the laboratories associated with the project will be dealt with appropriately according to the ESMP/ESIA. The approved ESIAs/ESMPs would be disclosed in-country and on the World Bank's website.

2. Describe any potential indirect and/or long term impacts due to anticipated future activities in the project area:

There are no potential indirect and/or long-term environmental and social impacts envisaged in the project area.

3. Describe any project alternatives (if relevant) considered to help avoid or minimize adverse impacts.

None

4. Describe measures taken by the borrower to address safeguard policy issues. Provide an assessment of borrower capacity to plan and implement the measures described.

The Environmental and Social Management Frameworks (ESMFs) prepared and consulted on for the 5 countries were
disclosed in-country as follows: Benin (August 20, 2019), The Gambia (August 05, 2019), Niger (August 21, 2019), Nigeria (November 15, 2018), and Togo (August 01, 2019). The following policies were triggered:

(a) Environmental Assessment (OP 4.01) is triggered because the proposed project will finance the construction, rehabilitation and extensions of academic institutions as well as the purchasing of equipment for installation in facilities on existing sites in the 5 participating countries. Since the specific locations for potential rehabilitation or reconstruction activities within the selected institutions are not yet known, standalone environmental and social management framework (ESMF) documents have been prepared, reviewed and consulted upon and disclosed in-country. Each candidate institution will prepare, review and disclose an ESIA or an ESMP before commencement of project activities for each eligible investment.

(b) Physical Cultural Resources (OP 4.11) and particularly chance finds, the project may carry out activities in areas of cultural significance and heritage that could impact and/or lead to the discovery of ancient antiques and other physical resources. As part of the Second ACE Impact project, this will also concern buildings of historical value and which would be the subject of rehabilitation works. To mitigate these risks, contracts for civil works involving excavations should incorporate procedures for dealing with situations in which buried physical cultural resources (PCR) are unexpectedly encountered. As a precautionary measure, the chance finds procedures guidance note have been included as an annex to the ESMF and will be included as an annex to the subsequent ESIs/ESMPs as required.

5. Identify the key stakeholders and describe the mechanisms for consultation and disclosure on safeguard policies, with an emphasis on potentially affected people.

Key stakeholders include: Non-governmental organizations (working on environment and education); Businesses (national medium and/or small building companies); Neighborhood associations; Representative of professors of university departments and faculties; Associations of graduate and post-graduate students etc

Public consultation will be an on-going activity taking place throughout the entire project process. Public participation and consultation would take place through meetings, radio programs, requests for written proposals/comments, filling in of questionnaires, explanations of project to the locals, making public documents available at the National, State and Local levels (where applicable).

A robust Citizens Engagement and GRM plans would be prepared as part of engagement tool as the project progresses. Finally, a Sexual harassment framework will be developed and enforced as part of due diligence for the project.

Finally, the project will mitigate the risk of Gender-Based Violence (GBV)/Sexual Exploitation & Abuse (SEA) by requiring that each center has and complies with its sexual harassment policies through the following actions: (a) As part of DLI 1, each center will submit its sexual harassment policy and make it accessible online to its students and staff; (b) Each center will report to the PSC (government, AFD and the World Bank), by submitting a report semi-annually to AAU on any related complaints and how it adequately resolved or is resolving the complaint; and (c) Each center will have available resources and/or information that survivors of GBV/SEA can be referred to either within the university or an external agency with expertise and mandate to handle such cases.
### B. Disclosure Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Environmental Assessment/Audit/Management Plan/Other</th>
<th>Date of receipt by the Bank</th>
<th>Date of submission for disclosure</th>
<th>For category A projects, date of distributing the Executive Summary of the EA to the Executive Directors</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

"In country" Disclosure  
Benin  
20-Aug-2019  
Comments

Gambia, The  
05-Aug-2019  
Comments

Niger  
21-Aug-2019  
Comments

Nigeria  
15-Nov-2018  
Comments

Togo  
01-Aug-2019  
Comments

### C. Compliance Monitoring Indicators at the Corporate Level (to be filled in when the ISDS is finalized by the project decision meeting)

**OP/BP/GP 4.01 - Environment Assessment**

Does the project require a stand-alone EA (including EMP) report?  
Yes

If yes, then did the Regional Environment Unit or Practice Manager (PM) review and approve the EA report?  
Yes

Are the cost and the accountabilities for the EMP incorporated in the credit/loan?
Yes

OP/BP 4.11 - Physical Cultural Resources
Does the EA include adequate measures related to cultural property?
Yes

Does the credit/loan incorporate mechanisms to mitigate the potential adverse impacts on cultural property?
Yes

The World Bank Policy on Disclosure of Information

Have relevant safeguard policies documents been sent to the World Bank for disclosure?
Yes
Have relevant documents been disclosed in-country in a public place in a form and language that are understandable and accessible to project-affected groups and local NGOs?
Yes

All Safeguard Policies

Have satisfactory calendar, budget and clear institutional responsibilities been prepared for the implementation of measures related to safeguard policies?
Yes
Have costs related to safeguard policy measures been included in the project cost?
Yes

Does the Monitoring and Evaluation system of the project include the monitoring of safeguard impacts and measures related to safeguard policies?
Yes
Have satisfactory implementation arrangements been agreed with the borrower and the same been adequately reflected in the project legal documents?
Yes

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                        | Himdat Iqbal Bayusuf |
|----------------------|----------------------|

Approved By

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Safeguards Advisor:</th>
<th>Halil Dundar</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Practice Manager/Manager:</td>
<td>Halil Dundar 04-Sep-2019</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Country Director:</td>
<td>Vijay Pillai 04-Sep-2019</td>
</tr>
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