

INTEGRATED SAFEGUARDS DATA SHEET CONCEPT STAGE

Report No.: ISDSC1426

Date ISDS Prepared/Updated: 25-Feb-2013

Date ISDS Approved/Disclosed: 25-Feb-2013

I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country:	Central African Republic	Project ID:	P133580
Project Name:	Education Sector Development Project II (P133580)		
Task Team Leader:	Dung-Kim Pham		
Estimated Appraisal Date:	16-May-2013	Estimated Board Date:	26-Sep-2013
Managing Unit:	AFTEW	Lending Instrument:	Specific Investment Loan
Sector:	Primary education (100%)		
Theme:	Education for all (100%)		
Financing (In USD Million)			
Financing Source		Amount	
BORROWER/RECIPIENT		0.00	
IDA Grant		4.00	
Education for All - Fast Track Initiative		19.20	
Total		23.20	
Environmental Category:	B - Partial Assessment		
Is this a Repeater project?	No		

B. Project Objectives

17. With Phase 1 of the National Education Sector Strategy (NESS) ending in 2011, Phase 2 plans to consolidate the gains and to pursue the goals of the NESS which consist of increasing access, improving the quality of education and strengthening the management of the system. With limited financing, the proposed project prioritizes its main support to access and education quality, with the following development objective: “In support of the implementation of Phase 2 of the NESS, the proposed project would contribute to (a) expanding educational enrollments at the primary level; and (b) improve the learning environment.”

C. Project Description

19. Despite an unfavorable environment, CAR is among a few countries in Sub-Saharan Africa that has registered good success in its program supported by the Global Partnership for Education. This success is reflected through (i) a satisfactory execution of the first grant received under the EFA-FTI Catalytic Fund; (ii) successful mobilization of additional bilateral funds with the French Development Agency, UNICEF and the Japanese Government; and (iv) the opening up of a sector dialogue with an extensive group of development partners and the civil society.

20. The first EFA-FTI grant of US\$37.8 million funded the Education Sector Development Project (PAPSE). The PAPSE contributes to the implementation of Phase 1 of the NESS and aims to improve access to better quality primary education. The main activities covered by the PAPSE include (i) school construction and rehabilitation; (ii) distribution of textbooks; (iii) teachers training and deployment, including community teachers; and (iv) system strengthening. All indicators set out to measure the PAPSE objectives have been met. Primary gross enrollment rate has reached 87.2%, surpassing the target of 79.5%. In 2011, new entrants in first grade were 115,803 students compared to a target of 110,142. The school infrastructure program has built 596 classrooms and rehabilitated 419 classrooms, contributing to lower the pupils/classroom ratio that often reached over 100 pupils per classroom. A total number of 1,353,510 textbooks in reading and mathematics have been distributed to schools, increasing remarkably the availability of textbooks at a ratio of almost 1 textbook per subject per student whereas the ratio was one book for 7 pupils on average at the project onset. School visits have shown the existence of textbooks in the schools and a larger utilization of the reading books in the classrooms. The teacher training program was implemented as planned: 365 community teachers have completed the training and 750 students-teachers are trained annually to be graduated after completion of the 2-year training program. Disbursement has reached almost 90% of the grant amount with a closing date in June 2013. As part of the GPE program, a sector review took place in May 2012 to assess progress and chart the future course of the NESS. The outcome of the review indicates that the main objectives of the NESS remain valid and confirms the achievements of the PAPSE, as indicated above. For primary education, the sector review points to the huge remaining needs in access, especially in the North-East and West of the country; the necessity to reduce repetition in order to retain children in schools for at least the first 6 years of education. The lack of qualified teachers also emerges as a critical factor.

21. The proposed project supports the implementation of Phase 2 of the NESS, with a co-financing grant from the Global Partnership for Education (US\$19.2 millions) and IDA (US\$4.0 million). With satisfactory outcome of the PAPSE, the proposed project seeks to expand the PAPSE activities in order to scale up their results and development effectiveness. A few features have been added that would reinforce the overall objective: in terms of coverage, the proposed project will bring the provision of education to rural areas to reach out for poorer and more vulnerable children; in terms of interventions, the project will include some activities that would generate a system for teacher training.

A. Concept

1. Description

Component 1: Improving access to primary education

22. This component aims to increase the provision of access to primary education in rural areas with low education enrollments to reach out for children of poor households, especially girls. It consists of two main interventions: (a) a school infrastructure program and (b) distribution of school kits.

23. Subcomponent 1.1: School infrastructure program. Apart from the program financed by the PAPSE, construction and rehabilitation of schools undertaken by the Government and other development partners are relatively modest. Therefore, in spite of the outcome achieved under the PAPSE, the needs remain enormous. The 2008 Country Status Report projected a requirement of 3,036 new classrooms in 2015. The action plan of the NESS Phase 2 adopted by the Government for the period 2012-2015 projects the construction of 2,100 classrooms and the rehabilitation of 1,140 classrooms.

24. Using a mapping of regional priorities which will be developed and a set of criteria which will be determined through a participatory consultation process, the subcomponent will finance a school infrastructure program to include the construction and rehabilitation ranging from 800 to 1,000 classrooms. Water supply and latrines to attract and retain girls' attendance are integral to the program. The infrastructure program will seek to complement UNICEF's on-going program, supported by the Government of Japan for the construction of 50 schools complete with equipment and ancillary structures. The subcomponent will also support a study on a low-cost strategy in school infrastructure construction and maintenance. In the meantime, the approach applied will follow the delegation of contract management to a third party ("maîtrise d'ouvrage déléguée") used under the PAPSE that has proved to be adequate. Community participation will be promoted; the extent of which will be determined using the recommendations of a study undertaken by UNICEF that is on-going. The implementation of the school infrastructure program will also capture the main recommendations of the technical audit financed by the PAPSE, notably (a) stronger participation of the communities in the establishment of schools, (b) the revision of the technical specifications in the bidding documents, (c) timely supervision of the works, and (d) involvement of the local enterprises in the production of bricks.

25. Subcomponent 1.2: Distribution of school kits. Despite significant increase in enrollments, the progress has not been extended evenly to rural areas, mostly at the detriment of the girls. While schools may be available for the poor, often the poor do not send their children to schools because they see the low quality of education together with the financial costs incurred as deterrents. In fact, the ECASEB survey pointed out the financial burden of education to poor households. Parents in CAR devote considerable resources to the education of their children. While public schools are free, students are required to pay for certain fees, uniforms, school materials, transportation and food. These education-related costs are out of reach of poor households. The subcomponent will contribute to the alleviation of these costs by providing school kits to the pupils in the school districts ("circonscriptions scolaires") in rural areas and where there is a high random factor in the allocation of material resources.

Component 2: Improving the quality of the learning environment

26. This component aims to provide a better quality learning environment to the pupils and focuses on two main interventions: (a) teacher training and deployment and (b) the distribution of free primary textbooks to all pupils in public and private schools. Pedagogical materials will also be provided to teachers.

27. Subcomponent 2.1: Teacher training and deployment. This subcomponent will respond to a situation where there is penury of teachers, poor teachers' qualification, and an unfair allocation of the sparse teachers. The subcomponent will support:

- a) Pre-service training of 750 teachers annually in the 10 regional pedagogical centers (that were built/rehabilitated under PAPSE) and the Teacher Training College (Ecole Nationale d'Instituteurs – ENI) with procedures of selection at entry and at graduation rigorously applied, including the deployment towards rural areas.
- b) The training/recycling of approximately 500 community teachers with procedures of selection at entry and at graduation rigorously applied and a strategy to allow them to be part of the teaching corps.
- c) The development of an in-service training system that is school-based with reinforcement of the role of school directors in the process.
- d) The development of a system to promote an equitable allocation of teachers.

28. The teachers training program, supported by the PAPSE, will undergo a qualitative and procedural evaluation. The results will be used to strengthen the training activities of the subcomponent. The project will not support the payment of the graduated teachers' salaries. Under the PAPSE, the Government has agreed to assume the salaries of the graduated teachers from October 2012 as a commitment to sustain the PAPSE investment but more importantly to demonstrate its commitment to the sector.

29. Subcomponent 2.2: Distribution of textbooks and pedagogical materials. The Country Status Report has revealed that the provision of reading textbooks in sufficient number constitutes one of the key elements of an education policy with strong cost efficiency. The subcomponent will support:

- a) The review of the actual textbook policy in order to arrive at a strategy that will help the Government reduce the cost of textbook production for better coverage.
- b) Development of a logistics to manage the textbook stocks and their distribution. This activity will rely on the lessons drawn from the distribution of a large volume of textbooks under the PAPSE.
- c) The acquisition and distribution of reading and mathematics primary textbooks to fulfill the increasing enrollments and to renew the stock. (The quantity of the mathematics textbooks will depend on the state of the usability of the existing stock.)

Component 3: Strengthening the management of the system

30. This component aims to initiate the development of mechanisms that will help MEPSA (Ministry of Primary and Secondary Education and Literacy) strengthen the management of its sub-sector. Interventions will be focused in two areas: (a) institutional capacity building, and (b) project management

31. Subcomponent 3.1: Institutional capacity building. The subcomponent will support:

- a) The strengthening in capacity for system planning, programming and monitoring. Technical assistance will be provided as well as equipment that can include computers and transport means to the inspectorates and the school districts (with priority given to the units that are closest to impacting the learning environment in the classrooms).
- b) The strengthening in capacity for budget planning and execution.

32. Other development partners are providing and/or will provide support to reinforce the capacity of the sector in complement to the subcomponent objective. Specifically, UNESCO and

UNICEF will support the strengthening of the quality of the sector statistics and the undertaking of a round of student learning assessment (PASEC). Analytical work on teacher careers, technical education and development of lower secondary education is part of a medium-term program that the French Development Agency has committed for CAR.

33. Subcomponent 3.2: Project management. The subcomponent will support the management and coordination of project activities. Monitoring and evaluation will be part of project management and will include communication campaigns to entrench social accountability around school affairs. Technical assistance will be provided to expand knowledge on prominent topics in the sector. In addition, it will provide financing for consultants to assume the fiduciary requirements of the project as well as for computer and office equipment.

2. Social Accountability

34. This project will introduce mechanisms to encourage community participation in the education system, with the aim of increasing the quality of services provided while maintaining the education system's role in promoting collective action. Community participation will also be an essential tool for gathering information on project interventions effectiveness.

35. A set of social accountability activities will be incorporated in the project in each participating community. Each community will be asked to identify existing parent-teacher associations or to create new ones if these do not exist. Parent-teacher associations will include individuals from all different groups in society that send their children to the schools. In some areas, these could include ethnic minorities or representatives of those that are displaced. A particular effort will be made to ensure gender balance on these committees, as well as parents who can advocate for the needs of female children.

36. Parent-teacher associations will initially be responsible for monitoring the activities planned by the project. In particular, they will:

- Monitor the quality and speed of school construction. They will receive information on the timelines agreed by contractors and will be able to report to the project if there are delays or if the quality of construction is low;
- Monitor and guide the delivery of school kits, ensuring that these are distributed fairly and that no group in the community is left out.
- Monitor the delivery of textbooks, and if possible, find ways for these textbooks to be transferred from one student to another when a school year is completed.
- Monitor the attendance of teachers to school and provide information to the project on the quality of teaching.

37. In future projects, these parent teacher associations could take on a larger role. They could be encouraged to provide advice on making training materials more culturally relevant, to inform the content of teacher training, or the content of school kits. This project will try to build a basic capacity that can be expanded upon in later years.

38. An NGO will be selected to lead social accountability activities early on project implementation. The NGO will be selected based on its experience leading similar activities, its presence throughout CAR, and its ability to gather information from community groups and transform it into policy advice for government. If a single NGO is not present throughout CAR, NGOs will be encouraged to organize into a consortium, and to ensure that each one can learn from the activities and experience of the other.

D. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

The project will target all areas in CAR, but the specific locations of the project are not yet known. During the preparation of sub-project in specific areas, the screening process will describe salient physical characteristics prior to the approval.

E. Borrowers Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

The Borrower's institutional capacity in addressing safeguards issues remains weak. The Borrower will hire at least a part time environmental and social safeguards specialist to ensure the general oversight of social and environmental concerns of the project. The Government team will also receive guidance from the Bank's safeguards specialists and capacity building training during the project preparation process and also during the project implementation. There is no capacity on environmental and social safeguards within the MEPSA.

F. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Lucienne M. M'Baipor (AFTCS)

Emeran Serge M. Menang Evouna (AFTN3)

II. SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/ BP 4.01	Yes	As subcomponent 1.1 will finance a school infrastructure program including the construction and rehabilitation ranging from 800 to 1,000 classrooms, this may have environmental and social negative impact. The exact location of the classrooms location is not yet known at this stage of project preparation. An ESMF will be prepared with the objectives among other to establish clear procedures and methodologies for environmental and social planning, review, approval and implementation of the activities to be financed under the project, specify appropriate roles and responsibilities and outline the necessary reporting procedures, for managing and monitoring environmental and social concerns related to the activities.
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	TBD	Impacts on natural habitats will be determined closer to appraisal. During the preparation of the project, the team will ensure that all classrooms construction or rehabilitation will not be in or near natural habitats.
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	The project does not involve forests or forest management.
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	The project does not involve pest management.

Physical Cultural Resources OP/ BP 4.11	TBD	The presence of physical cultural resources will be determined closer to appraisal. If such resources are present, the ESMF should provide guidance on how to manage accidental cultural assets found during the construction process of classroom.
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	Yes	As the project is expected to be nation-wide, vulnerable groups and IPs will be in the project areas. Due to the fact that this presence cannot be determined until the program is in place, the Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework will be prepared to ensure that IPs are benefiting from the project.
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	Yes	The project will build new classrooms. These new buildings should not cause land conflicts and the project will avoid as much as possible involuntary resettlement. The screening will be systematically used for every new construction. The Government will prepare a Resettlement Policy Framework which will guide the management of any land acquisition leading to involuntary resettlement or restrictions of access to resources and livelihoods.
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	N/A
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	N/A
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	N/A

III. SAFEGUARD PREPARATION PLAN

A. Tentative target date for preparing the PAD Stage ISDS: 30-Apr-2013

B. Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing¹ should be specified in the PAD-stage ISDS:

The three safeguards documents (ESMF, IFP and RPF) will be prepared prior to appraisal in April 2013.

IV. APPROVALS

Task Team Leader:	Name: Dung-Kim Pham	
Approved By:		
Regional Safeguards Coordinator:	Name: Alexandra C. Bezeredi (RSA)	Date: 25-Feb-2013
Sector Manager:	Name: Peter Nicolas Materu (SM)	Date: 30-Nov-2012

¹ Reminder: The Bank's Disclosure Policy requires that safeguard-related documents be disclosed before appraisal (i) at the InfoShop and (ii) in country, at publicly accessible locations and in a form and language that are accessible to potentially affected persons.