



Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary  
Concept Stage  
**(ESRS Concept Stage)**

Date Prepared/Updated: 05/20/2025 | Report No: ESRSC04922

**I. BASIC INFORMATION****A. Basic Operation Data**

|                                                                 |                                                     |                             |                      |
|-----------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------|----------------------|
| Operation ID                                                    | Product                                             | Operation Acronym           | Approval Fiscal Year |
| P507207                                                         | Investment Project Financing (IPF)                  | BWSSAP                      | 2026                 |
| Operation Name                                                  | Burundi Water Supply and Sanitation Access Project  |                             |                      |
| Country/Region Code                                             | Beneficiary country/countries (borrower, recipient) | Region                      | Practice Area (Lead) |
| Burundi                                                         | Burundi                                             | EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA | Water                |
| Borrower(s)                                                     | Implementing Agency(ies)                            | Estimated Appraisal Date    | Estimated Board Date |
| Republic of Burundi - Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning | Ministry of Water, Energy and Mines                 | 30-Sep-2025                 | 15-Dec-2025          |
| Estimated Concept Review Date                                   | Total Project Cost                                  |                             |                      |
| 08-Apr-2025                                                     | 95,000,000.00                                       |                             |                      |

**Proposed Development Objective**

To increase access to drinking water supply and sanitation services in selected urban and rural areas of Burundi and to strengthen institutional capacity for service delivery

**B. Is the operation being prepared in a Situation of Urgent Need of Assistance or Capacity Constraints, as per Bank IPF Policy, para. 12?**

No

**C. Summary Description of Proposed Project Activities**

The Burundi Water Supply and Sanitation Access Project aims to increase access to drinking water supply and sanitation (WSS) services in targeted areas of Burundi and strengthen institutional capacity for service delivery. For urban and peri-urban areas (in Bujumbura), the project intends to leverage financing from IDA, as well as mobilize private capital for water supply production. The aim is to provide safely managed drinking water services to previously unserved populations and to improve the quality of services from basic to safely managed drinking water services Bujumbura



through safe and reliable water access through household connections. For rural areas, the project will improve access to at least basic water supply and sanitation services in selected communes prioritized by the government. Moreover, the project will improve access to water, sanitation, and hygiene (WASH) facilities in selected schools and health centers within these rural communes. Aligned with the regional Multi-phase Programmatic Approach (MPA) design, the proposed components are the following: Component 1: Strengthening National WASH Platforms, Governance and Reforms (US\$ 4 million IDA). Subcomponent 1.1. on National WASH platforms finances technical assistance, training and equipment to develop and implement sector-wide monitoring platforms for WASH access, medium term investment plans, joint sector reviews and future investment preparation studies. Subcomponent 1.2 on Governance and Reforms finances technical assistance, training and equipment to address governance bottlenecks and support the implementation of reform measures including for the mobilization of private capital for WASH. This includes the development of regulatory instruments and policies, tariff studies, transaction advisory services, capacity development for sector ministries, the national water and sanitation regulatory entity, the national PPP center, as well as selected communes benefiting from investments. Component 2: Service Providers Performance Improvement (US\$ 12.5 million IDA): This component, mapped to pillar 3 of the MPA, finances works, equipment, technical assistance, training for the national water utility REGIDESO as well as for rural water supply providers and the rural water agency. Subcomponent 2.1 finances the implementation of REGIDESO's Performance Improvement Action Plan, including Non Revenue Water, digitalization, and water quality management improvements and social connection subsidies. Subcomponent 2.2. finances the preparation of delegation contracts between communes and private water operators, capacity development for professionalization of domestic private sector and subsidies for connection programs, as well as vocational and professional development programs for job creation in the WASH sector. Component 3: Leveraging Financing for Resilient Investments to Expand WASH Access (US\$ 58.5 million IDA and US\$ 15 million PCM). Subcomponent 3.1 finances infrastructure investments in climate -resilient urban water supply distribution and production systems for Bujumbura, including viability gap financing for the bulk water production plant. A Build-Operate-Transfer (BOT) arrangement is proposed for the bulk water production plant, blending public and private funding to ensure an affordable tariff for REGIDESO as off-taker, and to the households as end-consumers. IDA financing would support viability gap financing and REGIDESO's network expansion to maximize impact on the population. MIGA de-risking instruments will be brought as appropriate. IFC role would be to bringing debt and mobilizing other lenders (either through co-development with value-for-money assurances or through a competitive process). Subcomponent 3.2 finances rehabilitation and construction of solar-based climate-resilient rural water systems in selected communes, behavior change and market-enabling household subsidies for durable sanitation facilities, and construction of WASH facilities in schools and health centers including programs for girls on menstrual hygiene management. Component 4: Project Management and Coordination (US\$ 5.2 million IDA). This component finances the overall project management, monitoring and coordination costs, including operating costs. It also finances costs related to land acquisition and resettlement related to the project. The total project cost estimation is US\$ 95 million of which US\$ 80 million in IDA and US\$ 15 million in private capital mobilization (note: the preliminary IDA allocation for the project is US\$ 60 million). Depending on the possibility to mobilize parallel co-financing from other partners, and on performance of the project, additional finance and project restructuring may be processed to expand the Project to include water supply investments in Gitega and scale-up WASH services in selected rural communes.

## **D. Environmental and Social Overview**

### **D.1 Overview of Environmental and Social Project Settings**

Burundi is an FCV context, and it is one of the seven member states of the East African Community (EAC). Repeated episodes of conflict and fragility have created an uncertain and risky environment which has constrained investment,



leading to low performing and volatile economy. The proposed Project is part of a regional Multi-phase Programmatic Approach (MPA) on Accelerating WASH Access in AFE region (P506439). The proposed Project will include infrastructure investment in water supply systems in urban and rural areas, WASH facilities in schools and health centers and household latrine construction in rural areas and technical assistance to support technical studies, capacity building, reforms and policies. The project will be implemented in Bujumbura and in four rural communes (as per the communes boundaries that take effect in June 2025) that include Bituhinda, Muyinga, Rwibaga and Mugere (limited to the area of Kanyosha). The focus of the project is on i) water supply investments in the city of Bujumbura and measures (provision of equipment, technical assistance) to improvement performance of REGIDESO water operations (and ii) rehabilitation/expansion of existing and construction of new water systems in the four rural communes. The implementation of the rural water supply works will exclude remote or highly isolated areas, thereby restricting the potential risks, benefits and impact on communities residing in isolated regions. The feasibility studies and the APS for the selected systems are expected by December 2025. The APD and the ESIA's will be completed by March 2026. Based on feasibility studies, specific rural sites will be defined and assessed accordingly.

## D.2 Overview of Borrower's Institutional Capacity for Managing Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

The Project will be managed through a new Project Management Unit (PMU) within the Ministry of Water, Energy and Mines (MINHEM-PMU), with activities implemented by a second Project Implementation Unit (PIU) within REGIDESO. The MINHEM-PMU will oversee fiduciary, environmental, social, coordination, and reporting responsibilities, implementing activities under component 1 nationally, subcomponents 2.2 and 3.2 in rural areas, and capital subsidies (VGF grants) under subcomponent 3.1 for the Bujumbura water treatment plant. The REGIDESO-Water PIU will carry out activities related to REGIDESO's mandate, such as performance improvement under subcomponent 2.1 and water infrastructure under subcomponent 3.1 (except the treatment plant).

MINHEM-PMU and REGIDESO have limited capacities in managing project E&S risks, particularly under ESF. The MINHEM-PMU will hire qualified E&S specialists to manage project risks and impacts, including environmental and social development specialists. The REGIDESO-Water PIU will include REGIDESO's E&S staff, strengthened by an external consultant in charge of building their capacity in E&S risk management under ESF for 18 months. Capacity-building plans are part of the Project.

Various ministries and public entities will be involved at national, provincial, and communal levels, along with the private sector under a proposed Hybrid PPP for the Bujumbura bulk water treatment plant. A capacity assessment for E&S risk management will be conducted by Appraisal as part of the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF). Based on the results, a capacity-building action plan will be proposed to enhance public entities' capability, which will be reflected in the Project's Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP).

The Burundian Office for the Protection of Environment (OBPE) regulates Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIA) and issues Environmental Compliance Certificates under the Ministry of Agriculture and Environment.

## II. SCREENING OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISKS AND IMPACTS

### A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Substantial

#### A.1 Environmental Risk Rating

Substantial

The environmental risk rating is currently assessed as Substantial. The primary environmental risks and impacts are anticipated from activities under components 2 and 3. These include infrastructure investments in urban water supply



distribution and production systems for Bujumbura and Gitega, subsidies for a private developer of a bulk water treatment plant, investments in urban drinking water systems managed by REGIDESO, rehabilitation and construction of rural water systems in selected communes, and investments in WASH facilities in schools and healthcare facilities. Key anticipated direct, indirect, and cumulative risks and impacts include temporary disruption of utility services in the project areas, traffic disruption due to excavation of trenches and pipeline laying along main roads and streets, increased turbidity and sedimentation downstream affecting aquatic habitats, pollution and oil spill risks, chemical management, waste generation, occupational health and safety risks for workers, and health and safety risks for local communities due to active construction sites and activities within the community. The project will also support technical assistance (TA) activities of Types 1, 2, and 3 under components 1 and 2, which include the preparation of investment plans, investment preparation studies, transaction advisory services, capacity building, and the development of national legal and regulatory texts and policies. TA activities may have potential downstream environmental risks due to potential new investments that need to be assessed and managed. This classification also considers the capacity of the Borrower and all stakeholders involved in this project, including public and private sector companies, to manage potential risks.

Substantial

## A.2 Social Risk Rating

The social risk rating is considered to be Substantial, given the nature of the activities and their implementation in densely populated urban areas of Bujumbura, and in the four selected rural communes, and also considering the downstream impacts of the planned TA activities. The key social risks associated with the Project include (i) potential exclusion of women and members of vulnerable groups from project benefits, along with potential elite capture, especially from activities such as training and capacity building and the equitable household connections under component 3 and 4; (ii) community health and safety risks, including those associated with the labor influx associated with the civil works, which may increase the transmission of communicable diseases, and the level of SEA/SH risk; (iii) potential for land acquisition and economic displacement, temporary and permanently, particularly in relation to the activities planned to be supported under components 3.1 and 3.2; (iv) risks associated with the downstream impacts of the TA activities to be supported, including those related to the policy reforms to be supported, some of which may potentially experience stakeholder opposition to some of the proposed policy reforms; (v) potentially adverse economic impacts on vulnerable groups during the transition from unpaid to paid access to drinking water, particularly if differentiated approach for them, like social tariffs, are not adequately considered during the reform process.

## B. Relevance of Standards and Policies at Concept Stage

### B.1 Relevance of Environmental and Social Standards

#### ESS1 - Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Relevant

The project will finance investments in water systems/production and sanitation that may have potential environmental and social (E&S) risks/impacts. To manage these risks/impacts, including those related to ancillary works, E&S assessment will be conducted through several instruments. The Borrower will develop an ESMF and two (02) ESIs/ESMPs for infrastructure investments in urban water supply distribution and production systems for Bujumbura and Gitega, for which feasibility studies are already under preparation. These instruments will include measures to address SEA/SH risks as well. For other investments for which specific locations are not yet known at this



stage, an ESMF will be prepared. ToRs and advice or other documents for TA activities will need to be reviewed and cleared for consistency with ESSs 1-10. An environmental specialist and a social development specialist will be recruited for the new MINHEM-PMU.

#### **ESS10 - Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure**

Relevant

To ensure stakeholder involvement throughout the project cycle, the Project preparation Team has organized site visits and consultative meetings with institutional stakeholders. Once technical studies are finalized and detailed information on project sites is available, the team will continue engaging with communities through meaningful interactions, ensuring timely, understandable and accessible information. The engagement must be free of manipulation, interference, coercion, discrimination, and intimidation. The Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) shall outline the characteristics and interests of relevant stakeholder groups, including commune administrations, local water committees, beneficiaries (with a special focus on women), and directly impacted project-affected persons and vulnerable groups including Batwa and refugees. The SEP will be disclosed prior to Appraisal, and will include a record of stakeholder engagement activities carried out during preparation and implementation.

#### **ESS2 - Labor and Working Conditions**

Relevant

The implementation entities will prepare labor management procedures (LMP) to address key worker issues, such as working conditions, worker relationships, workforce protection, non-discrimination, child and forced labor prevention, Occupational Health and Safety (OHS) requirements, and guidance for employing youth and women (except minors). The LMP will feature a labor-specific grievance mechanism sensitive to SEA/SH, based on national laws, ESS2 provisions, and labor issue management. It will also include a code of conduct prohibiting SEA/SH and sanctions for misconduct. OHS risks will be managed through LMP for direct workers and contractors' workers via specific ESIAs/ESMPs. Contractors will develop Specific Health and Safety Management Plans in line with WBG Environment, Health, and Safety Guidelines (ESHGs) for construction/rehabilitation works, for water and sanitation and other relevant instruments. OHS requirements will be incorporated in the bidding documents and contracts.

#### **ESS3 - Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management**

Relevant

Investments under this project will entail risks/impacts relevant to ESS3 requirements, which include raw material and resource use, energy use, generation of hazardous/non-hazardous waste, handling and use of hazardous materials, increased water demand, noise and air pollution. All these risks/impacts will be assessed through ESA instruments (ESIAs/ESMPs and ESMF) to be prepared by the Borrower and relevant measures and plans will be developed accordingly. These instruments will include standard operating procedures and good construction management practices, including those proposed in WBG ESHGs. Since the project supports investments to increase access to drinking water supply and sanitation (WSS) services in targeted areas of Burundi, a water balance will be assessed as part of site-specific ESIAs/ESMPs and adequate measures will be proposed to minimize the depletion of water resources. An analysis of GHG emissions will be conducted during preparation. No pesticide use is expected.

#### **ESS4 - Community Health and Safety**

Relevant

ESS4 is relevant. Project activities may have negative risks and impacts on the health and safety of the communities surrounding the work sites. Anticipated risks and impacts include community health and safety risks associated with construction and rehabilitation work, traffic safety, community exposure to labor influx, exposure to diseases, noise,



hazardous materials, emergency preparedness, and transmission of communicable diseases. There are also risks associated with SEA/SH. All these risks and impacts will be assessed and mitigate through E&S risk management instruments in line with ESS4 and will include standard operating procedures and good construction management practices, include those proposed in WB EHSs and the SEA/SH Action Plan. A traffic management plan will be developed as part of site-specific ESIAs/ESMPs to manage and minimize traffic disruption due to excavation of trenches and pipeline laying along main roads and streets.

**ESS5 - Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement**

Relevant

ESS5 is relevant because project activities excepted under components 3 and 4 may require some land acquisition for water supply infrastructure in rural and urban areas, the installation of the water pipes along the right-of-way may affect homes, assets and economic activities of the local populations, as part of the planned works in urban areas and rural communes, may potentially lead to land acquisition and economic activity disruption on a temporary and permanent basis. While technical and the feasibility studies are still ongoing, no specific cases of resettlement have been confirmed yet. Once studies triggered the need of land acquisition and/or created economical displacement, base on the scope, during the implementation, it was agreed in the ESCP, that the social impacts mitigation measures must be handle through the preparation of the ESMPs and/or Resettlement actions plans prepare during implementation prior to the commencement of such activities prior launching civils works.

**ESS6 - Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources**

Relevant

ESS6 is relevant. The project activities are mainly taking place in inhabited urban and rural areas to meet their water and sanitation needs and are not expected to take place in or near protected areas or critical habitats. However, these activities may lead to increased turbidity and sedimentation downstream affecting aquatic habitats, pollution and oil spill risks. Through ESA instruments, impacts on biodiversity will be assessed and mitigation measures proposed. In addition, a screening process will be put in place to improve project sites selection to avoid selecting areas with high biodiversity values. A negative list will be included in the ESMF to exclude any activity or subprojects that would involve significant conversion or degradation of critical habitat or take place within protected areas.

**ESS7 - Indigenous Peoples/Sub-Saharan African Historically Underserved Traditional Local Communities**

TBD

Batwa communities are present in Burundi. Project activities will be carried out in urban and rural areas, integrating Batwa communities into overall Burundian communities, especially in service delivery. The applicability of ESS7 will be confirmed based on technical and feasibility studies outcomes. Project activities will not cause relocation or impact cultural heritage resources of Batwa groups, thus not requiring Free Prior and Informed Consultations (FPIC). Once studies are finalized, assessments will analyze potential adverse impacts on Batwa communities or barriers to their access to project benefits. If triggered, the IPPF sets out a framework for participatory consultation of Batwa and vulnerable populations, considering cultural impacts and engaging them according to their norms and traditions. The SEP includes provisions for consultation with Batwa communities, ensuring independent consultation in safe and confidential conditions.

**ESS8 - Cultural Heritage**

Relevant



ESS8 is relevant. The project will support civil works activities that will include land excavations works that may have adverse impacts on tangible cultural heritage. Through the environmental and social assessment, the project will confirm the existence of intangible and tangible cultural heritage in the rural areas of the project, including sacred forests, groves, among others. To manage and mitigate the risks related to ESS8, further screening and assessment will be conducted to the identified risks and, screening criteria will be included in the ESMF as well as chance find procedures which also included in the relevant ESMPs and contractor contracts.

#### ESS9 - Financial Intermediaries

Not Currently Relevant

No FI are involved in the project

### B.2 Legal Operational Policies that Apply

**OP 7.50 Operations on International Waterways**

Yes

**OP 7.60 Operations in Disputed Areas**

No

### B.3 Other Salient Features

**Use of Borrower Framework**

No

N/A

**Use of Common Approach**

No

N/A

## C. Overview of Required Environmental and Social Risk Management Activities

### C.1 What Borrower environmental and social analyses, instruments, plans and/or frameworks are planned or required by Appraisal?

The following E&S risk management instruments are expected to be disclosed by Appraisal:

- Draft Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF)
- Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)
- Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP)

The following instruments are expected during project implementation (or earlier):

- SEA/SH Action Plan
- Labor Management Procedures (LMP)
- ESIA/ESMPs (one for Bujumbura and one for Gitega) during implementation including grievance management procedure prior to starting bidding processes.
- RAPs, if the need for involuntary resettlement is confirmed.

Also, ToRs of documents for TA activities will need to be reviewed to ensure consistency with the ESF.



### III. CONTACT POINT

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