

DOCUMENT OF THE INTER-AMERICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK

HAITI

**STRENGTHENING THE FOUNDATIONS OF DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION OF
PUBLIC MANAGEMENT TO IMPROVE GOVERNMENT EFFECTIVENESS**

(HA-J0010)

PROJECT PROFILE

This document was prepared by the project team consisting of: Mendieta, Claudia Project Team Leader; Pareja, Alejandro, Alternate Team Leader; Nowersztern, Ariel; Mosqueira, Edgardo; Porrúa, Miguel; Pierri, Gaston; De La Torre, Catherinne; Gonzalez, Marianna (IFD/ICS); Monje, Andrea (SCL/GDI); Pierre, Ghislaine (CID/CHA); Gonzalez, Ana; Sanabria, Angel (VPC/FMP); Vila, Sara; Centeno, Monica (LEG/SGO).

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PROJECT PROFILE

HAITI

I. BASIC DATA

Project Name:	Strengthening the Foundations of Digital Transformation of Public Management to Improve Government Effectiveness		
Project Number:	HA-J0010		
Project Team:	Mendieta, Claudia, Team Leader; Pareja, Alejandro, Alternate Team Leader; Nowersztern, Ariel; Mosqueira, Edgardo; Porrúa, Miguel; Pierri, Gaston; De La Torre, Catherinne; Gonzalez, Marianna (IFD/ICS); Monje, Andrea (SCL/GDI); Pierre, Ghislaine (CID/CHA); Gonzalez, Ana; Sanabria, Angel (VPC/FMP); Vila, Sara; Centeno, Monica (LEG/SGO).		
Beneficiary:	Republic of Haiti		
Executing Agency:	Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF)		
Financial plan:	IDB (GRF-IDB Grant Facility):	US\$	16,000,000
	Total:	US\$	16,000,000
Safeguards:	Policies activated:	ESPS 1, 2, 10	
	Impact Classification:	C	
	Risk Classification:	Low	

II. GENERAL JUSTIFICATION AND OBJECTIVES

- 2.1 **Fragility, Conflict, and Criminal Violence (FCCV) situation and government effectiveness.** Haiti is a low-income, fragile state that has been struggling with sociopolitical and economic challenges for decades. Haiti is one of the most fragile countries in the world, ranked 11 out of 179 countries,¹ and it is one of the least effective governments, ranked in the 0.94th percentile according to the 2022 Worldwide Governance Indicators (WGI), comparable to Somalia (1.42) and South Sudan (0.00).² Haiti FCCV situation is associated to complex challenges on each of the elements of this condition: fragility, conflict, and criminal violence. Haiti's fragility – the FCCV element to be addressed by this project- is directly related to the insufficient capacity of the state to deliver basic public services.³

¹ [Fragile States Index, 2022](#).

² Relatedly, Haiti is in the 7.55th percentile rank in Rule of Law, 5.19th in Control of Corruption, 10.38th in Political Instability and Absence of Violence/Terrorism, and 8.49th in Regulatory Quality. See: [WGI](#).

³ The IDBG Framework to Support Populations in Situations of Fragility, Conflict, and Criminal Violence, 2024-2027 (FCCV Framework, in preparation) defines the three elements of FCCV-fragility, conflict, and criminal violence. Fragility is defined as the “insufficient capacity of the state, or the subsystems within it, to deliver basic public services and mitigate, manage, or recover from the effects of shocks

Haiti's severe limitations in institutional capacity and rule of law translate into deficient public management with ineffective policy design and implementation and service delivery to citizens and firms. The state's weak capacity to deliver on its functions and services renders it an ineffective government.

- 2.2 **Public sector management challenges.** Haiti's ineffective policy implementation and service delivery is due to interrelated causes underlying the weaknesses of its public management: (i) weak organizational and technical capabilities due to deficient core crosscutting management systems to generate and allocate financial resources and to manage resources for service production and delivery, as well as a frail governance and strategic approach with deficient organizational structures and regulatory framework; (ii) feeble accountability and rule of law framework; and (iii) an authorizing environment not conducive to consensus and support for reforms. Management systems are particularly relevant as they are preconditions for policy implementation and service delivery: budget, strategic planning, public investment, human resources, and procurement, as well as the use of digital technologies to improve these management systems' efficiency and effectiveness, are all critical for policy implementation as well as service production and delivery.
- 2.3 The Ministry of Economy and Finance (MEF) is at the heart of the country's center of government and is responsible for the core crosscutting management systems of the public administration, thus having an enormous impact across all government agencies, sectors and levels. However, gaps in MEF organizational and technical capabilities, including meager process optimization as well as scant digitalization of both mission areas and internal management, translate into deficient core management systems. The Central MEF comprises MEF Internal Services -Minister Office, General Directorate, and Treasury and Accounting Directorate (DGTCP) - as well as a critical MEF Deconcentrated Service - the Budget General Directorate (DGB).⁴ The Central MEF runs several core crosscutting management systems, including budget planning and execution, public investment strategic planning, civil service payroll management, and procurement's payments to suppliers, among other. Gaps in Central MEF technological enablers and capabilities to digitalize its internal management are key barriers to efficient and effective conduction of the core management systems under its responsibility. Gaps are detailed in Annex VI.
- 2.4 **Digital government challenges.** Digital transformation of public management is a key means to improve effectiveness of policy design and implementation, efficiency, quality and inclusiveness of service delivery, and public sector transparency and integrity. And this is especially important for Haiti, as digital

and risks associated with them". According to the FCCV Framework methodology to identify FCCV countries, one of the two criteria assessed is "Countries with high institutional and social fragility" which is measured by "extremely weak institutional and policy environment", among other indicators. Based on these criteria, Haiti is classified as a fragile country.

⁴ "Central MEF" refers to core MEF Internal Services and Deconcentrated Services, and their corresponding Directorates and Units. This excludes: (i) other MEF Deconcentrated Services such as Taxes General Directorate (DGI), Customs General Administration (AGD), Finance General Inspection (IGF), and Information Technology Institute (IHSI), among other; and (ii) MEF Autonomous Organisms such as Fight Against Corruption Unit (ULCC), Economic and Social Assistance Funds (FAES), and Industrial Parks National Society (SONAPI), among other.

government could help provide a tailored response to its FCCV situation by enhancing government effectiveness while improving the resilience of public sector operation. However, Haiti presents severe shortcomings in all the digital transformation enablers that are crucial to foster and leverage digital government: digital governance and institutions, digital legal and regulatory framework, digital talent, and digital infrastructure and tools. In 2022 Haiti ranked 187 (of 193 countries) in the UN e-government index.⁵ The country's gaps in this digital transformation enabling framework prevent it from developing this agenda in a coherent, sustained and inclusive way.⁶ This inability to leverage digital government in turn exacerbates public sector management challenges, with extremely weak institutional capacity and rule of law compounded by pervasive usage of paper transactions and in-person interactions as well as lack of resilience of public sector operation, causing enormous inefficiencies and a drain of public resources⁷ and adding to the ineffectiveness of policies and services. Gaps are detailed in Annex VI.

- 2.5 The Government of Haiti has shown commitment to address the public sector management and digital government challenges above presented by requesting donors' support. In response to this, programs supported by several donors are currently being implemented, including this IDB project (further details in paragraphs 3.2 and 3.4).
- 2.6 **Problem to address.** The problem identified is the government's ineffective policy implementation and service delivery to citizens. The project will address one of its main causes: the inability to leverage digital technologies in public management. This in turn is due to: (i) weak public sector digital governance; (ii) gaps in technological enablers and capabilities to digitalize and increase efficiency of core crosscutting management systems run by the Central MEF; and (iii) weak public sector cybersecurity capacity.
- 2.7 **Weak public sector digital governance.** Haiti's digital governance is weak, with overlapping roles and pervasive low institutional capacity. The Statistics and Information Technology Institute (IHSI), which depends on the MEF, has since 2020 the mandate of coordinating the country's digital transformation policy and efforts⁸ thus embodying the role of national digital government agency. The e-Governance Unit of the Prime Minister Office also has the mandate to orient the digital transformation policy and approve/validate all public sector initiatives in this regard, overlapping the IHSI role to set digital transformation policy strategic direction. The National Telecommunications Council (CONATEL)⁹ also has an important role as the regulator of digital connectivity infrastructure. Before the recent mandate of the IHSI as digital government agency CONATEL played a leading role in this agenda, and its longer presence in the sector with stronger

⁵ [UN e-Government Knowledgebase: Data Center \(un.org\)](https://unstats.un.org/unsd/e-government/knowledgebase/).

⁶ IDB (2022). [Government digital transformation guide](#).

⁷ IDB (2018). [Wait no more: Citizens, Red Tape, and Digital Government](#).

⁸ The decree stating IHSI mandate was issued on June 10, 2020, at Council of Ministers. The IHSI is one of the MEF Deconcentrated Services.

⁹ CONATEL is an Autonomous Organism of the Ministry of Public Works, Transportation, and Communication (MTPC).

capacity frequently results in tensions when defining scope of both agencies. Another important actor is the MEF's Information Systems Directorate (DSI), which is conducting digital transformation initiatives within the ministry which will impact the broad public administration. All these agencies and units present very low technical and operational capacity, limiting their effectiveness and efforts to jointly address issues. This challenge is particularly problematic for the IHSI given its lack of capacity to fulfill its mandate of digital government agency.

- 2.8 **Gaps in technological enablers and capabilities to digitalize and increase efficiency of core crosscutting management systems run by the Central MEF.** The Central MEF presents severe limitations in digital infrastructure and digital shared solutions that are key technological enablers for the digitalization of processes and transactions underlying the core management systems this ministry runs. This includes strategic internal management services and tools supporting both the entire Central MEF back-office operation and front-office processes at the Minister Office, General Directorate, DGTCP and DGB entailing senior management's document processing and signature. The Central MEF has very limited quality connectivity for high-demand applications and deficient and unstable energy supply for the operation of connectivity solutions. Cloud computing IT infrastructure is also weak, rendering critical applications, services and data vulnerable and deficient. While some improvements have been made to its interoperability platform, scope and effectiveness are still very limited with a low rate of data exchanged, a critical issue given that MEF's interoperability platform is expected to become the public sector single interoperability platform allowing data exchange between all government agencies and with private sector actors. The Central MEF also presents a limited institutional email system and very low uptake among employees at all hierarchy levels. Paper-based, in-person transactions and interactions are pervasive across MEF operation, including document management and signature as well as payments management. Payroll management is an emblematic reflection of this, with 80% of permanent public sector employees of the whole public administration being paid through paper-based check issuance and in-person check collection and cashing. In 2022, the annual cost of permanent employees' payroll payment management (i.e. payment processes and transportation costs) was estimated to be approximately US\$846,000 or 0.12% of payroll.
- 2.9 Furthermore, management systems' processes are cumbersome and have high compliance costs, underscoring the need of a process optimization approach for digitalization efforts and of building consensus and support for process simplification reforms.
- 2.10 Adding to these challenges, the country FCCV situation, with gang-controlled areas and increasing kidnappings and killings, limits severely the ability of employees to commute to MEF buildings, and more broadly pushes people to either be internally displaced or leave the country causing brain drain across all public sector institutions. The FCCV situation critically undermines the operation and business continuity of the entire public administration, including the MEF's, as frequent lockdowns and criminal violence both impede in-office operation and exacerbate digital connectivity and energy issues thus affecting remote work options. Hybrid -in office and remote- work, supported by autonomous connectivity and energy tools, is a solution the MEF is contemplating to increase the resilience of its operation and business continuity, and to mitigate brain drain by leveraging

the benefits of a more flexible and resilient work environment. However, the MEF lacks the regulatory, digital talent, and technological environment to enable hybrid work.

- 2.11 The brain drain issue affects the Central MEF increasingly and across all hierarchy levels, limiting human resources' availability, competencies, and ability to work. In addition to this, there are low digital skills among Central MEF employees, from digital literacy to advanced skills,¹⁰ compounding capacity issues. The Central MEF also presents limited functional and technological capabilities to leverage digital technologies, including the weak capacity of its DSI. Details of Central MEF gaps are presented in Annex VI.
- 2.12 **Limited public sector cybersecurity capacity.** Haiti has a very weak cybersecurity capacity, both in terms of institutional aspects and operational and technological capabilities. This is reflected in a low cybersecurity capacity maturity, as per the IDB-OAS 2020 assessment.¹¹ Haiti was assigned the lowest maturity level in all dimensions evaluated, faring among the worst performers in the region. The country lacks cybersecurity policy and national strategy, with no strategic direction on issues such as incident response, critical infrastructure protection, crisis management, cyber-defense, and communications redundancy. Accordingly, there is no cybersecurity national governance. The country also lacks legal frameworks (including on cybercrime, and data protection and privacy) and effective criminal justice system, as well as cooperation frameworks to combat cybercrime.
- 2.13 There is also an inability to control risks through standards, organizations and technologies, with gaps in internet infrastructure resilience, software quality, technical security controls, cryptographic controls, cybersecurity marketplace, and responsible disclosure. Similarly, the country fares poorly in its capacity to encourage a responsible cybersecurity culture within society, and cybersecurity education, training and skills. Consistent with this, there is no public sector Cybersecurity Incident Response Team (CSIRT) established to protect, monitor, detect, respond, and recover from cybersecurity incidents. According to the 2020 Global Cybersecurity Index, Haiti ranks 167 (of 182 countries).¹²
- 2.14 **Project design and implementation strategy.** This project is part of a series of IDB efforts to strengthen Haiti's state capacity and public management, and it builds on lessons learned from previous interventions implemented amidst the country's challenging context. In particular, this project is the continuation of efforts carried out during the last six years to strengthen the MEF as the agency responsible for the public administration's core management systems and a pillar of Haiti's institutional capacity. The Program to Strengthen Public Management to Improve Service Delivery ([4820/GR-HA](#), US\$55 million, in execution), whose objective is to improve service delivery by enhancing the effectiveness, efficiency and transparency of human resources and salaries management, builds up MEF capacity and does so with the MEF as executing agency in its role of owner of the reforms promoted by the program and the actor leading their implementation and

¹⁰ IDB (2021). [Digital Transformation and Public Employment: The Future of Government Work](#).

¹¹ IDB and OAS (2020). [2020 Cybersecurity Report: Risks, Progress, and the Way Forward in Latin America and the Caribbean](#).

¹² Haiti ranks below countries such as Belize (159) and Nicaragua (165). See: [ITU Global Cybersecurity Index](#).

- institutionalization.¹³ This project will directly complement and leverage 4820/GR-HA objectives and results so far, and it will benefit from pre-existing execution capacity by using 4820/GR-HA execution arrangements and governance. Thus, this project is a key next step in the Bank's progressive, adaptive strategy to build state capacity in Haiti whereby interventions are gradual and anchored in critical public management institutions, such as the MEF, and in critical capabilities, such as the use of digital technologies to improve public management.
- 2.15 Consistent with this, the project's design and implementation strategy internalizes challenges for execution and development effectiveness in Haiti, and it builds on the Bank's long-term engagement with the country. Key features of this strategy are: (i) incremental reforms that build upon one another leveraging longer term Bank support; (ii) a streamlined design with modest and feasible objectives; (iii) a sound theory of change; and (iv) execution arrangements and governance that secure both institutional capacity for implementation and country's appropriation and accountability.
- 2.16 In this context, the project's strategy to contribute to improvements to policy implementation and service delivery to citizens by supporting increased effectiveness of public management through digitalization is to foster levers that both enable (and accelerate) digital transformation and improve core management systems for service production and delivery. To this aim, the project will: (i) strengthen public sector digital governance and capacity of the digital government agency; (ii) deploy technological enablers and improve capabilities for digitalization and increased efficiency of core crosscutting management systems run by the Central MEF, focusing on the digital transformation of Central MEF internal management; and (iii) develop public sector cybersecurity capacity. This will allow fostering institutional, regulatory, technological, and digital talent enablers of digital transformation of public management at large, while building capacity and accelerating digitalization at the heart of the public administration by strengthening Central MEF capabilities and digitalizing its internal management. Furthermore, this will allow gradual and sustained progress with digital transformation of Haiti's public management, starting by the Central MEF not only due to its importance and role but also because improvements at this level can be organically and effectively mainstreamed and scaled up in MEF Deconcentrated Services and Autonomous Organisms as well as Sector Ministries. The fact that the Digital Government Agency (IHSI) depends on the MEF also contributes to impactful improvements in digital governance. This gradual and strategic approach is necessary given Haiti's fragility and the complexity of its public management and digital government challenges. The project design and implementation strategy will thus allow it to tackle the issue of insufficient capacity of the state to deliver on its functions and services, contributing to address Haiti's FCCV situation, specifically the fragility element of this situation.
- 2.17 A potential spillover, in addition to improved effectiveness in policies and services, is increased public sector transparency and integrity which in turn strengthens the

¹³ 4820/GR-HA was originally approved in 2019, and its reformulation was approved in November 2022. Eligibility of the reformulation was attained in March 2023. First disbursement post reformulation was completed in April 2023. Total disbursements during 2023 are equivalent to 20% of (post reformulation) budget of Components 1 and 2, which are comparable to the present operation (HA-J0010). Further details in Annex VII and Annex VIII.

rule of law. Both institutional capacity for government effectiveness and rule of law contribute to improve the country's governance and address Haiti's fragility.

- 2.18 **Country's strategy in the sector.** The project aligns with Haiti's Strategic Development Plan 2030,¹⁴ which states the goal of digital modernization of public administration. It also aligns with the country's guidelines for a Digital Transformation Strategy and Action Plan,¹⁵ which aim to establish the e-government framework. Likewise, the project aligns to MEF IT masterplan,¹⁶ which establishes digital transformation actions and goals in line with MEF and public administration needs.
- 2.19 **Strategic alignment.** The project is consistent with the Second Update of the Institutional Strategy (UIS) (AB-3190-2), and it is strategically aligned with the development challenges of: (i) Social Inclusion, by leveraging digital technologies to improve public service delivery to citizens; and (ii) Productivity and Innovation, by increasing efficiency and productivity of a key public sector institution - the MEF - through digitalization, and by promoting technological innovation in the MEF internal management operations. The project is also aligned with the cross-cutting issues of i) Gender Equality, by fostering digital skills of women in the public sector workforce (MEF), thus reducing the gender digital gap in access to and use of technologies;¹⁷ (ii) Climate Change, by reducing transportation as well as consumption of paper and other inputs for MEF internal management; and (iii) Institutional Capacity and Rule of Law, by building state institutional capacity for effective policy implementation and service delivery to citizens through improved conditions for digital transformation of public management in general and the MEF in particular, and strengthened core management systems for service production and delivery with focus on those run by the Central MEF. Additionally, the project will contribute to the Corporate Results Framework (CRF) 2020-2023 (GN-2727-12) through the indicator Agencies with strengthened digital technology and managerial capacity. Finally, this operation is included in the Operational Program Report 2024 (GN-3207).
- 2.20 **Alignment to Bank strategy with the country.** The project is aligned with the Country Strategy with Haiti 2017-2021 (GN-2904) strategic objective of Modernization of government organizations to enhance public sector management.¹⁸
- 2.21 **Alignment to Institutional Capacity and Rule of Law Country Matrix (ICRLCM) for Haiti.** The project is aligned with the Haiti ICRLCM,¹⁹ which highlights that strengthening institutional capacity and rule of law (ICRL) is crucial to address the country FCCV situation as sound ICRL is critical to both improve the ability of the state to deliver on its functions and services and create an enabling environment for private sector development. The Haiti ICRLCM identifies as a priority ICRL area the strengthening of institutional capacity for service delivery and policy implementation by fostering governance and management systems at

¹⁴ See: [Plan Stratégique de Développement d'Haiti, Pays Émergent en 2030](#).

¹⁵ IHSI (2020). *La Transformation Numérique de l'Etat Haïtien – Résumé Exécutif de la Stratégie et Plan d'Action*.

¹⁶ *MEF Schéma Directeur Informatique (SDI)*.

¹⁷ Gender gaps will be presented in the project Proposal for Operation Development (POD).

¹⁸ The Country Strategy with Haiti 2017-2021 (GN-2904) is still in force and extended until December 31, 2024 (GN-2904-4).

¹⁹ IDB (2023). Institutional Capacity and Rule of Law Country Matrix (ICRLCM): Haiti Pilot (2023).

country/transversal level -in topics such as center of government, civil service, and digital transformation of public management- and at sector level.²⁰ Thus, the project is directly aligned with this priority ICRL area by strengthening the institutional capacity of the MEF as a lead center of government agency, and by fostering the digital transformation of public management.

- 2.22 **Objectives of the project.** The project general development objective is to contribute to improvements to policy implementation and service delivery to citizens by supporting increased effectiveness of public management through digitalization. The specific development objectives are to: (i) increase the institutional capacity of the digital government agency; (ii) increase efficiency of core management systems run by the Central MEF through digitalization of Central MEF internal management; and (iii) increase cybersecurity monitoring and management capacity of priority public agencies. To achieve these objectives, the project has been structured into three components described below. Figure 1 presents the project's vertical logic (theory of change and results chain). Details of project technical description are presented in Annex VII.
- 2.23 **Component 1. Public Sector Digital Governance (US\$1.2M).** This component will help achieve specific objective (i) and aims to strengthen both public sector digital governance and the institutional capacity of the digital government agency (IHSI). The component will finance: (i) Strengthening of digital governance architecture, through assessments and recommendations for a better definition of roles of the public agencies responsible for digital transformation policy (IHSI, *Unité E-Gouvernance de la Primature*, and CONATEL), including IHSI responsibilities as digital government agency leading and coordinating digital transformation throughout the government, and coordination and accountability mechanisms among these agencies; and (ii) Strengthening of the IHSI as digital government agency, through support to its technical and organizational capabilities by financing the reinforcement of the IHSI technical team, technical assistance and training to the IHSI, and the preparation of an operations manual in consistency with the IHSI mandate.
- 2.24 **Component 2. Digital Transformation of Central MEF Internal Management (US\$9.3M).** This component will help achieve specific objective (ii) and aims to deploy technological enablers and improve capabilities for the digitalization and efficiency of processes and transactions that underly core crosscutting management systems run by the Central MEF, focusing on the digital transformation of Central MEF internal management. This involves digitalization of strategic internal management services and tools supporting both the entire Central MEF back-office operation and front-office processes at the Minister Office, General Directorate, DGTCP and DGB entailing senior management's document workflow and signature. This will be achieved by strengthening the following at the Central MEF: (i) digital infrastructure, including connectivity and energy, and cloud infrastructure; (ii) digital shared crosscutting solutions such as interoperability platform, institutional email system, digital document management, digital signature, digital payments for suppliers, and hybrid -in office and remote- work solution, supported by training on the use and management of solutions, as well as change management; and (iii) DSI technical capacity. This will allow both

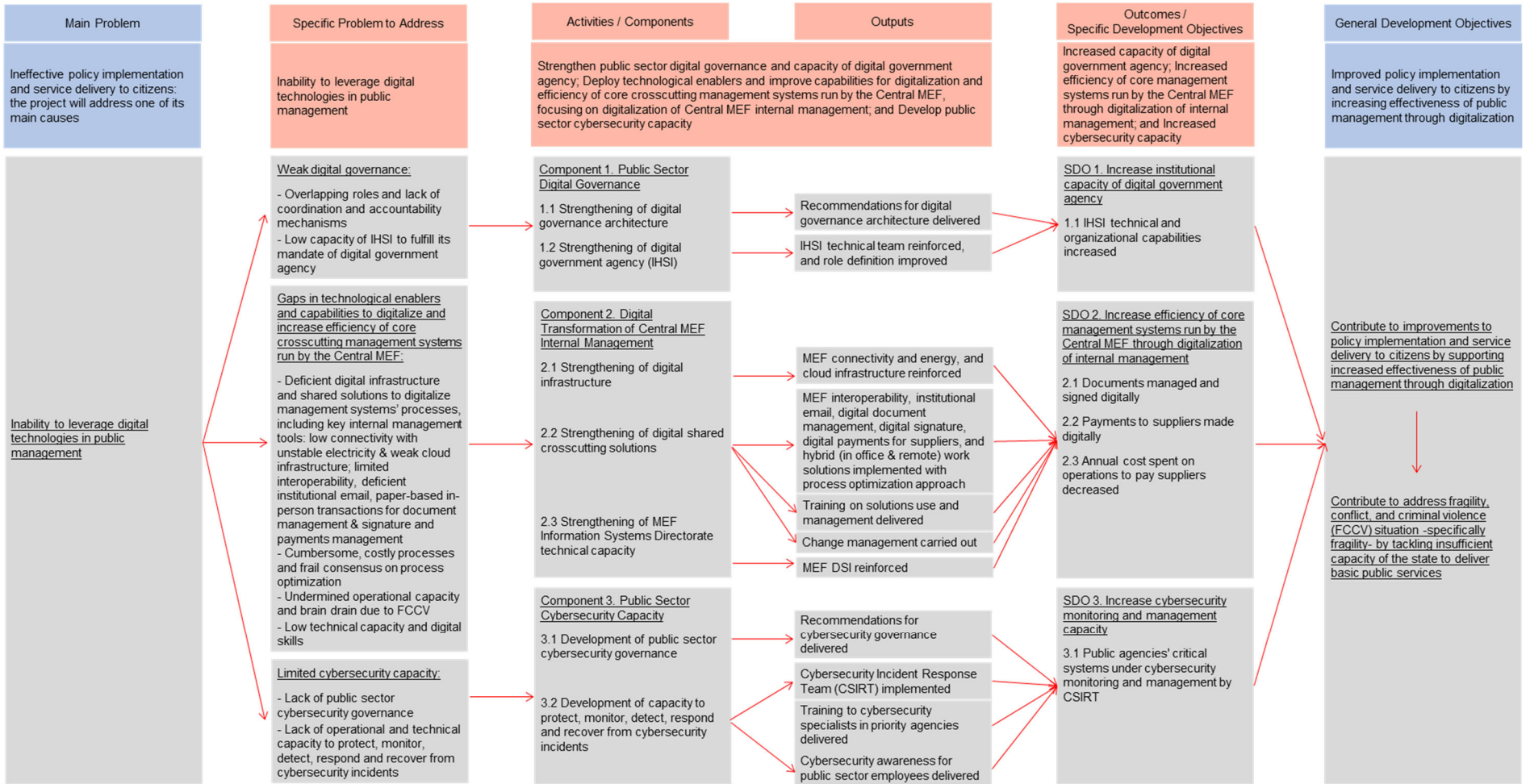
²⁰ The Haiti ICRLCM was prepared in the context of the piloting of the "Guidance Note for the Mainstreaming of the Institutional Capacity and Rule of Law Crosscutting Issue into the Country Strategy Cycle and the Project Cycle" (OP-2218-2).

(a) piloting in the Central MEF digital solutions that can be shared and scaled up across the whole public administration, and (b) deploying solutions to digitalize Central MEF internal management that in turn contribute to digitalize the core management systems run by this key actor. The whole set of digital solutions to be deployed, including the remote work tool, will directly address the Central MEF critical need of improving the resilience of its operation and business continuity in the FCCV context, and will contribute to mitigate brain drain. Digitalization activities will be oriented by a process optimization approach. Training and change management will be implemented with a gender equality perspective, fostering the participation of Central MEF women employees and ensuring they benefit from activities aimed at developing digital skills.²¹

- 2.25 **Component 3. Public Sector Cybersecurity Capacity (US\$3.0M).** This component will help achieve specific objective (iii) and aims to develop public sector cybersecurity capacity by supporting: (i) public sector cybersecurity governance through assessments to define and implement an optimal governance model (in consistency with the public sector digital governance to be fostered by Component 1); and (ii) capacity to protect, monitor, detect, respond, and recover from cybersecurity incidents, including the implementation of a CSIRT that will protect critical systems of priority public agencies, and support to its operational capacity by financing CSIRT specialized team members, technological tools for its operation, and technical assistance and training to the CSIRT, as well as training to cybersecurity specialists in key public agencies, and cybersecurity awareness for public sector employees.
- 2.26 **Project Management (US\$2.5M).** This component will finance: (i) the operation and strengthening of the executing unit at the MEF; (ii) a monitoring and evaluation system; and (iii) project audits.
- 2.27 **Expected results.** The expected impact of contributing to improvements to policy implementation and service delivery to citizens by supporting increased effectiveness of public management through digitalization will be associated to improved conditions for government online services. Regarding the expected results: (i) increased institutional capacity of digital government agency will be reflected in strengthened IHSI technical and organizational capabilities; (ii) increased efficiency of core management systems run by the Central MEF through digitalization of its internal management will be reflected in an increase of Central MEF macroprocesses supported by digital document management and digital signature solutions, and a decrease of payments to suppliers through checks and of cost spent in operations to make payments; and (iii) increased cybersecurity monitoring and management capacity of priority public agencies will be associated to an increased number of critical systems of priority agencies protected by the CSIRT.

²¹ Central MEF women employees trained in the use and/or management of new digital solutions are expected to represent a percentage of trainees consistent with their participation in the Central MEF workforce.

Figure 1. Vertical logic. Theory of change and results chain



- 2.28 **Beneficiaries.** This project will benefit the citizens of Haiti by improving (i) efficiency of core management systems run by the Central MEF that are key to improve public services production and delivery; and (ii) institutional, regulatory, technological, and digital talent enablers of digital transformation of public management which is a key means to improve efficiency, quality and inclusiveness of service delivery to citizens. The project will also develop digital skills of Central MEF employees as direct users of the digital solutions to be deployed through Component 2, as well as cybersecurity skills and awareness of employees of priority public agencies as users of the cybersecurity tools to be implemented through Component 3. Furthermore, the project will indirectly benefit MEF Deconcentrated Services and Autonomous Organisms as well as Sector Ministries by deploying digital crosscutting solutions that can be shared, mainstreamed, and scaled up in said agencies.
- 2.29 **Instrument, project amount, and financing.** This Specific Investment Operation (ESP) is financed with resources from the IDB Grant Facility for US\$16,000,000. A five-year disbursement schedule is proposed due to: (i) time involved in implementing proposed activities taking into account Haiti's fragile context; (ii) executing agency historical execution performance; and (iii) alignment with other milestones in the country's digital transformation agenda.
- 2.30 **Executing agency and Execution mechanism.** The project will use the same execution arrangements and governance of 4820/GR-HA, including the MEF as executing agency, the current MEF Project Team, and the Project Management Committee (PMC) led by the MEF and integrated by the IHSI and other public agencies that are key stakeholders. This will allow benefiting from institutional capacity for implementation built in the MEF in the context of execution of 4820/GR-HA with satisfactory results to date. This will also allow continuing strengthening MEF capabilities as executing agency of donor-funded projects, a MEF goal that is embedded in the execution arrangements of 4820/GR-HA and this project. These arrangements will thus leverage enhancements made to MEF execution mechanisms in the context of 4820/GR-HA, such as enabling project payments to providers by entrusting this responsibility to the MEF Project Team, while MEF public accountants remain in charge of other project transactions. Likewise, areas of improvement that will continue to be addressed, now in the implementation of this project, include strengthening financial management and procurement capabilities, and streamlining processes under the direct responsibility of the MEF Minister.²² Details are presented in Annex VIII.

III. TECHNICAL ASPECTS AND SECTOR KNOWLEDGE

- 3.1 **Lessons learned from the Bank's support to Haiti.** This project builds on IDB experience in Haiti strengthening public sector management broadly, and MEF institutional capacity and digital transformation particularly. Lessons on both what works and what does not work have been included in this project's design and

²² The current MEF Project Team implementing 4820/GR-HA is integrated by Executing Agency's key personnel for project execution, including a coordinator, a finance and administration specialist, a procurement specialist, an accountant, and an administrative assistant. This Project Team will also constitute the key personnel for the execution of this project (HA-J0010), and it will be reinforced for this purpose with additional personnel that will strengthen technical, subject matter aspects (i.e. public management and digital transformation specialist) as well as financial management and procurement aspects (i.e. financial management and procurement specialists).

implementation strategy. Lessons derived from 4820/GR-HA and its reformulation are: (i) implement a lean execution arrangement with a single executing agency; (ii) ensure a minimum level of executing agency's institutional capacity; (iii) foster country appropriation and align this to project governance with participation of all stakeholders; (iv) empower officers at technical and managerial level to build sustainability and resilience amidst FCCV context; (v) deepen coordination with donors; (vi) enhance vertical logic by prioritizing problems to address; and (vii) implement a comprehensive approach to digital transformation and its enablers, involving all agencies addressing this agenda. Lessons derived from operation [4352/GR-HA](#), US\$27 million, approved in 2017 and now closed, include: (i) ensure a disbursement schedule consistent with the project results chain and the country's execution environment; and (ii) follow up closely the project governance to ensure expected output milestones are achieved.

- 3.2 **Complementarities with other operations in the country.** As stated before, this project directly complements and leverages operation 4820/GR-HA which, among other, fosters the digital transformation of MEF administrative and financial systems with focus on civil service Human Resources Management (HRM). This project will improve conditions for the digitalization and efficiency of processes underlying MEF core management systems including those related to HRM; and in doing so, the project will: (i) leverage 4820/GR-HA progress with system innovations and digital infrastructure; (ii) scale up innovations by using payroll payment improvements in a digital payment solution for suppliers, and by expanding use cases for digital identity in digital document management and signature; and (iii) foster the sustainability of innovations by improving the country's digital transformation enabling framework. The project will therefore boost expected results with 4820/GR-HA on wage bill control and efficiency and civil service HRM. Details are presented in Annex VII.
- 3.3 **Bank experience in the sector.** The Bank has supported multiple countries fostering the digital transformation of public management, including advanced countries such as Uruguay and Panama, and countries at a lower digital development level such as Paraguay and Honduras.²³ Drawing on these experiences, both good practices and lessons learned on challenges have been incorporated into this project, including: ensuring project design is consistent with country context and institutional capacity; prioritizing digital enablers to address in order to streamline design and execution; and addressing functional and technological needs with a process optimization approach.
- 3.4 **Collaboration and synergies with donors.** There are important complementarities with World Bank projects on Digital Acceleration (HDAP), and Public Financial Management and Statistical Information (PAGEFIS), among other synergies with donors. This project would leverage and complement HDAP expected outputs related to connectivity of public sector institutions, cybersecurity strategy, BRH payments infrastructure, and public sector employees' digital literacy. Likewise, this project would complement PAGEFIS deployment of critical IFMIS modules and help boost IFMIS performance. Details are presented in Annex VII.
- 3.5 **Synergies with IDB Group.** The project could pilot, validate, and scale-up relevant IDB Lab digital government solutions. The project could also leverage IDB

²³ [4843/OC-UR](#), [5501/OC-PN](#), [4650/OC-PR](#), [4942/BL-HO](#), among others.

Invest activities aimed at fostering public-private investment in digital infrastructure and digital solutions.

- 3.6 **Technical Cooperation (TC) related to the project.** The project is linked to an Operational Support TC in execution²⁴ for US\$300,000, that provides technical assistance for the assessment of digital transformation gaps and strategies as well as support to Central MEF management systems digital transformation.

IV. ENVIRONMENTAL RISKS AND FIDUCIARY ASPECTS

- 4.1 **Environmental and social considerations.** In accordance with the Environmental and Social Policy Framework, the operation was classified as Category “C” as it is expected to cause minimal or no negative environmental or social impacts.
- 4.2 **Fiduciary aspects.** Project financial management will be executed according to OP-273-12. Procurement of works, goods and services, as well as consulting services, will be executed in accordance with Bank procurement policies, rules, and procedures (GN-2349-15 and GN-2350-15).

V. OTHER TOPICS: RISKS AND SUSTAINABILITY

- 5.1 **Risks.** Even though the MEF’s capacity as executing agency has improved, it still presents limitations in its ability to execute and monitor the project and these are high level risks. There are also risks related to the execution environment and FCCV situation, which are high level too. Executing agency risks related to internal processes, management systems, human resources, and interinstitutional coordination will be mitigated by: (i) streamlining project execution processes, reinforcing the MEF Project Team, and consolidating the PMC role as project execution, governance and appropriation body; (ii) implementing digital tools to support internal management systems and execution processes; (iii) developing digital skills and technical capacity; (iv) fostering a hybrid work environment that will contribute to retain MEF employees and attract new personnel currently lacking due to brain drain in the FCCV situation; and (v) increasing resilience of MEF operation through digital and hybrid work solutions. Execution environment risks associated with political, institutional, and social instability and uncertainty due to the country FCCV situation entail potential changes of Minister at the MEF, other cabinet changes affecting the IHSI or other stakeholders’ leadership, and/or a deteriorated FCCV situation with ensuing violence, border closure, protests, strikes, and other related issues, which could halt project execution and reforms implementation. This will be mitigated by: (i) implementing an execution mechanism whereby execution resilience is enabled by entrusting key processes related to justification of funds use, requests of advances of funds, requests of non-objection, and communications and transmission of reports, to several alternative high-level officers including MEF General Directors and Project Team Coordinator; (ii) improving MEF connectivity, energy, cloud infrastructure, and internal management digital solutions including remote work tools, to mitigate risks affecting the MEF’s ability to operate in a deteriorated FCCV context; and (iii) leveraging the PMC as project execution, governance and appropriation body. Other execution environment risks related to resistance to change, legal

²⁴ [ATN/OC-20532-HA](#), approved in December 2023.

framework, enabling environment for reforms, and macroeconomic and other FCCV-related shocks will be mitigated by: (i) implementing a change management strategy throughout execution, and engaging technical and managerial champions to improve reforms' authorizing environment; (ii) increasing MEF operational resilience; and (iii) managing procurement and budget with a preemptive, contingent approach. Further details of risks and mitigation measures are presented in Annex VIII; and the Risk Matrix is in Appendix II.

- 5.2 **Project sustainability and development effectiveness.** This project will follow key implementation principles to foster digital transformation effective solutions and sustainable results, including: (i) addressing jointly technological, institutional, regulatory, and skills aspects of digital solutions; (ii) promoting an optimal mix of digital infrastructure and solutions as a service and local investments; (iii) maximizing technological independence for the country; (iv) implementing comprehensive change management; (v) orienting digitalization by a process optimization approach; and (vi) nudging gradually-increasing public budget funding for digital solutions upgrade and maintenance, and human resources needs. Furthermore, this project will implement a development effectiveness approach focusing on: (i) strengthening institutional capacity of MEF and digital government agency (IHSI) and fostering appropriation and ownership of project results by these agencies; (ii) iteration, adaptation and learning embedded in project execution; and (iii) sustainability of results. Details are presented in Annex VII and Annex VIII.

VI. RESOURCES AND PREPARATION TIMETABLE

- 6.1 It is expected that the POD will be distributed to QRR on March 25, 2024. The distribution of the Draft Grant Proposal to OPC is expected for May 15, 2024. The expected date of approval of the Investment Grant Proposal by the Board of Executive Directors is June 26, 2024. The total of transactional resources is estimated to be US\$47,300. Time needed for project preparation is estimated to be 0.92 FTE.

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Operation Information

Operation Name	
Strengthening the Foundations of the Digital Transformation of Public Management	
Operation Number	HA-J0010

Operation Details

Organizational Unit	IDB Sector/Subsector
IFD/ICS	E-GOVERNMENT
Type of Operation & Modality	Original IDB Amount
GRF / ESP	\$16,000,000.00
Executing Agency	Borrower
HA-MEF	REPUBLIQUE D'HAITI
ESG Primary Team Member	Team Leader
	Claudia Mendieta Navarro
Toolkit Completion Date	Author
17/01/2024	Mauricio Tapia (Esg Guidance Service)
Applicable ESPs with requirements	
ESPS 1; ESPS 2; ESPS 10	

Operation E&S Classification Summary

Environmental and Social Impact Categorization (ESIC)	C
Disaster and Climate Change Risk Classification (DCCRC)	Low
Environmental and Social Risk Rating (ESRR)	Moderate

Summary of Impacts / Risks and Potential Solutions

The project has no environmental and social impacts and/or risks therefore no Environmental and Social Assessment (ESA) or Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) process will be conducted for the project during preparation.

The operation will not have direct impacts associated with child labor or forced labor in the workforce.

The operation will not have significant indirect and/or cumulative impacts associated with child labor or

forced labor in the workforce.

The Executing Agency or other relevant entity (in relation to the operation) has a proven track record to respect and protect the fundamental principles and rights of workers (including fair treatment, commitment to non-discrimination, equal opportunity, protection of workers including workers in vulnerable situations, work accommodations, migrant workers' rights, collective bargaining and rights of association) and compliance with national employment and labor laws.

The operation will not result in the direct loss of employment (i.e. retrenchment).

The operation will not result in the indirect and/or cumulative loss of employment (i.e. retrenchment).

The Borrower will prepare and operate a Grievance Redress Mechanism for all workers (direct and contracted).

The operation will not cause direct impacts associated with accidents, injury, and disease arising from, associated with, or occurring in the course of work.

The operation will not cause indirect and/or cumulative impacts associated with accidents, injury, and disease arising from, associated with, or occurring in the course of work.

The operation will promote a sustainable use of resources including energy, water and raw materials.

The operation will not have direct adverse impacts on human health and the environment due to pollution from project activities.

The operation will not have indirect and/or cumulative adverse impacts on human health and the environment due to pollution from project activities.

The operation will not generate direct impacts generated by solid waste (hazardous and/or non-hazardous).

The operation will not generate indirect and/or cumulative impacts generated by solid waste (hazardous and/or non-hazardous).

The operation will not have direct negative impacts to the environment and human health and safety due to the production, procurement, use, and disposal of hazardous materials such as PCBs, Radiological Waste, Mercury, CFCs, etc.

The operation will not have indirect and/or cumulative negative impacts to the environment and human health and safety due to the production, procurement, use, and disposal of hazardous materials such as PCBs, Radiological Waste, Mercury, CFCs, etc.

The operation will not have direct negative impacts to the environment and human health and safety due to the production, procurement, use, and disposal of pesticides.

The operation will not have indirect and/or cumulative negative impacts to the environment and human health and safety due to the production, procurement, use, and disposal of pesticides.

The operation is not expected to or currently produce directly GHG emissions.

The operation is not expected to or currently produce indirectly-cumulatively GHG emissions.

The operation is not considering alternatives to implement technically and financially feasible and cost-effective options to avoid or minimize project-related GHG emissions during the design and operation of the project.

The operation has no exposure to climate transition risks related with a loss of value of a project driven by the transition to a lower-carbon economy, result from extensive policy, legal, technology, and/or market changes to address climate change.

There are no direct health and safety risks associated with the design of structural elements or components of the operation (e.g. existing or new buildings, earthworks, bridges, drainage, roadways, power stations, transmission and distribution poles, underground utilities, and dams), and/or road transport activities (e.g. transport of heavy or over-sized equipment) which could result in health and safety impacts to third parties and project-affected people.

There are no indirect and/or cumulative health and safety risks associated with the design of structural elements or components of the operation (e.g. existing or new buildings, earthworks, bridges, drainage, roadways, power stations, transmission and distribution poles, underground utilities, and dams), and/or road transport activities (e.g. transport of heavy or over-sized equipment) which could result in health and safety impacts to third parties and project-affected people.

The project will not directly affect the public (including workers and their families) by exposing them to hazardous materials released by the project, particularly those that may be life threatening.

The project will not indirectly-cumulatively affect the public (including workers and their families) by exposing them to hazardous materials released by the project, particularly those that may be life threatening.

There is no potential for the project or project-related activities (e.g. the influx of temporary or permanent project labor, among others) to directly result in or exacerbate community exposure to water-related (i.e., waterborne, water-based, and vector-borne diseases) and/or communicable diseases (e.g. COVID).

There is no potential for the project or project-related activities (e.g. the influx of temporary or permanent project labor, among others) to indirectly-cumulatively result in or exacerbate community exposure to water-related (i.e., waterborne, water-based, and vector-borne diseases) and/or communicable diseases (e.g. COVID).

The project's direct impacts on priority ecosystem services will not result in adverse health and safety risks and impacts to the project-affected people.

The project's indirect and/or cumulative impacts on priority ecosystem services will not result in adverse health and safety risks and impacts to the project-affected people.

There is no potential for an emergency or unanticipated event to occur in the project area of influence that demands immediate action to prevent or reduce harm to people, property, and/or the environment.

Natural hazards, such as earthquakes, droughts, landslides, floods, wildfires, or others, including those caused or exacerbated by climate change, are not likely to occur in the project area, and there will be no impact the project, and/or the project will not exacerbate the risk from natural hazards to human life, property, and/or the environment.

There is no potential direct impacts to workers and project-affected people related to the use or arrangement of security services to safeguard personnel and/or property.

There is no potential indirect and/or cumulative impacts to workers and project-affected people related to the use or arrangement of security services to safeguard personnel and/or property.

The project will not lead to direct impacts related to physical, and/or economic displacement - Impacts include, and are not limited to, relocation; expropriation; loss of shelter; loss of land; loss of assets; restrictions on land and natural resources; loss of income; loss of livelihoods; loss of social safety net.

The project will not lead to indirect and/or cumulative impacts related to physical, and/or economic displacement - Impacts include, and are not limited to, relocation; expropriation; loss of shelter; loss of land; loss of assets; restrictions on land and natural resources; loss of income; loss of livelihoods; loss of social safety net.

Vulnerable people will not be disproportionately affected by direct impacts related to land acquisition - people may be considered vulnerable by virtue of disability, state of health, indigenous status, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, race, color, ethnicity, age, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, economic disadvantage, or social condition. Other vulnerable people include the elderly, children, single-headed households, refugees, internally displaced persons, natural resource dependent communities.

Vulnerable people will not be disproportionately affected by indirect and/or cumulative impacts related to land acquisition - people may be considered vulnerable by virtue of disability, state of health, indigenous status, gender identity, sexual orientation, religion, race, color, ethnicity, age, language, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, economic disadvantage, or social condition. Other vulnerable people include the elderly, children, single-headed households, refugees, internally displaced persons, natural resource dependent communities.

The operation doesn't have the potential to directly impact modified habitat that include significant biodiversity value.

The operation doesn't have the potential, including through the supply chain, to indirectly-cumulatively impact modified habitat that include significant biodiversity value.

The operation doesn't have the potential to directly convert or degrade natural habitat.

The operation doesn't have the potential, including through the supply chain, to indirectly-cumulatively convert or degrade natural habitat.

The operation doesn't have the direct potential to implement project activities in critical natural habitat.

The operation doesn't have the indirect and/or cumulative potential, including through the supply chain, to implement project activities in critical natural habitat.

The operation is not expected to directly impact a legally protected area or an internationally recognized area.

The operation is not expected, including through the supply chain, to indirectly-cumulatively impact a legally protected area or an internationally recognized area.

The project will not directly introduce (intentionally or accidentally) alien, or non-native, species of flora and fauna that have the potential for invasive behavior in areas where they are not normally found.

The project will not indirectly-cumulatively, including through the supply chain, introduce (intentionally or

accidentally) alien, or non-native, species of flora and fauna that have the potential for invasive behavior in areas where they are not normally found.

The project is not likely to adversely directly impact ecosystem services.

The project is not likely to adversely indirectly-cumulatively, including through the supply chain, impact ecosystem services.

The project is not expected to cause adverse direct impact on Indigenous Peoples. FPIC is required when there will be (i) impacts on lands and natural resources subject to traditional ownership or under customary use; (ii) Relocation of Indigenous Peoples from lands and natural resources subject to traditional ownership or under customary use; or (iii) significant impact on Cultural Heritage.

The project is not expected to cause adverse indirect/cumulative impact on Indigenous Peoples.

Indigenous Peoples are not expected to be adversely impacted by direct project related land-acquisition or access restrictions. Note that all impacts on lands and natural resources subject to traditional ownership or under customary law requires FPIC.

Indigenous Peoples are not expected to be adversely impacted by indirect/cumulative project related land-acquisition or access restrictions. Note that all impacts on lands and natural resources subject to traditional ownership or under customary law requires FPIC.

The project doesn't have the potential to cause adverse direct impacts on Indigenous Peoples who live in isolation and initial contact.

The project doesn't have the potential to cause adverse indirect and/or cumulative impacts on Indigenous Peoples who live in isolation and initial contact.

The project is not expected to directly damage or negatively impact cultural heritage.

The project is not expected to indirectly-cumulatively damage or negatively impact cultural heritage.

The project is not expected to directly damage or negatively impact critical cultural heritage.

The project is not expected to indirectly-cumulatively damage or negatively impact critical cultural heritage.

The project will not negatively directly affect people due to their gender, sexual orientation or gender identity.

The project will not negatively indirectly-cumulatively affect people due to their gender, sexual orientation or gender identity.

The project is not expected to lead to direct risks and impacts associated with Sexual and Gender-based Violence.

The project is not expected to lead to indirect and/or cumulative risks and impacts associated with Sexual and Gender-based Violence.

The project will not potentially face direct barriers to equitable gender-based participation.

The project will not potentially face indirect and/or cumulative barriers to equitable gender-based

participation.

The project will not deal with a subject matter and/or be implemented in an area where the manipulation, interference, coercion, discrimination, and intimidation of stakeholders has been documented.

ESPS 1 - Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

The Executing Agency will prepare and maintain an Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) for the operation as defined under ESPS 1.

The Borrower/Executing Agency's has moderate organizational capacity and competency for managing environmental and social issues.

There are moderate levels of contextual risks associated with the project (e.g. political instability, oppression of communities, armed forces in the project area).

ESPS 2 - Labor and Working Conditions

The Executing Agency will prepare and maintain an Environmental and Social Management System (ESMS) for the operation with specific elements related to Labor and Working Conditions under ESPS 2.

ESPS 10 - Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

The Borrower will operate a Grievance Redress Mechanism at the Project level (direct and contracted).

ANNEX III

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL SAFEGUARD STRATEGY

- 1.1 The project general development objective is to contribute to improvements to policy implementation and service delivery to citizens by supporting increased effectiveness of public management through digitalization. The specific development objectives are to: (i) increase the institutional capacity of the digital government agency; (ii) increase efficiency of core management systems run by the Central MEF through digitalization of Central MEF internal management; and (iii) increase cybersecurity monitoring and management capacity of priority public agencies.
- 1.2 In accordance with the Environmental and Social Policy Framework (ESPF), the operation was classified as Category “C” as it is expected to cause minimal or no negative environmental or social impacts. In order to comply with the requirements of the ESPF and especially those of the Environmental and Social Performance Standards 1, 2 and 10, during the preparation of the project any existing environmental and social management instrument in the Executing Agency and/or the applicable local regulations will be reviewed.

ANNEX IV
INDEX OF COMPLETED AND PROPOSED SECTOR WORK¹

Topic	Description	Year/Expected date	References & Links
Digital government performance index	UN e-Government Knowledgebase: Data Center (un.org)	2022	Link
Digital government strategy	IDB (2022). Government digital transformation guide	2022	Link
Digital government efficiency	IDB (2018). Wait no more: Citizens, Red Tape, and Digital Government	2018	Link
Country Digital Transformation Gaps	IDB (2024). Haiti: Digital Transformation Gaps at Country and MEF level (Technical Note prepared for project design)	2024	Annex VI
MEF Digital Transformation Gaps	IDB (2024). Haiti: Digital Transformation Gaps at Country and MEF level (Technical Note prepared for project design)	2024	Annex VI
Digital transformation and public sector employment	IDB (2021). Digital Transformation and Public Employment: The Future of Government Work	2021	Link
Cybersecurity capacity maturity assessment	IDB and OAS (2020). 2020 Cybersecurity Report: Risks, Progress, and the Way Forward in Latin America and the Caribbean	2020	Link
Cybersecurity index	ITU Global Cybersecurity Index: Global Cybersecurity Index (itu.int)	2020	Link
Country strategies: Development Plan	<i>Plan Stratégique de Développement d’Haïti, Pays Émergent en 2030</i>	2012	Link
Country strategies: Digital Transformation Strategy	IHSI (2020). <i>La Transformation Numérique de l’Etat Haïtien – Résumé Exécutif de la Stratégie et Plan d’Action</i>	2020	Confidential

¹ Listed in the order they are referenced in the project.

Country strategies: MEF IT masterplan	<i>MEF Schéma Directeur Informatique (SDI)</i>	N.A.	Confidential
Haiti Institutional Capacity and Rule of Law Country Matrix	IDB (2023). Institutional Capacity and Rule of Law Country Matrix (ICRLCM): Haiti Pilot (2023).	2023	Confidential

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