

**PROJECT INFORMATION DOCUMENT (PID)
ADDITIONAL FINANCING**

Report No.: PIDA29612

Project Name	Africa Higher Education Centers of Excellence Project Add. Fin. (P153111)
Parent Project Name	Africa Higher Education Centers of Excellence Project (P126974)
Region	AFRICA
Country	Western Africa
Sector(s)	Tertiary education (70%), Central government administration (10%), Vocational training (10%), Other Mining and Extractive Industries (10%)
Theme(s)	Education for the knowledge economy (75%), Regional integration (15%), Technology diffusion (10%)
Lending Instrument	Investment Project Financing
Project ID	P153111
Parent Project ID	P126974
Borrower(s)	Ministry of Finance
Implementing Agency	Ministry of Higher Education
Environmental Category	B-Partial Assessment
Date PID Prepared/Updated	27-Aug-2015
Date PID Approved/Disclosed	27-Aug-2015
Estimated Date of Appraisal Completion	04-Sep-2015
Estimated Date of Board Approval	14-Oct-2015
Appraisal Review Decision (from Decision Note)	The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

I. Project Context

Country Context

1. Sub-Saharan Africa has an unprecedented opportunity for transformation and sustained growth. To maintain rapid economic growth, thus further reduce extreme poverty and increase shared prosperity, Sub-Saharan African countries need to carry out an economic transformation. Among other factors, this requires an increase in science and technology capacity, skilled workforce, and applied research to accelerate technology absorption, raise productivity and generate new competitive sectors. Demand for specialized human capital from rapidly growing sectors relying upon Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM), such as the extractive industries, energy, water, infrastructure, and in service sectors has been rising. Current and future students, private companies and governments would gain substantially from building African training capacity to fill these skills gap.

2. The regional initiative of Africa Higher Education Centers of Excellence (ACE) was launched in 2013 to support change and improvement in human capital development within the region. The ACE project was successfully introduced in eight West and Central Africa countries with a US\$150 million investment approved by IDA in April 2014. 19 ACEs were competitively selected in Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, The Gambia, and Togo. In STEM, the fields covered include applied mathematics, environment and water engineering, application of information technology, material sciences and petroleum engineering. Projects were also selected in Health and Agriculture. The maximum grant awarded to each Center of Excellence is US\$ 8 million.

3. Following the post-electoral crisis in 2011 Cote d'Ivoire was not in a position to participate in the first phase of ACE project in 2013. Higher education institutions were closed for long periods of time, leadership was absent and the infrastructure and equipment underwent serious damage from the conflict. The higher education sector suffered for years from a lack of central control and the articulation of a clear vision as well as a lack of reliable and systematic information including on students, teaching, and budget parameters. Furthermore, lack of relevance remains a significant concern for higher education institutions, which need to achieve a better balance between humanities and STEM fields, which are undersubscribed at the tertiary level.

4. However, Cote d'Ivoire has been transitioning away from a country characterized by a post-conflict context to one in which political and economic stability are increasing. The country is embarking on an ambitious and comprehensive reform program aimed at leveraging its considerable endowments of human capital, natural resources and infrastructure to spur robust, broad-based and sustainable economic growth with the active engagement of the international donor community (including, among others, Agence Française de Développement (AFD), the African Development Bank (AfDB), the World Bank, UNICEF, and UNESCO). Public investment in infrastructure (transport, energy, health, and education) and private investment in mining, energy and housing have boosted domestic demand. GDP growth was 9.5 percent in 2012 and 8.7 percent in 2013. Continued revitalization of the Ivorian economy and the provision of opportunities for young people are critical for sustained economic development and inclusive growth. Improving quality and relevance of higher education is part of the solution to youth employment and continued economic revitalization. With World Bank support and political forces in place which foster a more stable environment, participation in the ACE project will contribute to the reduction of the impact of the crisis on poverty.

Sectoral and institutional Context

5. As part of the comprehensive reform program, higher education has been made a priority by the Government of Cote d'Ivoire. The government aims to make significant improvements in employability of the graduates, governance of institutions and quality of education. Ivorian higher education institutions used to be leaders in the region before the conflict, and are beginning to show signs of being able to resume a regional role in higher education. In June 2015 with World Bank support the Ministry of Higher Education and Science organized a policy workshop on higher education reform. The objective of the workshop was to support the development of the tertiary education strategy including identifying improvements and system reforms that can help higher education meet the growing needs of the economy. The Government aims to finalize a higher education strategy in 2016 and implement further reforms to the higher education system in 2017.

The strategy will address challenges to quality and governance, some of which include:

- a. Increasing demand for higher education. Following the end of the conflict and the return to school Côte d'Ivoire has witnessed an increasing number of students enrolled in higher education as more students graduate from secondary education. In 2013, 170,000 were enrolled in higher education of which 52 percent attended public institutions. This corresponds to 796 enrolled per 100,000 inhabitants, a decline from the pre-crisis enrollment in 2006 of 826 per 100,000 inhabitants. The number of qualified graduates for secondary education is expected to rapidly increase in the coming decade. In 2015, the annual increase was 31 percent (from 63,000 qualified graduates in 2014 to 83,000 in 2015). Although potentially very beneficial for higher income and economic growth, this pace of expansion, puts the public purse under heavy stress and risks deteriorating further the quality and relevance of higher education.
- b. Quality and relevance: low employability of graduates due to insufficient quality and poor relevance of courses with employers' demand is a key challenge. Notably, only 22 percent of students attend STEM fields, while 70 percent are enrolled in low-cost social sciences or humanities studies.
- c. Governance: Sector reports have found irregularities and lack of transparency around student admissions, budgeting and personnel management in universities. A key next step would be to implement on-going reform efforts to re-write the statutes of the institutions and institute management boards with substantial private sector and civil society representations.

6. The proposed AF will scale-up successful activities undertaken in the original project, incorporating lessons learned during project design and early implementation. The AF, under Component 1: Strengthening Africa Centers of Excellence will finance the strengthening of three additional Centers of Excellence within Cote d'Ivoire in the amount of US\$15 million USD including: (i) climate change; (ii) statistics; and (iii) construction and mining by drawing on specialized departments and faculty in higher education institutions in these priority areas. The project will retain the same PDO and components as well as indicators, however the targets will be modified to reflect the scale-up of the Project (addition of 3 centers, additional beneficiaries, etc.).

7. The project is designed to support capacity-building for the Africa Centers of Excellence in Participating Universities, in particular to:

- (a) Enhance capacity to deliver regional high quality training to address the development challenge, including, inter alia, update curricula of existing programs or create new education programs to meet the development challenge; meet international benchmarks for quality education (e.g. international accreditation); deliver short-term courses for professionals; attract regional students; training of faculty to introduce new approaches to teaching and learning; enhance workplace learning such as internships; encourage entrepreneurship among students, upgrading of qualifications of faculty; improve learning resources, including lab equipment, and minor rehabilitation or extension of existing facilities.
- (b) Enhance capacity to deliver applied research to address the regional development challenge, including, inter alia, faculty development and staff training, minor rehabilitation works or extension of existing facilities, scholarships and post-doctoral studies, networking activities with national and international partners, hosting and participating in conferences, research equipment and materials and laboratory refurbishment, research dissemination, knowledge and technology transfer, and patenting or other intellectual property rights-related costs.
- (c) Build and use industry/sector partnerships to enhance impact of the Africa Centers of Excellence on development and increase relevance of said centers education and research,

including, inter alia, industry advisory boards, internships, industry lectures, training of trainers for sector training institutions (such as polytechnics, nursing, teacher or agricultural colleges), joint research, training, and other activities to communicate, interact and reach out to civil society, the private sector, and grassroots communities.

(d) Build and strengthen regional and international academic partnerships to raise quality of education, raise the capacity of Network Partners and to raise the Africa Centers of Excellence's capacity, including, inter alia, joint delivery of education programs, professional courses for regional faculty, faculty exchanges/visiting faculty, joint research, joint conferences, sharing of specialized equipment and library resources

(e) Enhance governance and management of the Africa Centers of Excellence and the Participating Universities to improve monitoring and evaluation, including monitoring of labor market outcomes of graduates, administration, fiduciary management (including financial management, procurement, oversight and capacity), transparency, ability to generate resources, and project implementation.

8. The merit based competitive selection process used in the initial round of the project was maintained for the selection of the centers from Cote d'Ivoire. This process entailed an open call for proposals to public and private institutions; (ii) submission of Center of Excellence proposals through the Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research to the regional facilitation unit for the project at the Association of African Universities, of which seven proposals were submitted; (iii) a systematic and detailed evaluation of proposals by independent and international experts according to predefined criteria through a desk review and a site and leadership assessment. Eighty percent of reviewers also served as reviewers for the first round of ACEs. The additional reviewers were added to accommodate the additional sectors and consisted of three different and discrete sets of assessments, meaning that each proposal was reviewed and scored by at least five independent evaluators.

9. The selected Ivorian proposals meet the same high minimum standards as the existing 19 selected ACEs. The regional steering committee for the project required that all selected Ivorian proposals should be evaluated above 62.6 points out of 100, as this was the lowest score for the existing ACEs. Two ACE proposals (climate change and statistics) were evaluated above the regional minimum level, while a third proposal (skills for mining and construction) was exceptionally given a second chance to meet the quality threshold. This exception was authorized by the Regional Steering Committee given the skill shortage for, and importance of the mining and construction sector in the region. Through the second chance, the proposal was substantially improved and met the regional threshold and therefore included in the project.

II. Proposed Development Objectives

A. Current Project Development Objectives – Parent

The Project Development Objective is to support the Recipients to promote regional specialization among participating universities in areas that address regional challenges by strengthening the capacities of these universities to deliver quality training and applied research.

III. Project Description

Component Name

Strengthening Africa Centers of Excellence

Comments (optional)

This Additional Financing will scale-up Component 1 of the parent project by financing additional Africa Higher Education Centers of Excellence located in Cote d'Ivoire. The Centers were competitively selected. These ACEs will deliver regional, demanded, quality training and applied research in partnerships with regional and international academic institutions and in partnership with relevant employers and industry.

IV. Financing (in USD Million)

Total Project Cost:	30.00	Total Bank Financing:	15.00
Financing Gap:	0.00		
For Loans/Credits/Others			Amount
BORROWER/RECIPIENT			15.00
International Development Association (IDA)			15.00
Total			30.00

V. Implementation

10. Institutional and implementation arrangements will remain the same as the parent project. Each selected institution will implement its own ACE sub-project. An ACE implementation team will be established to run the day-to-day management of the project and provide secretariat services to the National Review Committee. It will be led by a Center Leader (CL) who is a recognized educator/researcher within the primary discipline of the ACE and supported by senior faculty from the relevant engaged departments. As before, each new ACE will sign a partnership agreement with selected partners laying out partner activities for the project, and an annual workplan. Each ACE will prepare an implementation plan including the FM Manual and Procurement Manual. The implementation plan will include: (i) the terms of reference, functions and responsibilities for members of the Implementation teams or the personnel of the ACEs working on the Project ; (ii) the Procurement Procedures Manual; (iii) the Financial Management Procedures manual; (iv) the indicators to be used in the monitoring and evaluation of the Project; (v) the criteria, detailed rules and procedures for the EEPs; (vi) the detailed content of the EEP Spending Report, the customized statements of expenditures, the interim financial reports, the Procurement Plan Progress Report and the Project Reports; (vii) flow and disbursement of Project funds; and (viii) the Disbursement Linked Indicators. This Implementation Plan can be amended during the project life-time provided the ACE obtains approval from the World Bank.

11. As under the parent project, in addition to institutional management the government of Cote d'Ivoire will constitute a National Review Committee through the Ministry of Higher Education. The committee is tasked with a semi-annual review of performance, withdrawal applications, and implementation planning and support, but no day-to-day implementation or approvals. The Ministry of Higher Education will chair and convene the committee, and the committee will include members from the Ministry of Finance as well as line ministries.

12. The role of the Regional Facilitation Unit (RFU) will be continue to be played by the Association of African Universities (AAU). A grant agreement between the World Bank and the AAU lays out to key activities of the RFU, and an annual workplan between the World Bank, the

ACEs, and the AAU, which details the AAU's expected work on capacity building, M&E, and convening ACE meetings, including steering committee meetings.

VI. Safeguard Policies (including public consultation)

Safeguard Policies Triggered by the Project	Yes	No
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	x	
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04		x
Forests OP/BP 4.36		x
Pest Management OP 4.09		x
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11		x
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10		x
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12		x
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37		x
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50		x
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60		x

Comments (optional)

VII. Contact point

World Bank

Contact: Andreas Blom
 Title: Lead Economist
 Tel: 458-7351
 Email: ablom@worldbank.org

Borrower/Client/Recipient

Name: Ministry of Finance
 Contact: Ad Coulibaly
 Title: Director of Cabinet
 Tel: 022520200838
 Email: adcoulibaly@hotmail.com

Implementing Agencies

Name: Ministry of Higher Education
 Contact: Prof. Nindjin Aka Fulgence
 Title: Director of Higher Education
 Tel: 22503099903
 Email: Nindjinaka_fulgence@hotmail.com

VIII. For more information contact:

The InfoShop
 The World Bank
 1818 H Street, NW
 Washington, D.C. 20433
 Telephone: (202) 458-4500
 Fax: (202) 522-1500
 Web: <http://www.worldbank.org/infoshop>