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Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 06-Jan-2026 | Report No: PIDIA01217



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BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Project Beneficiary(ies) Cameroon, Central African Republic, Congo, Republic of	Region WESTERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA	Operation ID P505923	Operation Name Sustainable Congo Basin Forest Economies
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing (IPF)	Estimated Appraisal Date 08-Jan-2026	Estimated Approval Date 19-Mar-2026	Practice Area (Lead) Environment, Natural Resources & the Blue Economy
Borrower(s) Ministry of Economy, Planning and Regional Development	Implementing Agency Central Africa Economic and Monetary Union, Central Africa Forest Commission (COMIFAC)		

Proposed Development Objective(s)

To improve forest management, strengthen forest value chains, and create jobs in targeted areas in Congo Basin Forest countries.

Components

Policies & Institutions
Forest Resource Development
Industry & Enterprises
Project Management
Regional Platform

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)

Maximizing Finance for Development

Is this an MFD-Enabling Project (MFD-EP)?	Yes
Is this project Private Capital Enabling (PCE)?	Yes

SUMMARY

Total Operation Cost	394.83
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Total Financing	394.83
of which IBRD/IDA	385.83
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS

World Bank Group Financing	
International Development Association (IDA)	385.83
IDA Credit	313.83
IDA Grant	72.00
Non-World Bank Group Financing	
Commercial Financing	9.00
Unguaranteed Commercial Financing	9.00

Environmental And Social Risk Classification

High

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. The Sustainable Congo Basin Forest Economies (SCBFE) Program is an ambitious and transformational commitment to create jobs through sustainable management of the Congo Basin Forests (CBF). The world’s second-largest tropical forest system yields significant local, national, and global benefits, absorbing around six times more carbon annually than the Amazon. The Program’s dual focus on jobs and sustainability is especially important in CBF countries (Cameroon, Central African Republic (CAR), Republic of Congo (RoC), Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea) given the potential of their natural resources and growing young population. This Multi-Phase



Programmatic Approach (MPA) proposes an indicative financing envelope of US\$1.03 billion. Phase 1 is expected to create 220,000 jobs and reduce annual regional greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions on average by 17.6 million tCO₂e.

2. The Congo Basin region is characterized by low economic growth, extreme poverty, and high fragility. Gross domestic product (GDP) growth in the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (*Communauté Économique et Monétaire de l'Afrique Centrale*, CEMAC)¹ region, decelerated to 1.8 percent in 2023, down from 3.1 percent in 2022.² Nearly 13 percent of the world's extreme poor live in the CBF countries,³ with the majority of extreme poor located around forested landscapes, where they depend heavily on subsistence agriculture and forest resources, with limited access to basic services and economic opportunities. Ongoing conflicts and insecurity in the region continue to displace thousands and exacerbate disputes over control of natural resources.⁴

3. The region is missing opportunities to leverage natural resources for economic and structural transformation, a critical prerequisite for job creation. The contribution of the forest industry to GDP (ranging from 2 to 10 percent in CBF countries in 2021) has stagnated, largely due to a focus on exporting logs rather than developing local wood processing. Unreported extraction and fragmented domestic markets undermine price discovery, traceability, and reliability of legal supply for downstream processors.

4. Concurrently, job-intensive domestic and export activities are stagnant, and most businesses are informal and characterized by low-productivity.⁵ The need for more and better jobs is exacerbated by high population growth rates and increases in working-age adults. Estimates project that the population Central African countries will increase by a third by 2035 and double by 2050⁶. Population and demographic shifts will increase the demand for jobs and urbanization, with a concomitant increase in demand for cooking energy, food production, and raw materials^{7,8}.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

5. The CBF cover about 200 million ha, an area slightly larger than Indonesia or Mexico, and account for between 35-90 percent of the total national land areas in each of the six CBF countries. The CBF is the only tropical forest system that still serves as a global carbon sink.⁹ These forests sustain an estimated 40 million people in nearby urban centers and directly provide livelihoods for an estimated 60 million people who live in or near the forest areas, including local communities and Indigenous Peoples, comprising at least 150 different ethnic groups.¹⁰ Critically, about 100 million ha (or about half of the CBF), are not under active management¹¹ and are mostly unallocated forests that could be converted to other uses. About 54 million ha of the CBF are under commercial forest concessions, while Protected Areas of high conservation value constitute 30 million ha.

6. Forest loss is rising in the CBF, driven by subsistence-scale fuelwood and charcoal production, mining, small-scale agriculture, and informal extraction of timber, particularly in unallocated or unmanaged forest areas. DRC

¹ CEMAC includes Cameroon, Central African Republic, Chad, Equatorial Guinea, Gabon and Republic of Congo.

² World Bank. 2024. CEMAC Semiannual Economic Barometer, November 2024.

³ The analysis includes Cameroon, CAR, DRC, Gabon, and ROC. Equatorial Guinea is not included due to lack of data. International poverty rates from the World Bank Macro Poverty Outlook (2023) used to estimate the absolute number of people living in poverty by country and added up to a regional estimate.

⁴ International Monetary Fund. 2025. Staff Report on the Common Policies of Member Countries, and Common Policies in Support of Member Countries Reform Programs, IMF Country Report No. 25/64. February 2025.

⁵ World Bank. 2024. CEMAC Semi-annual Economic Barometer, November 2024.

⁶ United Nations World Population Prospects 2024. <https://population.un.org/wpp/>

⁷ Annual demand for industrial wood could increase four-fold to 300 million m³ by 2030. African Natural Resources Centre (ANRC). 2021. Wood processing and trade of wood products in Africa. African Development Bank; Improving Governance and Delivering for People in Africa. Africa's Pulse, No. 31 (April 2025). World Bank.

⁸ International Labour Organization. "ILO Modelled Estimates and Projections database (ILOEST)" ILOSTAT.

⁹ Dargie, G., Lewis, S., Lawson, I. et al. Age, extent and carbon storage of the central Congo Basin peatland complex. *Nature* 542, 86–90 (2017). <https://doi.org/10.1038/nature21048>; [World Resources Institute](https://www.worldresourcesinstitute.org/). 2021; and [Keys et al.](https://www.worldresourcesinstitute.org/) 2012.

¹⁰ Eba'a Atyi R, Hiol Hiol F, Lescuyer G, Mayaux P, Defourny P, Bayol N, Saracco F, Pokem D, Sufo Kankeu R and Nasi R. 2022. *The Forests of the Congo Basin: State of the Forests 2021*. Bogor, Indonesia: CIFOR.

¹¹ In CBF countries unclassified or 'non-permanent' forests can be allocated to other uses.



recorded the highest rise in forest loss among CBF countries, from 300,000 ha in 2015 to approximately 600,000 ha in 2024. Studies show that nearly half (48 percent) of CBF wood production takes place informally, mainly from these unallocated forests. For example, the informal charcoal value chain is valued at millions of dollars and contributes thousands of jobs. However, high levels of informality raise due diligence costs for investors and undermines creditworthiness. Unmanaged, informal logging also leads to social problems such as conflicts and labor abuse.

7. Community co-management in unallocated forests could improve sustainability and expand economic opportunities for communities. This approach has been effective in other tropical regions, such as in Latin America and Asia, when combined with clear tenure security and institutional and technical support. CBF countries have robust forest laws, and many have recently updated their national forest laws with provisions for community forest management; but implementation has been limited (see Box 1). For instance, Cameroon has designated 1.5 million ha as community forests, but most communities do not have technical or financial means to prepare and implement effective management plans.

8. Despite being the source of 80 percent of Africa's wood exports, CBF countries account for only half a percent of the global wood value chain¹². Wood is one of the top export earners – first most valuable export for CAR, second for Gabon and RoC, and third for Cameroon. Most wood exports are subject to minimal processing, and are shipped as sawn wood or logs, in order to meet the requirements of the CEMAC log export ban¹³. However, enforcement of this ban has been uneven throughout the region, with Gabon being the only country to fully implement it. The absence of structured internal wood supply chains and contract-based relationships between large logging concessionaires and wood processing Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) holds back the sector's potential. Regulatory inconsistencies across the CEMAC region, including differing processing mandates, tax regimes, and product definitions and standards, also limit the sector's competitiveness and integration.

9. Development of the wood value chains in the region is also limited by the lack of robust timber legality verification systems, skilled labor, and accessible financing. Only 24 percent of forest concessions in the RoC have third-party certification for legality/sustainability. Community forest institutions and SMEs face high fixed costs for legality verification, limiting their access to premium international markets.¹⁴ National systems like Cameroon's SIGIF 2.0 (*Système Informatique de Gestion des Informations Forestières*) Management System are being developed with support from the European Union's (EU) Forest Law Enforcement, Governance, and Trade (FLEGT) Action Plan and Foreign, Commonwealth and Development Office (FCDO) of the United Kingdom. SIGIF 2.0 issues automatic barcodes across the timber value chain but lacks full compliance with EU Timber Regulations (EUTR). Most countries in the region lack specialized vocational institutions aligned with modern industry needs, while existing training centers are often under-resourced. Banks view the forest sector as high-risk, limiting operators' ability to invest in processing.¹⁵

10. To fully unlock the potential of CBF for driving economic growth, creating jobs, and reducing poverty, it is essential to implement targeted interventions across both upstream and downstream segments of the wood value-chain. This approach should include: (i) supporting the effective implementation of regulations and procedures, with a particular focus on empowering local and community institutions by strengthening their capacity to oversee forest management, enforce compliance, and participate in decision-making processes. By building the capabilities of these institutions, communities can take an active role in ensuring the legality and sustainability of wood production, which

¹² AUC/OECD. 2022. Africa's Development Dynamics 2022: Regional Value Chains for a Sustainable Recovery, AUC, Addis Ababa/ OECD Publishing, Paris, <https://doi.org/10.1787/2e3b97fd-en>

¹³ CEMAC Decision No. 06/24 UEAC-225-CU-41([CEMAC Decisions portal](#)). In an effort to increase domestic value addition CEMAC countries decided to fully ban export of logs without processing by January 2028. However, only Gabon has implemented this ban, and others are in different stages of implementing this decision.

¹⁴ While not mandatory, many companies in CBF countries pursue independent legality certification schemes to strengthen their legal compliance systems, documentation, and traceability and meet EU Timber Regulation (EUTR) or US Lacey Act, which accept legality certification as a minimum entry requirement. Sustainability certification through Forest Stewardship Council (FSC) takes longer and is costlier and more rigorous.

¹⁵ Banks are hesitant to lend to the forestry sector due to perceived high risk and lack of acceptable collateral (concession titles). This constraint on financing for equipment and expansion into higher value-added.



helps foster inclusive growth and job creation at the local level; (ii) facilitating the formalization of informal wood-based enterprises to promote sustainability, compliance, and access to finance and markets which helps firms to grow; and (iii) strengthening wood value chains by forging stronger connections among operators, integrating SMEs into processing and product development, and broadening access to both domestic and regional markets. The jobs agenda is central to these activities, creating employment opportunities both upstream—in sustainable wood production managed by empowered local and community institutions—and downstream, in the wood processing industry where SMEs and larger firms collaborate for product innovation and market expansion. IFC is expected to play a pivotal role by providing advisory services to promote best practices in wood processing industry, facilitating access to infrastructure and finance for SMEs, and supporting market linkages that enable growth and job creation throughout the value chain. The proposed MPA is designed to address these measures in a comprehensive and coordinated manner, with a strong emphasis on creating quality jobs, fostering inclusive economic growth, and leveraging IFC expertise and resources to maximize impact along the wood value-chain.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

11. The Program Development Objective (PrDO) is to improve forest management, strengthen forest value chains, and create jobs in targeted areas in Congo Basin Forest countries.

12. Project Development Objective (PDO) for Phase 1: To improve forest management, strengthen forest value chains, and create jobs in targeted areas in Cameroon, CAR, and RoC.

13. The PDO is the same as the PrDO in view of the similarities among the countries' forests, forest management systems, deforestation challenges and private sector development issues. The Program countries will require similar interventions to achieve the PrDO. Cameroon, CAR, and RoC will be participating in Phase 1 of the MPA.

Key Results

Table 1. Indicators and Targets

#	Indicator	Targets for Phase 1
1	Landscapes under enhanced conservation and/or sustainable management (terrestrial and inland water areas) (Ha) (CSI)	7,000,000 ha
2	Net GHG emissions per year (tCO ₂ eq/year)	-17,670,269 tCO ₂ eq/yr
3	Increase in volume of legal wood undergoing secondary, domestic processing (Percent increase in volume, cubic meters)	15 percent increase in volume, cubic meters
4	Jobs created (Number)	220,000

D. Project Description

14. The Program follows the World Bank Group approach to job creation, with three mutually reinforcing Components. The Program is designed to remove binding constraints and enable private sector solutions and job creation across activities. *Component 1 Policies and Institutions* supports regulatory and fiscal reforms to reduce disincentives for private investment and harmonization of trade barriers, thereby reducing market distortions and improving predictability for private actors. Interventions also support enhanced wood traceability and certification systems, directly addressing constraints such as illegality, which hinder private sector entry into forestry businesses and access to premium markets. *Component 2 Forest Resources Development* invests in the foundational infrastructure facilitating smallholders and private investment in agroforestry and plantations through seed banks and technical support, as well as investments in community forest economies, protected areas management, improving opportunities for nature-based tourism, production capacity, processing equipment, and access to infrastructure to enable SMEs and community enterprises to grow commercially. Component 2 also enhances smallholder entry into the wood value chain through buy-back schemes, and PPPs. *Component 3 Industry and Enterprise* enhances private sector access to finance and infrastructure, with private



capital enabling (PCE) potential through the creation of SME wood service parks and Special Economic Zones (SEZs), directly enabling private processing firms to establish manufacturing operations in the CBF countries.

15. The Program operationalizes a One World Bank Group approach that sequences World Bank supported reforms and public investments with IFC advisory/investment and MIGA guarantees to unlock private capital across the CBF wood value chain. IFC and MIGA have been actively involved in the preparation of the Program and will continue to coordinate closely with the World Bank during implementation to align strategies, identify entry points for private sector engagement, investigate country-specific constraints for Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and private investment, as well as for local content development, and pursue the complementarity of public and private interventions.

Component 1. Policies and Institutions

16. Component 1.1. Policies and Regulations. This subcomponent will cover the development and enactment of regulations to operationalize national Forest Codes, emphasizing the assignment of forest management duties to local communities, simplifying procedures for the approval of community forest management plans, and establishing permit protocols for small-scale forestry operations.

17. Component 1.2. Traceability, Certification, and Information Systems. National traceability and legality verification systems will be improved to facilitate the entry of legally sourced timber into domestic and export markets and to update forest inventories for more accurate management planning. These systems will be applied nationwide to help prevent unauthorized logging outside project areas. Activities will include capacity building for forest officials, civil society, and private sector stakeholders regarding system use. Financial support will be allocated for (i) hardware, software, and technical expertise for the development of forest inventories and data on forest carbon, where feasible, using digital Monitoring, Reporting and Verification (d-MRV); and (ii) improved traceability and legality verification systems, including equipment, connectivity, hardware, software, training, and support for SMEs.

Component 2. Forest Resource Development

18. Sub-component 2.1. Foundational Infrastructure for Forest Resource Development. Support will include: (i) preparation of plantation strategies and plans; (ii) establishment of forest seed collection and storage centers; (iii) conducting silviculture trials and research on lesser-known timber species; (iv) planting on government and private lands, including agroforestry initiatives led by smallholders and communities; (v) forest regeneration on degraded lands managed by government agencies; (vi) provision of essential equipment such as Information Technology (IT), GPS devices, and internet connectivity; and (vii) supply of fire management equipment.

19. Sub-component 2.2. Community Forest Economies and Local Development. This subcomponent supports Community Forests and Communal Forest institutions. Key activities will include: (i) capacity building to empower and strengthen community forest committees; (ii) delivery of technical and professional assistance for developing forest management plans, replanting in logged or deforested areas; (iii) procurement of equipment for timber logging and small or mobile sawmills; (iv) development of storage and processing infrastructure for NTFP processing such as oil presses and charcoal kilns; and (v) rehabilitation, upgrading, or expansion of critical small-scale infrastructure to improve market access and essential services for remote communities, including feeder roads, drinking water boreholes, structures for community meetings and markets, solar panels, and enhanced digital connectivity where possible. Investment decisions will be made through participatory processes, aligned with local development plans, and communities will enter subsidiary agreements with service provider organizations to prepare management plans and subproject proposals for economic activities. Project Implementing Units (PIUs) will select professional organizations and NGOs to deliver these services.

20. Sub-component 2.3. Management of Protected Areas. Activities under this subcomponent will strengthen the management of protected areas and provide targeted support to Indigenous Peoples and Local Communities (IPLCs) residing in or near buffer zones. Protected area selection will be guided by national priorities and, in the case of



transboundary sites, by intergovernmental agreements. Specific locations for activities will be determined according to the selection criteria outlined in Annex 7 (Table 7.1 and Box 7.1). Key activities include: (i) preparation and/or implementation of management plans for prioritized national or transboundary protected areas, excluding law enforcement and the redrawing of boundaries. Investments will be aligned with the needs identified in each management plan and may encompass habitat restoration, biodiversity and forest status monitoring using geospatial tools and community engagement; (ii) construction and upgrading of essential park infrastructure, especially in areas at risk from climate change impacts (such as firebreaks, guard stations, and park boundary markers); and (iii) enhancement of management effectiveness tools for protected areas, transitioning from the Management Effectiveness Tracking Tool (METT) to the Integrated Management Effectiveness Tool (IMET). It is important to note that law enforcement activities and support for the establishment or redrawing of existing protected area boundaries will not be financed.

21. Support for IPLCs will comprise: (i) participatory development of culturally appropriate management plans for communities in or near protected areas; (ii) initiatives to promote alternative livelihoods and improve food security; (iii) efforts to preserve and strengthen Traditional Ecological Knowledge Systems, particularly those related to native seeds and crops, to bolster climate resilience; and (iv) measures to mitigate human-wildlife conflicts and safeguard crops and human settlements. Additionally, COMIFAC will facilitate regional dialogue and cooperation among countries managing transboundary protected areas under the MPA.

Component 3. Industry and Enterprises

22. Component 3.1. Access to Finance. This subcomponent focuses on enhancing the capacity of financial institutions to effectively assess risks, develop tailored financial products, and appropriately price credit for the wood sector. It will support: (a) Building sector expertise within credit institutions: To start, technical assistance will be provided to participating financial institutions (PFIs) to help them better understand and manage sector-specific and systemic risks. This support will include mapping the wood value chain, identifying potential clients, evaluating their cash flows and financial needs and implementing robust risk management strategies; and (b) Facilitating financing for wood producers: The Program intends to support wood producers and producer associations by providing Lines of Credit (LOCs)¹⁶, matching grants and Partial Credit Guarantees (PCGs). These financial instruments will help address both capital investment and working capital requirements, particularly during Phase 2 and Phase 3 of the initiative.

23. Subcomponent 3.2: Value Addition and Processing Capacity. To enhance value addition and processing capacity in the wood sector, the Program will focus on both human capital development and strategic industrial investments. Specifically, the Program will finance:

(a) Developing Human Capital and Industrial Skills: Support will be provided to address skills gaps by: (i) Establishing or upgrading at least one specialized forestry and wood-processing training center in each participating country; (ii) Co-designing modular, industry-relevant training curricula in partnership with private sector stakeholders to ensure alignment with market needs; (iii) Piloting dual training and apprenticeship programs that combine classroom learning with hands-on industry experience; and (iv) Expanding training to include essential non-technical skills such as enterprise management, logistics, and occupational health and safety (OHS), equipping participants for a broader range of roles within the sector.

(b) Investing in SME Clusters/Service Parks: The Program will make targeted investments to encourage private sector participation in clusters and SME service parks. Funding will focus on upstream activities such as feasibility studies, demand surveys, and identifying viable sites, with limited last mile infrastructure support such as power and roads. A one-stop service will be also established to simplify permits, customs, compliance, and aftercare. When feasible,

¹⁶ A World Bank financed survey on Long-Term Finance in Cameroon found significant and unmet demand for long term credit in the forestry sector. The study found that out of 247 companies surveyed, (25 percent of which are companies in the wood sector), market demand among companies in the wood sector for long term credit amounted to CFA francs 86 billion (approximately. US\$150 million).



the Program will coordinate with Mission 300 projects and with potential IFC investments in roads and energy to leverage access to key infrastructure for these zones.

- (c) **Facilitating SME Access to Wood Resources:** The Program will support formalizing artisanal logging associations and cooperatives and help SMEs access logs and processed wood through contracts with logging companies. In Phase 1, the project will coordinate with a potential private sector plantation guaranteed by MIGA in ROC for wood supply contract with SMEs.

24. Component 4. Project Management. This will include support to the PIUs in all participating countries and in regional organizations for implementation oversight, procurement, financial management and reporting, M&E and administrative and logistical support. It will also help strengthen the capacity of key institutions for oversight and monitoring and communications activities. This component will cover the costs of implementation and compliance with environmental and social standards, establishing and implementing a robust grievance redress mechanism (GRM), and third-party support to project monitoring and reporting.

25. The MPA will support the establishment of a Regional Learning and Stakeholder Engagement Platform. The platform will be implemented by CEMAC and COMIFAC to provide learning, knowledge exchange, policy harmonization, and stakeholder engagement at the regional level. Leaning into their comparative strengths, CEMAC will focus on harmonization and learning on timber trade policies, and COMIFAC will focus on cooperation on forest and biodiversity management. CEMAC will convene member countries to harmonize non-tariff barriers within the CEMAC region, help develop trade relations with consumer countries in other parts of Africa, under the AfCFTA and organize trainings to update regional quality and technical standards for wood products. COMIFAC will support regional dialogue and cooperation on management of transboundary protected areas and promotion of community forestry and multi-stakeholder participation in protected areas management. Partnerships will be established for training and knowledge sharing with the World Bank's technology initiatives and with programs in other parts of the world such as the Amazon Forest. COMIFAC will establish and maintain the Stakeholder Platform which will include an electronic GRM to facilitate feedback from all stakeholders. An independent panel of experts will be enlisted by COMIFAC to advise on the program challenges that arise during implementation in the countries. The platform will build on the work with existing networks such as regional Indigenous Peoples Networks, NGOs, development partners, and wood industry companies and associations, among others.

Legal Operational Policies

Triggered?

Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50

Yes

Projects in Disputed Area OP 7.60

No

Summary of Screening of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

26. The environmental and social risks are rated as High. These risks are viewed at two levels: the project-specific risks, which are relatively contained and technical in nature, and the contextual and sector-wide risks, which are more complex, interlinked, and influenced by external drivers beyond the project's direct control. While the former can be addressed through well-established mitigation measures, the implementation context in the Congo Basin significantly elevates overall risk due to its ecological sensitivity, biodiversity, carbon value, and systemic risks in the wood sector including illegal logging, deforestation, weak governance, fragility and conflict-affected (FCV) conditions, and limited oversight. The most significant risk is that project-supported wood processing enterprises could inadvertently increase



demand for illegally harvested timber, which may be further exacerbated by weak traceability, while transboundary pressures such as wildlife trafficking, uneven regulatory enforcement, and artisanal mining could exacerbate deforestation and conflict. Amplified by weak institutional capacity and the FCV context of several participating countries, these systemic, multi-layered, and interlinked risks—ranging from localized impacts to broader cumulative governance and ecosystem threats—justify a high environmental and social risk classification for the MPA.

27. To manage Phase 1 environmental and social risks, participating countries have prepared framework environmental and social instruments—including Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF), Resettlement Framework (RF), Indigenous Peoples Planning Framework (IPPF), Security Management Plan (SMP) in CAR, Labor Management Plan (LMP) and Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) which have been widely consulted and will be disclosed before appraisal. The 3 ESMFs have been disclosed in the respective countries and on the World Bank website¹⁷. While the physical relocation of households is not expected, the project may still affect livelihoods by restricting access to grazing areas, firewood collection, hunting, and fishing. To address such livelihood impacts, draft Process Frameworks (PF) have been developed as a **precautionary measure** since the participating countries have not selected the final sites to be financed by the project and will be updated to reflect site specific aspects once identified. The PF ensures a structured transparent and participatory approach, incorporating Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC) and details the approach for mitigation, compensation, and benefit-sharing measures, with particular focus on vulnerable and marginalized groups. Draft Institutional Assessments have been undertaken will and will be available by project appraisal and the timeline for the final versions will be reflected in the ESCPs.

E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

28. Each country operation will be independently implemented with one project implementation unit (PIU) under the oversight of the lead line Ministry. Implementation will be led by the respective Ministries responsible for forests as the lead Ministry for this operation. The PIUs will be staffed with experts on all three pillars of the Program. Staff could be seconded from within the government or contracted through competitive selection. In each country, the lead Ministry could enter into a cooperation agreement with relevant ministries (i.e., industry, trade and commerce, SMEs, Planning, lands and construction, finance, etc.) responsible for providing technical advice and participating in Steering Committees and Technical Committees for the Program, especially on Pillar 3 activities, outside of their own area of responsibility (i.e. SME Service Park approval and oversight, support to private sector processing activities, financial sector regulation, etc.). Furthermore, the ministries of forests would enter into a subsidiary agreement with apex institutions that will select the financial intermediaries to manage credit facilities to support eligible private sector enterprises and companies.

29. At the Regional level CEMAC and COMIFAC will be responsible for implementation of the regional activities under Program. CEMAC will convene a Regional Steering Committee of Ministers of Economy & Ministers of Forests to carry out annual review of progress on implementation of the Program. An independent panel of experts will be enlisted by COMIFAC to advise and facilitate transparent and continuous stakeholder engagement during implementation. Detailed descriptions of implementation arrangements for Phase 1 are presented in Annexes 1 -4. The PIU in CEMAC will be housed within the Department for Sustainable Development and Industry. Both CEMAC and COMIFAC will have PIUs with fiduciary capacity for implementation and monitoring and reporting on the Regional Project activities.

B. Results Monitoring and Evaluation Arrangements

30. Implementation progress and results will be monitored over the course of the MPA implementation. Indicators for all projects in the MPA will directly contribute to meeting the PrDO targets and are aligned with the corporate

¹⁷[ESF documents](#)



scorecard. The MPA proposes a set of results indicators (described in the Results Framework) from which participating countries select in accordance with their respective programs. These indicators will be tracked individually by project-level implementing agencies as outlined in the respective operation annexes and reported through semi-annual progress reporting. The MPA will conduct a mid-term review (MTR) to take a broader assessment of implementation progress and lessons learned to make necessary adjustments.

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