



Concept Environmental and Social Review Summary

Concept Stage

(ESRS Concept Stage)

Date Prepared/Updated: 02/03/2022 | Report No: ESRSC02468



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Region	Project ID	Parent Project ID (if any)
Africa	AFRICA	P178045	
Project Name	Support to Regional Knowledge Capacity on Economic Transformation, Resilience, and Recovery		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Governance	Investment Project Financing	3/4/2022	3/31/2022
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)		
African Center for Economic Transformation	African Center for Economic Transformation		

Proposed Development Objective

To strengthen the African Center for Economic Transformation’s capacity to inform economic transformation policy and practice in selected countries, including COVID-19 response.

Financing (in USD Million)	Amount
Total Project Cost	8.28

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

No

C. Summary Description of Proposed Project [including overview of Country, Sectoral & Institutional Contexts and Relationship to CPF]

This project aims to provide continued support to ACET in delivering economic transformation and contribute to a more effective Covid-19 response and resilience through core policy analysis, advice, and advocacy; coordination of the G20 Compact with Africa agenda; and promotion of private sector development. This support will take various forms including:

- i) Producing and delivering core thematic analysis, advocacy and advisory services that advances national and regional economic transformation;



- ii) Enhancing partner countries’ economic management and resilience through the provision of implementation support of Compact with Africa as well as through broader support to strengthen post covid-19 recovery and resilience; and
- iii) Promoting Private Sector Development through the provision of government support to create an enabling environment to attract private investment, particularly in industry, agriculture, and infrastructure, as well as through support to small and medium enterprises (SMEs) to build their capacity as business, create decent jobs, and become more bankable.
- iv) Hosting a series of PhD-level Fellowships designed to provide technical assistance African governments vis-a-vis the Chief Economists of Africa Network, COVID-19 recovery efforts, regional economic transformation.

D. Environmental and Social Overview

D.1. Detailed project location(s) and salient physical characteristics relevant to the E&S assessment [geographic, environmental, social]

The project funds predominantly “soft activities”, such as knowledge generation, capacity building, and technical assistance, which will be implemented by the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), a leading pan-African economic policy institute located in Accra Ghana. This project aims to provide continued support to ACET in delivering economic transformation and contribute to a more effective Covid-19 response and resilience through core policy analysis, advice, and advocacy; coordination of the G20 Compact with Africa agenda; and promotion of private sector development. No infrastructure investments are proposed. Due to COVID-19 and the multi-country nature of the project activities, it is envisioned that most project activities will occur online using digital tools such as video conferencing. The selection of the African countries to benefit from the project will be determined during project implementation. Decisions on country engagement are made on a rolling basis as programs are developed and launched based on the necessary timelines, processes, and objectives. It is not feasible to establish who the partner will be years ahead of project implementation. Furthermore, ACET uses a country partnership matrix to help determine which countries will be engaged for different activities. This matrix currently includes 22 African countries and should be considered an upper bound list of which countries could potentially be engaged during project implementation. This process is fluid and has several factors taken into consideration including guidance from the MDTF partners. Therefore, the priority countries and the precise geographic location of project activities are not known at this stage.

D. 2. Borrower’s Institutional Capacity

The project will be implemented by the African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET) which is a leading pan-African economic policy institute at the forefront of promoting economic transformation. ACET’s approach largely blends analysis, advice, and advocacy. Between 2018 to 2021, ACET successfully implemented the World Bank funded project: Support to Regional Knowledge Capacity (P167357) under the Operational Policies without any reported safeguards infractions. The current project will build on the achievements of the past project but will be implemented under the World Bank Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). Given the low to moderate E&S risks of the project, it is not expected to present implementation challenges to the ACET Team. However, ACET will need some capacity building on the ESF, and the Bank will support them to achieve this. Also, ACET will appoint one Specialist to oversee E&S risks and impacts management on the project.

II. SCREENING OF POTENTIAL ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL (ES) RISKS AND IMPACTS

Public Disclosure



A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Moderate

Environmental Risk Rating

Low

The environmental risk is rated low. The rating considered the nature, scale and scope of the project, the potential environmental risks and impacts, and the capacity of the implementing institution to manage the potential environmental risks and impacts. The project will mainly involve capacity strengthening, knowledge sharing, and policy dialogue. Other interventions include providing top-tier technical and managerial assistance, mentorship, coaching, and transactions advisory services to small and medium enterprises (SMEs). These activities are not anticipated to present significant environmental risks and impacts. Component 4 will support procurement of office equipment, vehicles, hardware and software tools for virtual work. These activities will happen at a low scale and environmental risks and impacts are generally expected to be low. The implementing institution will appoint one E&S Specialist to oversee the management of these potential risks and impacts.

Social Risk Rating

Moderate

The social risk of the project is classified as Moderate. The key potential social risks and impacts identified in the project include Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH), as well as discrimination and lack of equal opportunities for women and persons with disabilities to participate in and benefit from the project including equitable access to opportunities presented by the fellowship. The project will not finance activities that involve land acquisition, restrictions on land use and involuntary resettlement. Potential Gender-based risks were identified at two levels. The first is the unequal access to benefits and opportunities of the project. There may not be equal opportunities for participation in the project for women due to traditional gender bias. The second is sexual harassment, sexual assault or verbal harassment on the assumption that more women may be part of the capacity building/fellowships programs and as project workers. There could also be potential issues regarding exclusion of people with disabilities from the stakeholder engagement process across Africa for the project design and implementation including exclusion of female owned firms/SMEs, as well as the design of capacity building and support to private sector development activities that may not be tailored to the needs of person's with disabilities. To address these anticipated potential social risks and impacts, the participating partners client shall prepare and disclose both in-country and in the World Bank's website an Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP), a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), including SEA/SH sensitive Grievance Mechanism (GM), and a SEA/SH Prevention and Response Framework.

B. Environment and Social Standards (ESSs) that Apply to the Activities Being Considered

B.1. General Assessment

ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Overview of the relevance of the Standard for the Project:

This standard is relevant. The project will generally have a low environmental footprint as it will largely involve advisory services, knowledge sharing, policy dialogue, and capacity building. Potential environmental risks and impacts will mainly arise from Component 4, which involves procurement of office equipment, office vehicles, hardware and software tools . The potential environmental risks could include procurement of non-energy-efficient office devices and hardware and generation of electronic waste (e-waste) at the end of their use. Other potential risks could include procurement of non-fuel-efficient office vehicles that may generate excess emissions and



greenhouse gases. However, the scale of these interventions is small, and potential environmental risks and impacts are anticipated to be insignificant and easily mitigated. The project will prepare an Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) which will require the implementing institution to screen project interventions and avoid activities that may present significant environmental and social risks and impacts.

The project social risk is moderate. The project social risks include SEA/SH, discrimination and lack of equal opportunities for women and persons with disabilities to participate in and benefit from the project, which shall be addressed through an Environmental and Social Commitment Plan, a Stakeholder Engagement Plan, including a SEA/SH sensitive GM, as well as a SEA/SH Prevention and Response Framework.

Areas where “Use of Borrower Framework” is being considered:

Borrowers Framework is not considered for this project

ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

This standard is relevant. Project stakeholders are not fully identified at this stage but will involve governments and their departments and agencies in selected African countries. The inputs and concerns of these stakeholders and subsequent ones to be identified will need to be factored into the design and implementation of various activities of the project. The project will prepare a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) which will be consistent with the requirements of ESS10 and will be disclosed as required during preparation and implementation to guide meaningful and inclusive engagements. The objective of the SEP is to establish a systematic approach for stakeholder engagement, maintain a constructive relationship with them, consider stakeholders’ views, promote and provide means for effective and inclusive engagement with stakeholders and beneficiaries throughout the project life cycle, and ensure that appropriate project information is disclosed to stakeholders in a timely, understandable, culturally accessible and appropriate manner. The SEP will also provide Grievance Mechanism (GM), which will enable a broad range of stakeholders to channel concerns, questions, and complaints to the implementing institution for redress. The GM will include protocols and mechanisms to address the SEA/SH risks and any SEA/SH allegations that may arise. If major changes occur in the scope of the project during implementation, the SEP will be revised and publicly re-disclosed accordingly.

Public Disclosure

B.2. Specific Risks and Impacts

A brief description of the potential environmental and social risks and impacts relevant to the Project.

ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions

The project will involve direct workers who are mainly staff of the implementing institution. About 38 individual consultants and 13 consulting firms may be hired to provide support to the implementing institution as needed. The client will follow the World Bank Group Environment, Health and Safety Guidelines (EHSG) and national laws on occupational health and safety and labor management procedures to guide labor and working conditions related to the project activities. The ESS2 requirements and objectives will be applied to all types of project workers, including the Code of Conduct, awareness raising on SEA/SH and establishing grievance mechanism.

ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management



This standard is relevant. The potential risks are procurement of non-energy efficient office equipment, hard and software tools and generation of e-waste, and procurement of non-fuel efficient office vehicles. The ESCP will require the implementing institution will procure energy-efficient office equipment and fuel-efficient vehicles. The ESCP will also include e-waste management.

ESS4 Community Health and Safety

This standard is relevant. No physical intervention will happen in communities nor will project interventions adversely affect communities due to construction activities. However, there are potential SEA/SH risks associated with engagement of the SMEs. This risk will be mitigated by measures presented under the SEA/SH section of this ESRS.

ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

This standard is not relevant as the project will not acquire land, restrict land use, or cause involuntary resettlement.

ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

This standard is not relevant. No project intervention is expected to adversely affect biodiversity or living natural resources.

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

This standard is not relevant. The project will not affect indigenous peoples/Sub-Saharan African historically underserved traditional local communities.

ESS8 Cultural Heritage

This standard is not relevant. Project activities will not affect cultural heritage.

ESS9 Financial Intermediaries

This standard is not relevant. No financial intermediary is involved.

B.3 Other Relevant Project Risks

N/A

C. Legal Operational Policies that Apply

OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways

No

OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas

No

Public Disclosure



III. WORLD BANK ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL DUE DILIGENCE

A. Is a common approach being considered?

No

Financing Partners

No financial partner is involved.

B. Proposed Measures, Actions and Timing (Borrower’s commitments)

Actions to be completed prior to Bank Board Approval:

- Prepare, consult upon and disclose the Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP)
- Prepare, consult upon and disclose the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)

Possible issues to be addressed in the Borrower Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP):

- Appointment of one E&S Specialist to oversee E&S risks and impacts management
- Implement the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)
- Prepare, consult upon and disclose a SEA/SH Prevention and Response Framework, as part of the Project Implementation Manual
- Establish a Grievance Mechanism (GM) including SEA/SH prevention and response protocols
- Measures to ensure gender and disability inclusion in the project
- Monitoring and reporting requirements
- Development of an E&S Checklist
- Firms/consultants’ adherence to World Bank contractual E&S requirements

IV. CONTACT POINTS

World Bank

Contact:	Kirstin Iman Conti	Title:	Public Sector Specialist
Telephone No:	5220+80738	Email:	kconti@worldbank.org
Contact:	Jana Kunicova	Title:	Senior Public Sector Specialist
Telephone No:	+1-202-473-0110	Email:	jkunicova@worldbank.org

Borrower/Client/Recipient

Borrower: African Center for Economic Transformation

Implementing Agency(ies)

Implementing Agency: African Center for Economic Transformation

Public Disclosure



V. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

The World Bank
1818 H Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20433
Telephone: (202) 473-1000
Web: <http://www.worldbank.org/projects>

VI. APPROVAL

Task Team Leader(s):	Kirstin Iman Conti, Jana Kunicova
Practice Manager (ENR/Social)	Senait Nigiru Assefa Recommended on 18-Jan-2022 at 15:49:40 GMT-05:00
Safeguards Advisor ESSA	Peter Leonard (SAESSA) Cleared on 03-Feb-2022 at 18:24:20 GMT-05:00