



Combined Project Information Documents / Integrated Safeguards Datasheet (PID/ISDS)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 19-May-2022 | Report No: PIDISDSA34160



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country Central African Republic	Project ID P179053	Project Name Additional Financing: Central Africa Republic Data for Decision Making	Parent Project ID (if any) P160717
Parent Project Name Data for Decision Making	Region Western and Central Africa	Estimated Appraisal Date 16-May-2022	Estimated Board Date 28-Jul-2022
Practice Area (Lead) Poverty and Equity	Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Ministry of Economy, Planning, and Cooperation	Implementing Agency ICASEES

Proposed Development Objective(s) Parent

To increase the capacity of the national statistical institute (ICASEES) to produce and publicly disseminate statistics through data recovery, institutional development and support to data production.

Components

Statistical recovery, rehabilitation, professionalization and modernization of ICASEES
Data collection, production and dissemination

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)

SUMMARY

Total Project Cost	3.00
Total Financing	3.00
of which IBRD/IDA	3.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS

World Bank Group Financing

International Development Association (IDA)	3.00
IDA Grant	3.00



Environmental Assessment Category

B-Partial Assessment

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. **Central African Republic (CAR) is one of the world's poorest and most fragile countries.** In 2019, per capita gross domestic product (GDP) averaged US\$468 —much lower than the average of US\$1,130 in countries affected by fragility, conflict, and violence (FCV) in Sub-Saharan Africa. The extreme poverty rate remained high at 71.4 percent in 2020.
2. **CAR's political and governance context remains exceptionally fragile.** Throughout its history, this landlocked country located in the heart of Africa has suffered from cycles of violence. While the adoption of the 2015 Constitution began a new stabilization process, the December 2020 presidential election was marked by violence following the creation of a rebel coalition and the subsequent government counter-offensive. The Government had regained control over most of its territory by the end of 2021. While the country has recently seen important gains in terms of consolidation, fighting continues in some areas of strategic interest. Government troops and their allies are accused of human rights violations. Furthermore, the choice of bilateral partnerships in the security sector is creating tensions with CAR's traditional political, development and humanitarian partners. The ability of CAR and the international community to establish an effective and sustainable arrangement to address chronic instability will determine the prospects for poverty reduction and shared prosperity and strengthen the resilience against state collapse.
3. **Insecurity and forced displacement have severely aggravated poverty and contributed to the acceleration of urbanization, placing additional strain on already-limited infrastructure and services in host communities.** According to the 2021 Human Development Report, CAR has one of the lowest levels of human development, ranking 188th out of 189 countries. Poverty rates range from 45 percent in Bangui - which accounts for 11 percent of the country's poor, to 78 percent in the northwest of CAR, the area mainly controlled by armed groups¹. The World Food Program (WFP) estimates that 45 percent of the population face food and nutritional insecurity. CAR's population is young (60 percent under the age of 25) and increasingly urban (with an urban growth rate of 2.8 percent per year), though most Central Africans reside in rural areas. With a land area of about 620,000 square kilometers and an estimated

¹ Humanitarian Needs Overview (HNO), 2021. Needs analysis conducted by the REACH in October-December 2020. Source: <https://www.reach-initiative.org/where-we-work/central-african-republic/>



population of 4.7 million, CAR is sparsely populated (approximately 8 people per square kilometer), making it even more difficult to provide public services.

4. **The COVID-19 pandemic, political instability, and security threats have contributed to CAR's economic performance deterioration.** Due to a fragile security environment and persistent structural issues,² CAR has experienced a deceleration of its growth trend, which reached 3.1 percent in 2019 and 0.8 percent in 2020 (compared to a peak growth rate of 4.8 percent in 2015). Per capita income decreased by 1.1 percent and 2.8 percent in 2020 and 2021, respectively. Successive crises and the pandemic exacerbated existing vulnerabilities, worsened the precarious humanitarian situation and pushed more Central Africans into extreme poverty³. The World Bank estimates that the pandemic pushed approximately 70,000 additional people into extreme poverty in 2020. The fiscal position has deteriorated as tax revenues declined. Public expenditures have risen due to the pandemic and the effort to maintain security. In the medium term, CAR's economy is projected to grow at an average of 3 percent—2 percentage points below pre-COVID-19 projections.

5. **The Government's ability to provide public services, and address the population's grievances, is curtailed by limited State presence throughout the territory, constraining the capacity and legitimacy of State institutions across the territory.** The State is present in the capital, Bangui, and surrounding localities, but absent from an estimated 50 percent of the national territory (largely exacerbated by the 2013 political crisis, after which civil servants migrated to the capital and urban dwellings) which undermines the Government's capacity to address the population's grievances and leads to territorial disparities in service provision. Low population density, compounded by persistent security and resource constraints, has led to weak infrastructure and service coverage investments. Extensive infrastructure gaps hamper economic activity, access to markets, and service coverage. Approximately 55 percent of health facilities are functional, 21 percent of the population have access to drinkable water, and it is estimated that 80 to 90 percent of the population lack formal identification. Weak governance has been a major challenge to sustainable economic growth and shared prosperity. CAR ranked 154th out of 180 countries in the 2021 Transparency International Corruption Index. CAR's 2.6 score on the World Bank Group (WBG) 2019 Country Policy and Institutional Assessment (CPIA), is also below the Sub-Saharan Africa's (SSA) fragile countries' average of 2.8. The social contract between the population and the Government remains weak due to unequal access to public services and a perception of widespread corruption and impunity.

6. **As CAR has been identified as highly vulnerable to climate change, supporting investments in climate-smart infrastructure, digitally-enabled efficiency gains, and increased response capacity will be critical.** CAR ranks 181 out of 182 in the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index, indicating high vulnerability and low readiness to combat the effects of climate change. Heavy rains and floods are recurrent, and the frequency and impact of these events are expected to increase.⁶ The impacts of climate change will disproportionately affect the poorest and most vulnerable and hinder CAR's development agenda and its efforts towards economic sustainability and political stability. Factors contributing to low preparedness to adapt to the impact of climate stress include: (i) limited use of energy-efficient and resilient

² CAR Economic Update –Third Edition –The Central African Republic in Times of COVID-19 –Diversifying the Economy to Build Resilience and Foster Growth, World Bank Group, October 2020.

³ CAR Economic Update – Fourth Edition - Investing in Human Capital to Protect the Future. World Bank Group, July 2021



infrastructure (including digital); (ii) limited integration of climate data and climate risks into sectoral (including digital) policies, regulations, and infrastructure planning; (iii) weak capacity to manage and analyze climate data, including its cross-sectoral impacts on sectors such as health; and (iv) limited management of e-waste.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

7. **The Central African Institute of Statistics and Economic and Social Studies (ICASEES) is the national statistical institute.** Despite the existing statutes and decrees allowing its legal autonomy, ICASEES currently operates under the administrative supervision of the Ministry of Economy, Planning and International Cooperation and lacks financial autonomy. Although an ICASEES Board of Directors was first appointed in December 2016, ICASEES does not always have the Establishment Agreement.

8. However, the military-political crisis of 2012 left the National Statistical System (NSS), which was reasonably developed before the crisis, in poor condition. The ICASEES offices were looted, creating the loss of much of the country's statistical data and archive. Additionally, the looting of the ICASEES offices resulted in the loss of much of the statistical infrastructure as well as the physical archive of paper documents. Most of the databases were outdated and not useful for decision-making.

9. The World Bank has helped the Government to rebuild the NSS through the Data for Decision Making Project (P160717). Therefore, several results are obtained with the support the project. But the Government still need to rebuild the statistical system and the performance of the statistical sector in the CAR should be improved to make evidence-based policy and decision making. Some of the achievements of the parent projects are:

- The data dispersed in various ad hoc databases and archives due to the 2012 crises were recovered and archived on the NADA platform. Since ICASEES does not have a secure infrastructure to ensure the security of data, the archives were stored on remote cloud servers to avoid future losses.
- The capacity of ICASEES staff was increased through exchanges with their peers from other National Statistical Offices (NSO) and by technical assistance through learning on Job. This mechanism made it possible to build the capacity of ICASEES departments not only technically but also in procurement and financial management.
- Some of the databases that were outdated for decision-making have been updated. The Consumer Price Index (CPI) was rebased in 2021 (from its 1975 base). The agricultural census, an essential component of the estimate of the National Accounts was carried out in 2021 (updating data last collected in 1985); two planned rounds of Communal Monographies Survey were completed in 2018 and 2019 respectively; Living Conditions Survey, necessary for the measurement of poverty was carried out in 2021 (the last Living Conditions Survey was carried out in 2008).

10. Despite these efforts and achievements, three critical activities under the parent project were not fully completed due to a funding gap/cost overrun. These included: the cartography of the population census, revising the National Accounts, and the rehabilitation of the main building.



11. The context, dominated by the crises (COVID-19 and security), impacted the implementation of project activities, mainly under Component 2, data collection, production and dissemination and more specifically census cartography and National Account activities. The first impact is related to the delay due to multiple suspensions of activities. As a result, the implementation of the main surveys whose data were expected be used to revise National Accounts were delayed. In addition, due to the crises, the deployment and redeployment of enumerators in the fields generated additional costs. Although the main survey was completed, the costs generated by the crisis did not allow to finalize the census cartography and the revision of the National Accounts.

12. The parent project started the rehabilitation of one of the two ICASEES buildings. So, the rehabilitation of the main building was completed in May 2021 as planned in the financing agreement. However, to have more workspace, during rehabilitation ICASEES has extend the building while expecting additional resources (**US\$ 0.4 million**) from the state budget. Unfortunately, ICASEES was not able to mobilize the funding gap although the amount was included in the 2022 Central Africa Republic finance law. Therefore, the ICASEES building extension work was not completed. Additionally, a fire destroyed part of the other ICASEES building and all computer equipment and other documents were burned at the end of January 2022. This significantly reduced the workspace at ICASEES. Therefore, the extension activities of the ICASEES building will be critical and are planned to be funded by the proposed AF.

13. The Government of CAR requested an AF of US\$3 million to close a financing gap to finalize ongoing project activities of the parent project (P160717), including: (i) the revision of the National Accounts; (ii) the census cartography (including related activities); (iii) improving Central African Institute of Statistics and Economic and Social Studies (*l'Institut Centrafricain des Statistiques et des Etudes Economiques et Sociales*, ICASEES) physical infrastructure; and (iv) financing project management until the project proposed closing date, i.e., August 31, 2023 to fully implement the activities under the AF and to achieve the project development objective.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Original PDO

14. To increase the capacity of the national statistical institute (ICASEES) to produce and publicly disseminate statistics through data recovery, institutional development, and support to data production.

Current PDO

The PDO remain the same as the parent project

Key Results

15. The project development objective will be assessed by the relevance and quality of the output/outcome obtained by ICASEES. The main expected outcomes of the project are the following:

- A secure electronic data archive exists (yes/no).
- Rebased national accounts are being published (yes/no)
- Statistical data sets are publicly disseminated online (number)



D. Project Description

a) Parent Project Components

16. The project comprises two components (1) statistical recovery, project management and professionalization and modernization of ICASEES' management, and (2) data collection, production and dissemination.

17. Capacity building is an integral aspect of the project, with staff receiving training tailored to the activities for which they are responsible, preferably from peers, particularly those from the sub-region. No Project Implementation Unit (PIU) is created at ICASEES to facilitate the implementation of the project. Instead, procurement, financial management and project management functions are integrated as routine activities in the agency as part of the institutional reform process, with the objective of serving this project and other financiers (State; donors).

18. In the selection and definition of project activities, particular attention was paid to the fact that the CAR is expected to remain insecure during the implementation period and government revenue limited. Consequently, the purchase of assets and durable goods is minimized to reduce potential losses in the event of elevated insecurity, while remote supervision (CAPI) and use of the cloud for data storage and archiving are encouraged. The project pays particular attention to value for money by seeking to combine data collection activities where feasible and by providing disaggregated estimates in accordance with administrative planning and implementation capacity. The project adheres to open data principles and all data produced with World Bank funding will be made publicly available, provided it meets confidentiality standards.

COMPONENT 1. STATISTICAL RECOVERY, REHABILITATION, AND PROFESSIONALIZATION AND MODERNIZATION OF ICASEES (US\$1.5 million equivalent)

Subcomponent 1.1. Data Recovery (US\$0.2 million equivalent)

19. Data recovery consists of recuperating (to the extent possible) lost databases, archiving databases, and making them publicly accessible online. A first activity is the restoration of the 2003 census cartography. Any population census starts with a cartographic exercise in which enumeration areas (i.e. the area that one enumerator can cover during the implementation of the census) are delineated. These maps contain valuable information on roads, bridges, location of villages, hamlets and encampments, as well as transhumance routes and the official commune, sous-prefecture and prefecture borders, and form the basis for sampling. These maps will be digitized and made available on-line as public-use files.

20. A related activity is the digital archiving of statistical publications. Documents that have been preserved during the crisis will be scanned, indexed and made available on-line (much as documents are available as googlebooks), along with the recovery of remaining digital data bases from different storage devices (computers, laptops, CDs etc.). Once digitized and indexed all these data bases will be archived



and made accessible online, implying investments in web design, secure digital data storage in the cloud, as well as in training ICASEES staff in archiving and web-site maintenance.

Subcomponent 1.2. Rehabilitation of ICASEES' physical and data infrastructure (US\$0.7 million equivalent)

21. **ICASEES physical infrastructure is dilapidated and does not offer a productive work environment.** Of the two buildings that are currently in use, one has a leaking roof. A large part of the other available building is used for storing field materials (scales, measure boards etc.). Electrical wiring is aged (over 40 years old), there is no functional intranet, the generator is broken, and staff lack space to work. Some of the most basic tools are missing.

22. **This subcomponent aims to rectify this situation by investing in physical recovery.** Renovations will be informed by an engineering study and is expected to include replacing the roof, renewing the electrical wiring, and local area computer network, improving the perimeter wall, creating storage space using a shipping container, painting, safe room, repair of (and a service contract for) the generator and finishing the half-finished building on the plot. All renovations will be done within the existing ICASEES perimeter and do not include an expansion of the existing infrastructure footprint. Once renovations are completed and the network restored, ICASEES will be connected to the internet. This rehabilitation component will also cover investments in hardware, computers, tablets, stabilizers, photocopiers, office furniture (including safes), transport means and software. These investments will be informed by an inventory of existing assets and a needs assessment and will only be executed once a system of asset management has been put in place (see subcomponent on professionalization and modernization). The rehabilitation works are not expected to have any negative environmental or social impacts. The component will also complement non-salary funding to facilitate the daily functioning of ICASEES.

Subcomponent 1.3. Professionalization and modernization of ICASEES' management (US\$0.6 million equivalent)

23. **Satisfactory functioning of ICASEES is hindered by the lack of or inadequate adherence to procedures in all areas: general management, human resources, procurement and fiduciary controls and by a lack of management autonomy.** Years of ad hoc management under severe budget constraints, a difficult external environment and erratic demands for data have created a culture in which ad hoc fixes are norm. Execution and control functions are not clearly separated, paper trails are incomplete, and transparency is limited. This is further complicated by the fact that ICASEES lacks dedicated procurement and fiduciary staff.

24. **The first pillar of the professionalization of ICASEES aims to establish effective management practices through the adoption of clear administrative rules and the hiring of specialists.** Administrative manuals defining the policies and procedures for general operations, financial management, accounting, procurement, and personnel management will be prepared and adopted. These manuals will reflect relevant country systems and international standards. A Performance Based Financing (PBF) manual will also be prepared presenting deliverables, verification mechanisms, associated pay and its distribution. Data dissemination policies will be revised, and the quality control function revamped. The manuals and procedures will not only cover this project but the overall



management of ICASEES. This will be complemented with the hiring of (i) a procurement specialist; (ii) a financial management specialist; (iii) an assistant accountant; and (iv) a project assistant. These four-project staff will train dedicated ICASEES staff to take over their functions during the course of the project so as to ensure a full integration of fiduciary and management functions within the agency.

25. **A second pillar aims to incentivize higher quality data and efficiency through the introduction of Performance Based Financing (PBF).** Currently, there are few incentives for producing high quality data, reducing costs, or delivering results faster. Instead, perverse incentives exist to maximize per diems by attending workshops, by creating overly large samples or to pursue other rent-seeking opportunities. Introducing PBF in the statistics domain offers a way to reorient incentives towards improving data quality and value for money, critical for any statistical operation. ICASEES is a good candidate for PBF. It produces outputs that can be readily evaluated, the size of the agency is relatively small (simplifying the introduction of reforms), and ICASEES directors are motivated to break away from old practices. PBF requires identification of products that are purchased, their unit price, the verification mechanism that will be followed and a clear set of rules defining how good performance will be rewarded. In the PBF manual, each of these aspects will be defined for each activity. Activities that lend themselves to a PBF approach include all data production activities included in subcomponent 2.1. Prior to the start of each data production activity the PBF manual will be updated taking into account past experiences and the details of the activity under consideration. Table A1 Annex 4 present illustrations of how PBF works with respect to statistics.

26. **The introduction of PBF is expected to be cost neutral. Allowances for committee meetings will be replaced by bonuses paid for quality work delivered, thus emphasizing outputs rather than process.** More importantly activities will be rationalized, contracts negotiated at sharper rates, incentives to inflate data collection efforts reduced and the need for 'corrective data cleaning' measures will be less as data quality improves. The project will introduce well-specified performance criteria for the payment of premiums and for contracted services in the PBF manual.

27. **A third pillar aims to strengthen the capacity for management autonomy, a critical aspect in increasing the legitimacy of a statistical agency.** Autonomy helps insulate data production from political pressures and facilitates the creation of a conducive work environment. Although ICASEES has the underpinnings for legal autonomy, it lacks financial autonomy due to its tiny operational budgets and the absence of adequate financial management systems. Achieving true autonomy requires a professionalized management structure and demonstrated financial management capacity. A first step in this direction has been taken by appointing the members of the Board of Directors. This Board will need to oversee the professionalization of ICASEES and replace the oversight function of the Ministry of Economy. Achieving full autonomy will only be possible once ICASEES is in a position to execute its own budgets and hire its own staff, and if the authorities allocate sufficient budget for its activities. ICASEES is envisaged to be ready for this towards the end of the project at which point public finances are expected to have recovered sufficiently to permit adequate public funding for statistics. This sub-component will finance studies, (legal) consultants, Board meetings, and training of Board members and ICASEES staff to prepare for management autonomy. Full autonomy (budget execution and personnel management) are condition for considering any request for additional financing or for a follow up project.



28. **A fourth pillar aims to improve short and medium-term coordination and planning of data production.** This comprises three aspects: agreement and adoption of the National Statistical Development Strategy (NSDS), coordination of statistical activities across different sectors, and donor coordination. These three aspects are related in that the NSDS identifies priority data collection activities to which all (including donors) should adhere. This requires donor coordination and recognition that many data production activities do not yield official statistics. As such they can just as well be produced by private entities, thus preserving the limited capacity of official institutions in the National Statistical System (NSS) for official statistics. This sub-component finances the coordination of the NSS, adoption and regular updating of the national statistical strategy, and collaboration on RPBA (Recovery and Peace Building Assessment) monitoring.

29. **Subcomponent 1.4: Technical assistance in support of urgent data access, recovery and renewal (US\$ 0.494 million equivalent).** There are a number of activities that need to be undertaken with urgency in the first years of the project. These activities which comprise short term internet connectivity (prior to the rehabilitation of the building), recovery of lost data sets, restoring the library (digitally), the revision of the CPI (except for the budget survey which is covered under part 2.1) as well as the design and population and hosting of the website of ICASEES. The Trust Fund for Statistical Capacity Building (TFSCB) has agreed to fund these activities provided they are implemented during the first two years of the project, in accordance with the urgency of the activities at hand.

COMPONENT 2: DATA COLLECTION, PRODUCTION AND DISSEMINATION (US\$8.5 million equivalent)

30. In accordance with the principles described above funding for data production is separated into two subcomponents: collection of critical data using a PBF approach and capacity development in support of data production and dissemination.

Subcomponent 2.1: Data collection using a PBF approach (US\$8.0 million equivalent)

31. **National Accounts are at the heart of any statistical system as they are construed from data originating from multiple sources.** Strengthening national accounts implies improving critical source data. For the CAR, this includes price data (CPI; Producer Price Index (PPI)), consumption data and information on the informal sector (living conditions survey), data on agriculture (agricultural surveys), enterprise data (tax; enterprise survey), mining and information on public spending. Almost all these data serve multiple users: living conditions surveys provide the National Accounts with information about consumption and informal sector activities, but also offer information on poverty and many of the sustainable development indicators. Agricultural surveys provide information about agricultural GDP (approximately 40 percent of the total GDP of CAR), but also information about productivity, availability of inputs etc. Much of the national account's information is derived from surveys, which in turn depend on up-to-date sampling frames to be accurate and representative.

32. **The current sampling frame for household surveys is based on the 2003 census and is outdated.** A first and critical step is therefore to produce a new sampling frame. Advances in census



cartography and an integrated data collection approach offer a cost-effective alternative (to traditional approaches) and is pursued under this project. This alternative starts with an enhanced census cartography which can subsequently serve as a sampling frame for household welfare as well as agricultural surveys. Moreover, by combining this enhanced cartography with survey data, many, but not all⁴, indicators provided by population and agricultural censuses can be derived, thereby promoting value for money.

33. **Enhanced Census Cartography (US\$3.0 million equivalent):** This activity includes updating (using GPS) all enumeration area (EA) borders, enumerating the number of households in each EA, and a listing exercise establishing household size and whether households depend on agriculture for a living. In every EA information is also collected on physical characteristics (agro-ecological zone, rivers), infrastructure (settlements, schools, clinics, roads, bridges, markets, transhumance corridors, camps for displaced) as well as economic activities (crops grown). The thus generated data base can be reproduced in the form of maps and offers a complete inventory of all villages, schools, clinics, bridges and markets in the country. The data base offers information on population size by area (commune, sous-prefecture, prefecture, region and nation) and can subsequently be used as sampling frame for household surveys as well as agricultural surveys.

34. **Living Conditions Survey (US\$1.5 million equivalent):** The last welfare survey was conducted in 2008 and updating welfare and poverty information is urgent. The project will align the CAR with survey practices in other WAEMU and CEMAC countries and generate statistics that are comparable to a large number of countries in West and Central Africa. Survey data harmonization is spearheaded by the WAEMU Commission which has indicated welcoming the participation of the CAR in its harmonization exercise. Participation ensures comparable best practice methods are used for pilot testing, sampling, training, fieldwork, supervision, verification, cleaning, and analysis, and ensures that training materials and pedagogy are effective and of high quality. The envisaged living conditions survey is multi-modular meaning that information on a large number of aspects will be collected, including consumption (critical for poverty estimates), informal sector activities (critical for national accounts) and farming practices.

35. **Annual Agricultural Surveys (US\$1.8 million equivalent):** The last time data to estimate agricultural GDP was collected from farmers was in 1992. Ever since estimates of agricultural GDP were based on projections. The project will address this shortcoming by revamping agricultural data collection. Information on rural households will be collected by the living conditions survey. This will be complemented with information on annual production. Production data will need to be combined with information on prices which will be collected using regular market surveys in selected locations. For Bangui, information collected for the consumer price index can feed the agricultural price system; for other markets other means of collecting price information will need to be developed. Price information collection under this component will be critical for the assessment of food security.

⁴ So called low frequency events such as maternal mortality require a census to be estimated with any degree of accuracy.



36. **Communal Monographies Survey (US\$0.45 million equivalent):** The RPBA was informed by the “Enquete nationale sur les monographies communales” a survey that collected information on the functionality of communal administrations, as well selected information from households, including subjective information on priorities. Data from this survey form the basis for the RPBA monitoring system and repeating the survey regularly is critical to assess progress made against targets agreed during the Brussels conference of November 17, 2016. The project envisages funding two rounds of this survey, on the assumption that additional rounds will be funded out of the RPBA monitoring system that is being established.

37. **Revised CPI (US\$0.4 million equivalent):** The CPI was last rebased in 1981 making its revision a matter of urgency (as reflected by the fact that this is one of the benchmark indicators for the IMF support program). The project will facilitate CPI revision including by estimating new product weights (necessitating a budget survey), reviewing the outlets from which prices are obtained, updating estimation methodology, software and by supporting price data collection for the duration of the revision (18 months). After the revision, the authorities through budget allocations of regular statistical activities are expected to pay for price data collection.

38. **Revised National Accounts (US\$0.85 million equivalent):** National Accounts face three fundamental challenges. Definitive national accounts for 2013-2016 have not been produced, critical information is not available, and the methodology used is outdated. The project will support the transition of the national accounts to the SNA 2008 methodology (with assistance from AFRITAC) as well as the collection of additional databases critical for the national accounts: enterprise census, trade information, public spending, mining data, and information on the business cycle. The project will support the preparation and publication of the national accounts for 2013-2016 and the subsequent years.

Subcomponent 2.2: Technical assistance to improve and modernize data production and dissemination (US\$0.5 million equivalent)

39. To modernize data production, computer-assisted personal interview (CAPI) systems will be introduced. These systems which rely on tablets as opposed to paper questionnaires for data collection to improve abilities for remote supervision and instant consistency checks to facilitate corrections while enumerators are still in the field and preclude the need for a separate data entry phase. The introduction of CAPI systems requires extensive training in developing the software applications, in project management, and supervision, as well as in interview techniques.

40. In addition, funds will be made available for technical assistance. It involves hiring of specialists to facilitate methodological innovations and operational improvements. A substantial sub-component will be allocated for peer-to-peer learning particularly from other statistical offices in the sub-region. This can be in the form of study visits to these offices. Considering that most staff benefitted from training at the statistical school in Cameroon, twinning arrangements with the national statistical institute in Cameroon offers promising potential for ongoing knowledge exchange.



41. To stimulate analysis and dissemination of data, the project supports the preparation of interactive data dissemination allowing web-users to create their own tables out of survey data bases. In addition, the preparation of an annual statistical yearbook will be supported. Not only does this ensure that data becomes widely available, but it also offers a good entry point for ICASEES to engage with the production of sector statistics.

42. To enhance quality control, new mechanisms will be introduced. First, performance-based financing will be introduced to align incentives with the production of quality data in a timely and cost-effective manner. Second, the Board of Directors, tasked with oversight of ICASEES performance, will be trained in how to carry out this function. Thirdly, and only for major data production tasks, the project will rely on third party evaluators who assess data quality and make suggestions for improvements

b) Activities to be financed through the proposed additional financing

43. Four existing activities of the parent project will be supported by this AF including: Component 1: (i) rehabilitation of the ICASEES building; (ii) financing project management to ensure project monitoring and evaluation for activities until the project closing date; Component 2: (iii) the revision of the National Accounts, and (iv) the census cartography and related activities. Therefore, the AF would not introduce new activities, but rather would aim to close a financing gap/cost overrun to implement planned activities under the parent project.

44. **Component 1:** The cost for this component will increase from **US\$1.5 million to US\$2.2 million**. Activities to be implemented under the AF are (i) rehabilitation of the ICASEES physical infrastructure (as part of the building extension) and (ii) covering the costs of the project management team until the proposed project closing date, (i.e., August 31, 2023).

45. **Component 2:** The cost for this component will increase from **US\$8.5 million to US\$10.77 million**. (i) Revision of the National Accounts; (ii) Census Cartography (including related activities). Table 2 below shows the project activities under the AF including their estimated budget in XAF and USD.

46. **Change in project closing date.** The government requested the closing date extension for seven months (from August 31, 2022, to August 31, 2023). However, according to technical opinion of the Contractors, the time required to finalize ICASEES's building rehabilitation work is estimated six months. The World Bank team proposes to increase the extension period by twelve months instead of seven, to mitigate any risk of delay in finalizing the rehabilitation works. The projects closing date will be extended by twelve months, from August 31, 2022, to August 31, 2023.

47. **Changes in the Result Framework.** To comply with the United Nations Statistics Division (UNSD) minimum list of gender indicator requirement towards meeting the gender tag. The AF will add an intermediate-level indicator namely, Number of UNSD Minimum List gender indicators available using



data collected within the past 5 years. Baseline [8 out of 52 indicators], Target [35 out of 52 indicators]. This indicator will be measured through the EHCVM data that is already collected under the parent project. Additionally, the target end dates of all results indicators will be aligned with the proposed project closing dates.

48. **Safeguards.** The project's EA category will move from C (partial assessment) to B. The Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet (ISDS) will be updated and approved. Indeed, the parent project description initially included rehabilitation only but during implementation it was changed to an extension and an ESMP was prepared and disclosed on May 12, 2022. Categorization and OP 4.01 change is being done now to reflect the measures that were taken at the time.

49. The main factors for moving from Cat C to Cat B in addition to risks of insecurity are due to:

- a) The risk of accidents due to the proximity of the new extension building to the old building in which many people work; and the confusion with company workers if they do not wear PPE.
- b) The risk of GBV and EAS/HS related to the presence of the construction company's managers and workers, who may appear to be more fortunate than many of the ICASEES staff and may be attractive to some women.
- c) The risks of abuse and/or rape that could appear between the workers and the young women sellers on the construction site which is in the center of the Bangui city.
- d) Risks on Hygiene, Health, Safety and Environment related to noise nuisance, poor waste management, and poor security of the site and workers.
- e) Finally, the risks of transmission of contagious diseases, in this case Covid, but also STIs and HIV/AIDS.

50. The safeguards activities will be monitored by Environment & Social (E&S) safeguards consultant to ensure the implementation of the updated ESMP, Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) and Security Manual.

51. **Fiduciary.** The project is rated Satisfactory by the Bank's financial management and procurement teams, and complies with legal covenants, including audits and preparation of IFRs. The PIU is familiar with World Bank fiduciary procedures; however, fiduciary risks will involve the following: (i) multiple implementing entities with weak capacity, which can lead to delay in implementation, reporting and disbursement; (ii) risks of mismanagement of funds including absence or inadequate supporting documents of proof of services. To better mitigate these risks, the following actions will need to be implemented: (i) clear deadline and requirement for budget preparation and execution will be well established and documented; and (ii) Interim Financial Report (IFR) frequency and format will be well explained to implementing entities be used for monitoring the implementation of the annual work program. Close hands-on support will be provided by World Bank fiduciary team in Bangui in a timely manner.

52. **The disbursement categories.** The increase in the amounts allocated under some sub-components will result in the increase in the first disbursement category by US\$ 0.74 million and second disbursement category by US\$ 2.26.



E. Implementation

53. **Institutional and Implementation Arrangements remain the same as for the parent project. Institutional and Implementation Arrangements remain the same as for the parent project.** ICASEES is the implementing agency for this project. The national statistical institute is at the heart of the National Statistical System. Although ICASEES has the legal underpinnings to be autonomous, ICASEES currently operates under the administrative supervision of the Ministry of Economy, Planning, and International Cooperation and lacks financial autonomy. The institute has experience conducting national surveys and censuses and has the technical capabilities to conduct the data production activities of this project. As mentioned above, the fiduciary capacity of ICASEES has been strengthened through Component 1.

54. The Board of Directors that oversees ICASEES was appointed in December 2016. It is tasked to oversee the professionalization of ICASEES, review the data production plans and budgets, and hold the management accountable for delivering results –as such, the Board plays a critical role in implementing PBF. The Board assumed the administrative oversight responsibilities. The Director General (DG) of ICASEES reports to the Board.

55. To promote transparency and coordination within ICASEES, a Committee of Directors, comprising the DG and ICASEES departmental Directors, oversees project implementation and statistical activities funded by other partners. This Committee is responsible for planning of activities, approval of implementation plans and budgets for project activities, and evaluation of progress and results. The DG assumes ultimate fiduciary responsibility. A “Project Assistant” has been hired to support the Committee, serving the role of secretary while actively monitoring that the agreed procedures are followed. This “Project Assistant” also oversees the projects implementation on a day-to-day basis.

F. Project location and Salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

The Parent project was initially classified as environmental category C during its preparation in 2017. In view of the ICASEES project extension rehabilitation work, the Safeguard policy OP/BP 4.01 is triggered when the project passed from Category C to Category B for this AF. Even if the AF will not finance a new rehabilitation activity but the completion of the extension activities of the rehabilitated building throughout the duration of this activity. In addition, the data collection activities will be conducted across the entire country, including vulnerable peoples and indigenous. The data processing and analytical activities will be primarily undertaken in Bangui. The Project will benefit the entire population.



G. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Albert Francis Atangana Ze, Environmental Specialist
Yves Bertrand Koudjou Tatang, Social Specialist
Sandrine Armelle Nambessa Ndoubenoue, Environmental Specialist

SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	Safeguard policy OP/BP 4.01 is triggered when the project passed from Category C to Category B for this AF because of the extension of office activity. Even if the AF will not finance a new rehabilitation activity but is simply proposed to deal exclusively with an extension of financing, OP 4.01 is triggered for the completion of the extension activities of the rehabilitated building throughout the duration of this activity and updating of the ESMP under this AF is recommended.
Performance Standards for Private Sector Activities OP/BP 4.03	No	Not relevant
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	No	Not relevant
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	Not relevant
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	Not relevant
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	No	Not relevant
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	No	Not relevant
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	No	Not relevant
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	Not relevant
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	Not relevant
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	Not relevant



KEY SAFEGUARD POLICY ISSUES AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

A. Summary of Key Safeguard Issues

1. Describe any safeguard issues and impacts associated with the proposed project. Identify and describe any potential large scale, significant and/or irreversible impacts:

Safeguard policy OP/BP 4.01 is triggered when the project passed from Category C to Category B for this AF because of the extension of office activity. Even if the AF will not finance a new rehabilitation activity but is simply proposed to deal exclusively with an extension, OP 4.01 is triggered for the completion of the extension activities of the rehabilitated building throughout the duration of this activity and updating of the ESMP under this AF is recommended.

2. Describe any potential indirect and/or long term impacts due to anticipated future activities in the project area: N/A

3. Describe any project alternatives (if relevant) considered to help avoid or minimize adverse impacts. N/A

4. Describe measures taken by the borrower to address safeguard policy issues. Provide an assessment of borrower capacity to plan and implement the measures described.

To promote transparency and coordination within ICASEES, a Committee of Directors, comprising of the Director-General and the departmental Directors of ICASEES, oversees project implementation as well as statistical activities funded by others. This Committee is responsible for the planning of activities, approval of implementation plans and budgets for project activities, and evaluation of progress and results. The DG assumes ultimate fiduciary responsibility. A "Project Assistant" has been hired to support the Committee, serving the role of secretary while actively monitoring that the agreed procedures are followed. A "Project Assistant" oversees implementation on a day-to-day basis.

5. Identify the key stakeholders and describe the mechanisms for consultation and disclosure on safeguard policies, with an emphasis on potentially affected people. The updated ESMP under this AF will be disclosed.

B. Disclosure Requirements (N.B. The sections below appear only if corresponding safeguard policy is triggered)

Environmental Assessment/Audit/Management Plan/Other

Date of receipt by the Bank 28-Jan-2020	Date of submission for disclosure 29-Apr-2022	For category A projects, date of distributing the Executive Summary of the EA to the Executive Directors
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"In country" Disclosure

Central African Republic
05-May-2022

Comments



The project has developed an Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP) which addresses environmental aspects which specifically addresses the environmental aspects of the activities carried out during the extension of the rehabilitated building. The updated The ESMP will be disclosed on the government website

If the project triggers the Pest Management and/or Physical Cultural Resources policies, the respective issues are to be addressed and disclosed as part of the Environmental Assessment/Audit/or EMP.

If in-country disclosure of any of the above documents is not expected, please explain why:

The ESMP summary was disclosed on May 5, 2022, and the final updated ESMP was disclosed on the government website on May 20, 2022.

C. Compliance Monitoring Indicators at the Corporate Level (to be filled in when the ISDS is finalized by the project decision meeting) (N.B. The sections below appear only if corresponding safeguard policy is triggered)

OP/BP/GP 4.01 - Environment Assessment

Does the project require a stand-alone EA (including EMP) report?

No

The World Bank Policy on Disclosure of Information

Have relevant safeguard policies documents been sent to the World Bank for disclosure?

Yes

Have relevant documents been disclosed in-country in a public place in a form and language that are understandable and accessible to project-affected groups and local NGOs?

Yes

All Safeguard Policies

Have satisfactory calendar, budget and clear institutional responsibilities been prepared for the implementation of measures related to safeguard policies?

Yes

Have costs related to safeguard policy measures been included in the project cost?

Yes

Does the Monitoring and Evaluation system of the project include the monitoring of safeguard impacts and measures related to safeguard policies?

Yes

Have satisfactory implementation arrangements been agreed with the borrower and the same been adequately reflected in the project legal documents?

Yes



CONTACT POINT

World Bank

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Borrower/Client/Recipient

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APPROVAL

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Approved By

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Country Director:	Han Fraeters	08-Jun-2022
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