



Project Information Document/ Integrated Safeguards Data Sheet (PID/ISDS)

Concept Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 06-Apr-2018 | Report No: PIDISDSC23837



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country Central African Republic	Project ID P164295	Parent Project ID (if any)	Project Name Central African Republic Emergency Basic Education Support Project (P164295)
Region AFRICA	Estimated Appraisal Date Apr 18, 2018	Estimated Board Date Jun 27, 2018	Practice Area (Lead) Education
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Central African Republic	Implementing Agency Ministry of Primary, Secondary, Technical and Literacy Education (MEPSTA)	

Proposed Development Objective(s)

Improving access to quality basic education and strengthening capacity in education sector management.

Financing (in USD Million)

Financing Source	Amount
IDA Grant	25.00
Total Project Cost	25.00

Environmental Assessment Category B-Partial Assessment	Concept Review Decision Track II-The review did authorize the preparation to continue
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Other Decision (as needed)



B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. The Central African Republic (CAR) is an extremely fragile country in central Africa with a population of 4.9 million, which has recently come out of the latest in a series of internal conflicts, and is facing enormous development challenges. It is a landlocked country, not densely populated (8 people per square kilometer), with a land area of about 620,000 square kilometers. Most of the population (60 %) lives in rural areas. Bangui the capital city, is the largest urban center with an estimated population of 800,000 people (40 percent of the total urban population). Despite a wealth of natural resources such as uranium, crude oil, gold, diamonds, cobalt, lumber, wildlife and hydropower, as well as significant quantities of arable land, CAR is one of the three poorest countries in the world. With a Human Development Index (HDI) of 0.35 and a GDP per capita of USD 291 (2013), CAR is ranked last on HDI (188th out of 188 countries) and second to last on GDP per capita (229th out of 230 countries). With approximately 62 percent of the population living below the national poverty line based on the latest year of the last nationally representative household survey (2008), with 69 percent poverty rate in rural areas and 50 percent in urban areas, poverty remains a major concern for the Central African Government. Recent estimates, based on observed trends in GDP, suggest that the poverty rate, measured at the international poverty line of US\$1.90 per day in 2011 (purchasing-power parity terms), has surged to more than 75 percent in 2016. The 2013 political, insecurity and humanitarian crisis undid much of the economic progress achieved between 2008-2012. Currently, the country is still in an extreme fragile economic state and is facing strong structural constraints. GDP growth declined to -36 percent in 2013 from 4 percent in 2012; and inflation surged to 12 percent in 2014 while it was 2.6 percent in 2012. Although signs of recovery have been observed since 2014 in terms of GDP growth and reduced inflation rate, the deteriorating security environment is a clear hindrance to ensuring sustained economic recovery.

2. Since gaining independence from France, CAR experienced only two peaceful transitions of power: in 1993 and in 2016. The most recent major conflict occurred in early 2013 when a coalition of armed groups mostly from the northeast, Séléka, took control of much of the territory, and seized power in Bangui. The ensuing insecurity led to massive forced displacement, the collapse of state institutions and devastation of the country's economy. Trade was severely disrupted and the main productive sectors - agriculture, extractive industries and forestry - collapsed. Mining sites fell in the hands of armed groups, and growing resource trafficking financed warlords, further fueling instability. Vulnerable groups were particularly hard hit as food reserves dwindled and the provision of basic services came to a halt. The conflict left an already disenfranchised and traumatized population exposed to further exploitation by the identity politics of strongmen who benefited from local conflicts to serve their ambitions.

3. Recent developments have been somewhat encouraging. The transitional government, appointed in 2014, drafted a new constitution and organized elections. The presidential run-off and the legislative re-run elections were held on February 14th 2016. Despite the presence of numerous armed militias, the elections



were largely peaceful. It gave the new president, Faustin Archange Touadéra, a political legitimacy and hope for the prospect of rapid security and economic improvement. Moreover, there was a clear consensus amongst local authorities and citizens about the priorities for the country: peace, reconciliation, and security, followed by good governance, the provision of basic services, and economic development.

4. Despite the recent progress, the security situation remains fragile and it is unlikely to fully stabilize anytime soon. CAR is a country where the central government controls only about a forty percent of the territory, and a plethora of armed groups the other 60 percent. The restoration of state authority has been slow and in many regions limited to the “préfet” and key civil servants.

5. In the absence of strong governance, women and girls are the most affected and evidences from recent assessment shows that CAR is a country with an acute incidence of gender-based violence, and accountability to support the fight against impunity for conflict-related sexual violence remains a fragile hope. During nearly five years of internal conflicts, armed groups have brutalized women and girls aged 10-75, committing sexual slavery, rape, physical assault and kidnapping across the country. The United Nations, recorded over 2,500 cases of sexual violence in 2014 alone. Gender-based violence has resulted in long-term consequences, including illness and injury, unwanted pregnancy, stigma and abandonment, and loss of livelihoods or access to education.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

6. The formal education system in CAR uses the 3-6-4-3-4 system: the first three years is pre-primary, the next six years are primary education, the next four years are lower secondary education, the next three years are upper secondary education, and the final four years are tertiary education. Official school age for preschool is 3-5, primary 6-11, lower secondary 12-15, upper secondary 16-18 and tertiary 19-25. The sector falls under three ministries: (i) Ministry of Primary, Secondary, Technical and Literacy Education (MEPSTA), (ii) Ministry of Higher Education and Scientific Research (MESRS), and (iii) Ministry of Vocational Education and Qualifying Training (MEPFQ).

7. The education sector has been significantly impacted by the crisis, particularly with the state’s weak capacity to respond to the population’s urgent needs¹. It is estimated that only 5 percent of civil servants remained in their posting outside of Bangui during the crisis, because of insecurity and the breakdown of the civil service payroll system. Challenges faced by the sector are daunting as most of the unpaid teachers left their posts; school facilities were looted or destroyed; and thousands of children lost several years of schooling. Teacher recruitment and training were disrupted, further constraining the deployment of qualified teachers. The formal school system effectively ceased to function for two full academic years. The

¹ Central African Republic: National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan 2017–21



crisis increased both gender inequality regarding access to education and the vulnerability of girls to exploitation and abuse. Key issues affecting the education sector relate to (i) access and equity, (ii) learning outcomes and (iii) government capacity.

Access and Equity

8. Key Millennium Development Goals (MDG), Sustainable Development Goals (SDG) and access indicators remain low particularly at post-primary levels of education, and the 2012 crisis adversely affected the progress achieved post 2003. At the primary level, access is low even though it is relatively better than the other levels of education. At the national level, the gross enrollment rate (GER) stands at 92 percent at the primary level, whereas the lower secondary GER stands only at 18 percent and 7 percent at the upper secondary level. Prior to the beginning of the 2012 crisis, enrollment rates in preschool and lower secondary level were extremely low and they have stagnated. At the preschool level, the GER stands at 2.6 percent with about 76 percent of enrollment being provided by private institutions. At the lower secondary level, the access rate is extremely lower and has worsened after the crisis, decreasing by 11 percent between 2011/12 and 2015/16. Likewise, in terms of MDGs/SDGs, though the target was set to be achieved by 2005, the primary completion rate is still less than 50 percent, and the gender parity index is currently standing at 78 percent at the primary, 67 percent at the lower secondary, and 58 percent at the upper secondary.

9. The number of out-of-school children, including children who have never attended school, aged 6-18 is massive and the conflicts have exacerbated the situation by increasing the drop-out rates. In 2016, one third of primary school age children are out-of-school of which 65 percent has never been to school. Before the crisis, the trends of out-of-school show tremendous improvement, but there has been minor improvement between 2010 and 2016. For example, the out-of-school rate for primary school age children dropped from 56.4 percent in 2000 to 32.8 percent in 2010 but only decreased to 29.2 percent in 2016. Although the out-of-school trends at the secondary level are like the primary education level, the share of children who have dropped out at the lower secondary is high and has increased rapidly. This affects particularly boys and young people living in urban areas. More than 70 percent of youth aged 15-24 in CAR have not completed primary education and many youth across the regions are inactive – not working, not enrolled in school. Being out-of-school increases the likelihood of the youth to remain functionally illiterate and lack foundational skills in literacy and numeracy to engage into productive labor market activities.

10. There are huge disparities in access to education across different socio-economic backgrounds in CAR. Inequality measurements based on the GER by level of education reveal that girls, children living rural areas and remote regions are the most disadvantaged groups although the 2012 crisis disproportionately affected children living in urban areas and wealthy households. For example, at the preschool level, although there is no gender gap in access, most preschool services are in urban areas mainly the capital city (Bangui), serving a very small group of the population. Moreover, the gap in access between children from the poorest and richest quintile is large and it increases with each level of education—for example, at the primary level the GER for the poorest quintile is 81 percent compared to 112 percent for the richest quintile; at the lower



secondary level, the GER is 7 percent for the poorest and 26 percent for the richest; and at the upper secondary level, the GER is 2 percent for the poorest and 37 percent for the richest.

11. Furthermore, while the rural-urban inequality in access is generally small because the crisis affected mostly urban areas, the gap remains particularly significant at the post-primary education level since most secondary schools are in urban areas. For example, in 2010 (prior the 2012 crisis) the GER in rural areas was 98 percent compared to 128 percent in urban areas, however, in 2016 (after the crisis), the GER in rural areas was 92 percent compared to 91 percent in urban areas. There are also regional disparities across all levels of education although these disparities are low given the crisis contributed to reducing the gap through its impact on regions with the highest numbers of cities. Overall, the impact of the crisis has reduced the GER for girls by about 17 percent versus 15 percent for boys; while the reduction in urban areas is about 30 percent against 5 percent for rural areas and the reduction in region 7 (Bangui) at primary level is 40.

Learning outcomes:

12. Key indicators reveal that learning outcomes in CAR are low. Although there is no recent assessment available except test results, the latest available standardized assessment (PASEC 2006 for grade 5) and the national exam success rates show that the quality of education in CAR is low. For example, CAR ranks the lowest, both in French and mathematics, amongst the 10 French-speaking African countries who participated in the PASEC, with scores of 23.8 out of 100 in French and 28.8 out of 100 in mathematics. Moreover, the grade 6 test results indicate that only 32 percent of students pass the exam at the national level. The success rate at grade 10 national exams is relatively better and it stands at 59 percent at the national level, which could be due to the very low transition rate to lower secondary and the extremely low access rate at the lower secondary. The success rate at the grade 13 national exams is very low and it stands at only 13 percent. Similarly, high repetition rates at all levels of education also provide partial evidence of low learning outcomes, though repetition policy is not used as a reliable tool for quality control. The repetition rate in public schools stands at 24 percent at the primary level, 31 percent at the lower secondary and 32 percent at the upper secondary level. While many factors could contribute to the low learning outcomes, key supply side factors—high class size, high Student Teacher Ratio (STR), high share of unqualified teachers—are among the key contributing factors and high repetition rate directly contributes to such indicators.

Limited sector financing and weak capacity in sector planning and budgeting

13. The government has limited capacity in resources mobilization and this undermines its ability to adequately plan and fund the sector. In 2016, the government spent about 1.3 percent of GDP on education and only 12 percent of total public spending went to education, which is below the international best practice benchmark² for SSA countries. Given its weak resources mobilization capacity, the absolute funding allocated to the education sector is insufficient. Capital spending at the primary level relies heavily on donors and the government has limited capacity to provide teachers and post primary education services. For example, public

² The benchmark stands at 20 percent of total public spending



schools rely on unqualified parent-teachers (57%) at the primary level and contract teachers (61%) in post-primary levels. Moreover, STR in public preschools is 41:1, primary schools (91:1) and secondary schools (51:1).

14. The government has a very limited capacity to provide adequate school infrastructure at all levels of education and infrastructure planning is extremely weak at the post-primary level. Although primary schools seemed to be fairly distributed across the regions³, school infrastructure in other levels of education is limited and mostly concentrated in urban areas. For example, in 2015/16, the number of preschools stands at 127 with 43 being public schools and these preschools are mostly located in Bangui. Similarly, there are 151 secondary schools, with private schools accounting for about 46 percent --13 percent and 36 percent public and private schools are in Bangui only, respectively.

15. Due to weak sector planning and management, many facilities in need of rehabilitation remain unusable, further exacerbating the challenges of services delivery. Lack of adequate capital spending and the limited education sector budget undermine the effective utilization of facilities – many schools need rehabilitation across the country and the government has no or limited budget for maintenance cost built in the budget process. The existing classrooms are overcrowded and often are used both for double shift and multi-grade. For example, at the primary level, the current deficit of adequate seats amounts to 196,781 which is equivalent to 3,280 additional classrooms; the average class size in public primary schools is 76 but, the average class size in early grades is even higher (118 in grade 1). Like the primary education level, the supply of classrooms and adequate seats at the secondary level tends to be weak, however, this sub-sector faces a significant sanitary infrastructure deficit. For example, 26 percent of secondary schools have no functioning latrines and only 42 percent have no separate sanitary blocks for girls and boys. Overall about 42 percent of classrooms in preschool, 34 percent in primary schools and 63 percent in secondary schools are in bad condition.

16. In addition to the enormous resource limitations of the government, unstandardized repetition policy and lack or limited remedial policy also weaken the government's ability to fund and manage the sector. Internal inefficiency associated with high repetition rates at all levels of education is one of the key factors contributing to the supply side issues facing the sector, further deteriorating the quality of education in CAR. Repetition by grade tends to be decided at the school or by the respective teachers and its role for quality control is minimal. About a fourth of students repeat each year which contribute to overcrowded classrooms. This adversely affects the quality of education and contributes to waste of limited resources.

³ the total number of primary schools in 2015/16 was 2,323 with private schools accounting for about 17 percent, ranging from 5 percent at the Central IA to 52 percent at the IA of Bangui



Relationship to CPF

17. The last Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for CAR was for the period 2009-2012. Human resources building was identified as the fourth pillar to improve the delivery of social services and develop a comprehensive approach to social protection and risk management. This included equitable access to quality education services. The proposed project is in line with the FY17 Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) and supports the implementation of the 2016 National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan.

18. The FY17 Systematic Country Diagnostic for CAR is currently being finalized. The focus of the SCD centers around understanding demographics and fragility to reduce poverty and boost sustainable growth. It identified three pillars: (i) security (creating an environment where development can happen), (ii) economic growth and job creation, and (iii) addressing grievances which include strengthening human capital, public services delivery, decentralization and justice as grievances are rooted in inequities in service delivery. The proposed project will contribute to these objectives in several ways to renew and improve the confidence in government and institutions through key activities – infrastructure, teachers, second chance opportunities and capacity building.

19. The National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan was endorsed by the government in 2016 and it is articulated around 3 priority pillars, 11 objectives and 6 cross-cutting themes. The second pillar focuses on the renewal of social contract between the state and the population by providing basic services to the population across the country, in the areas of education, health, and water. Furthermore, from the 6 cross-cutting themes identified to address fragility, conflict, and violence across each pillar, the proposed project is either directly or indirectly aligned to four of the cross-cutting themes: (i) reducing regional imbalances, (ii) promoting gender equality; (iii) developing national capacities, and (iv) promoting youth inclusion.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Improving access to basic education and strengthening capacity in education service delivery in CAR

Key Results (From PCN)

The key results are measured by the following PDO indicators:

Indicator 1: Increase primary completion rate by gender

Indicator 2: Increase gross enrollment ratio at lower secondary by gender

Indicator 3: Number of students successfully completing alternative education

Indicator 4: Increase the share of qualified teachers



D. Concept Description

The project aims to cover four key activities:

20. Activity 1: Support an enabling environment for teaching and learning in basic education through rehabilitation of damaged classrooms and expansion of classrooms in existing schools as well as the provision of equipment. The construction and rehabilitation of classrooms will encompass classroom infrastructure (equipment and furniture), latrines, water supply, and wells to attract and retain girls. Equipment will consist primarily of desks for teachers and school directors, tables and chairs for students as well as small sports/board game items (soccer balls, jumping cords, dominoes, chess, monopoly, etc.) as a mean to develop social cohesion. A community participation approach will be explored to strengthen ownership at the local level for resilience and sustainability. It also includes supporting development strategies and approaches to strengthen community involvement in playing a more effective role in supporting the delivery of education services including identification of school sites for rehabilitation, safeguard school assets, monitor teachers' presence and teaching in the classrooms, selection of parent-teachers based on criteria, school operating expenses. The geographical targeting of the school infrastructure will be based on criteria that emphasize inclusiveness and the urgency to contribute to the social commitment objective of the National Recovery and Peacebuilding Plan. The team will explore use of geospatial technology (unmanned aircraft systems) to help the identification and supervision process.

21. Activity 2: Enhance teaching effectiveness. Given STR is extremely high and a large share of teachers are unqualified of which most are either parent-teachers or contract teachers, this activity will address the issues of teachers and teaching environment in a holistic approach under four key sub-activities:

- (i) Support in-service training. The activity will aim to strengthen the effectiveness of the present system by introducing practical/directive approaches to training of teachers of low capacity. It also plans to roll out a monitoring and evaluation system to assess the effectiveness of the training and its impact on teaching in the classroom. Support to the teacher training centers ("Centres pédagogiques régionaux") will also be envisaged.
- (ii) Standardization of the use of parent-teachers. The activity aims to develop policies on parent-teachers by setting minimum standard criteria on recruitment, qualification, training and integration to the public wage bill process.
- (iii) Strengthen pedagogical support to teachers which is critical for teaching effectiveness and supplements the training received. A new model of pedagogical support will be developed for school directors. Training program for strengthened leadership capacity, revised job description and criteria to select school directors will be envisaged. This sub-activity aims to provide pedagogical support of teachers by school directors for an effective implementation of policies and coordination with the local community to improve learning at the school level.



- (iv) Support deployment/posting of trained teachers focusing on areas where infrastructure activities result in high student population and additional teachers are required. Given the government has limited capacity to deploy trained teachers, this sub-activity aims to support posting of teachers in the areas where the additional classroom provision under activity #1 requires additional teachers. Additional teachers need to be hired by the government, paid through its civil servant payroll system, and the project will reimburse salaries during the life span of the project

22. Activity #3: Support alternative education. The activity aims to provide both accelerated learning and remedial education programs.

- (i) The Accelerated Learning Program (ALP) would be designed for out-of-school and over-age children excluded from education or those who have had their education interrupted due to crisis and conflict. At the primary level, the ALP targets children of age 12-15 for a 3-year program equivalent of primary education while at the lower secondary level it aims to offer a 2-year schooling program equivalent of lower secondary education for youth aged 16-18. This sub-activity will include developing a policy, new curricula, instructional materials, and teacher's manuals tailored to the ALP, and training of teachers to deliver the program, printing and distribution of textbooks and instructional materials for program participants.
- (ii) The remedial education program would be tailored for in-school children to reduce repetition and dropout rates thereby increasing retention and completion of appropriate levels of education. It targets currently enrolled both at the primary and lower secondary education level who are at risk of dropping out or are subjected to repetition. This program will be offered either during regular school sessions or summer sessions, once students subjected to the incidence of repetition or dropout have been identified. For example, students who have low test scores during the first semester will be placed on additional support schemes during the second semester, and those who failed the final exam at the end of the school year will be considered for summer classes. This sub-activity also includes supporting teachers who will provide such remedial services, and technical support to the government to improve the effectiveness of remedial policy in the education system.

23. Activity 4: Capacity building to strengthen service delivery. To strengthen the overall service delivery system, this activity aims to support the following main areas of attention:

- (i) Supporting capacity building at the MEPSTA level to carry out sector planning, budgeting, monitoring and evaluation (M&E) to ensure efficient and effective service delivery.
- (ii) Strengthening sector knowledge including supporting the process of EMIS for a timely and quality production of annual school statistics, as well as the production of report cards to increase the communication awareness of communities to encourage stronger social accountability.



- (iii) Building resilience in the education system through better community empowerment at the school level to build and promote mutual support and social cohesion – strategies to respond to emergencies and minimize the effect of any conflict on the communities’ wellbeing.

SAFEGUARDS

A. Project location and salient physical characteristics relevant to the safeguard analysis (if known)

The project location will be identified during the project preparation stage.

B. Borrower’s Institutional Capacity for Safeguard Policies

Due to the conflict, a number of Bank operations have been operational under emergency procedures, therefore, it is estimated that the Client’s knowledge of the Bank’s safeguards policies is rather limited. The government's institutional capacity on safeguard related indicators will be assessed during the project preparation stage.

C. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Lucienne M. M'Baipor, Social Safeguards Specialist
Grace Muhimpundu, Social Safeguards Specialist
Albert Francis Atangana Ze, Environmental Safeguards Specialist

D. Policies that might apply

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	The project is rated EA category B. The project triggers OP4.01 Environmental Assessment due to activities to be financed under components 1: rehabilitation of damaged classrooms and expansion of classrooms in existing schools as well as the provision of equipment. In addition, the construction and rehabilitation of classrooms will encompass classroom infrastructure (equipment and furniture), latrines, water supply, and wells to attract and retain girls. At this point, the exact location of the infrastructure (classrooms/schools) to be selected is still to be determined. An Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) will be prepared and will provide guidance for preparation and implementation of the environmental and social screening process and the preparation of the specific Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs)



		for sub-projects. The ESMF will be consulted upon, and disclosed in the country and in the World Bank’s External website prior to appraisal.
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	No	This proposed project will not have potential impact on natural habitats.
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	This proposed project will not affect forest nor will it involve reforestation.
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	This project does not involve Pest Management.
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	Yes	This policy is triggered as the proposed works might involve excavation, which may result in chance finds of physical cultural resources. Thus, this policy will be addressed in the Environmental and Social Assessment, and “chance finds” procedures should be part of every civil works contract, even where risks are deemed low.
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	TBD	Currently, the locations of interventions have not yet been identified. However, seeing as the project is being implemented on a national scale (with the deployment of teachers in various underserved localities), there is a high probability that the project would intervene in areas with indigenous peoples (Mbororo and Aka). Should the project intervene in areas with the IP groups, the project will prepared an Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) or an Indigenous Peoples Policy Framework (IPPF), depending on the level of identification of activities prior to appraisal. The instruments ensure that the IPs are consulted and can reap benefits from the project activities in a culturally appropriate manner. The instrument will be published in country and on the Bank’s external website prior to approval.
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	TBD	It is yet to be determined if the project will trigger the involuntary resettlement. Currently, the project plans on rehabilitating damaged classrooms. The activity that could potentially trigger OP 4.12 is the expansion activity for classrooms, as well as additional classroom infrastructure that may go beyond currently existing structures. The team will assess the construction plans and discuss with the Client during preparation mission. Should the project trigger the policy, a resettlement action plan (RAP) will be prepared should the schools that will benefit from the construction be already identified. If these are not yet known, the project will prepare a resettlement policy framework (RPF) to provide the guidelines for the resettlement activities.



		The instruments will be published in-country and on the World Bank’s external website prior to appraisal.
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	This proposed project will not involve nor will it affect Dams
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	This project does not involve international waterways
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	This proposed project does not involve Disputed Areas.

E. Safeguard Preparation Plan

Tentative target date for preparing the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

Apr 06, 2018

Time frame for launching and completing the safeguard-related studies that may be needed. The specific studies and their timing should be specified in the Appraisal Stage PID/ISDS

The ESMF, IPPF/IPP (if necessary), and RPF/RAP (if necessary) and ESMF studies will be scheduled to be completed by May 15, 2018.

CONTACT POINT

World Bank

Dung-Kim Pham, Kebede Feda
Senior Operations Officer

Borrower/Client/Recipient

Central African Republic

Implementing Agencies

Ministry of Primary, Secondary, Technical and Literacy Education (MEPSTA)
MADA Ernest
Directeur du Cabinet
mada_ernest@yahoo.fr



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>

APPROVAL

Task Team Leader(s):	Dung-Kim Pham, Kebede Fedu
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Approved By

Safeguards Advisor:	Maman-Sani Issa	04-Apr-2018
Practice Manager/Manager:	Meskerem Mulatu	04-Apr-2018
Country Director:	Robert Bou Jaoude	21-Apr-2018