



Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 28-Jan-2022 | Report No: PIDA31814



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country Western Africa	Project ID P175043	Project Name Gulf of Guinea Northern Regions Social Cohesion project	Parent Project ID (if any)
Region AFRICA WEST	Estimated Appraisal Date 29-Nov-2021	Estimated Board Date 15-Mar-2022	Practice Area (Lead) Social Sustainability and Inclusion
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Prime Minister's Office, Ministry of Finance, Ministry of Economy and Finance, Ministry of Economy and Finance	Implementing Agency Prime Minister's Office, Cashew and Cotton Council, National Community Development Support Agency (ANADEB), Technical Secretariat for Coordination of the Social Cohesion Project (SETCO)	

Proposed Development Objective(s)

to improve regional collaboration and the socioeconomic and climate resilience of border-zone communities in the target northern regions of the Gulf of Guinea countries exposed to conflict and climate risks.

Components

1. Investing in Community Resiliency and Inclusion
2. Building foundation and capacity for inclusive and resilient communities
3. Regional Coordination Platform and Dialogue
4. Project Management
5. : Contingent Emergency Response Component

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)

SUMMARY

Total Project Cost	450.00
Total Financing	450.00
of which IBRD/IDA	450.00



Financing Gap	0.00
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DETAILS

World Bank Group Financing

International Development Association (IDA)	450.00
IDA Credit	375.00
IDA Grant	75.00

Environmental and Social Risk Classification

Substantial

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. **The Gulf of Guinea region¹—Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, and Togo—is witnessing a dramatic reversal in poverty eradication gains due to the coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) crisis.** These countries earlier enjoyed impressive annual economic growth averaging over 5 percent in real gross domestic product (GDP) in 2018. However, this figure has fallen to an average of 1.4 percent in the last two years, with the region battling ongoing COVID-19 episodes, combined with limited access to vaccines.² The pandemic is likely to have continued devastating ramifications on the extreme poor living on less than US\$1.90 per day, who form a significant percentage of the region’s 76 million³ population and are disproportionately concentrated in the lagging northern areas.

2. **Poverty renders the lagging northern areas of the Gulf of Guinea especially vulnerable to external fragility factors—chiefly, the spillover of fragility, conflict and violence (FCV) risks from the Sahel.** At the immediate north of the target subregion, Sahel is one of the world’s most fragile and risk-

¹ The Gulf of Guinea region is located within the West and Central African coastlines and the surrounding territorial waters of the Atlantic Ocean. In the context of this project, it refers to Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, Ghana, and Togo.

² IMF (International Monetary Fund). 2021. *Regional Economic Outlook: Sub-Saharan Africa*. Real GDP (annual percentage change) in 2018 for Benin is 6.7 percent, Côte d’Ivoire is 6.9 percent, Ghana is 6.9 percent, and Togo is 5.0 percent. Real GDP in 2020 for Benin is 3.8 percent, Côte d’Ivoire is 2.0 percent, Ghana is 0.4 percent, and Togo is 1.8 percent.

³ Per World Development Indicators (WDI), population (in million) in 2019 for Benin is 11.8, Côte d’Ivoire is 25.72, Ghana is 30.42, and Togo is 8.8.



prone subregions. Unrelenting and surging violence by armed insurgent groups and criminal gangs in these countries in Sahel have resulted in a record-breaking 2.5 million internally displaced people (IDP) in 2021,⁴ quadrupling in just two years. The past five years have also been the most violent on record, with over 12,000 conflict events and 50,000 fatalities through June 2019.⁵ Halfway through 2020, the number of reported fatalities due to violent attacks in Burkina Faso, Mali, and Niger had either neared or surpassed the full total for each country in 2019.⁶ The boundaries between violent extremism, rebellions, inter-communal conflict, banditry, and self-defense groups are also increasingly blurred, with armed groups presenting themselves as an alternative to the State perceived to be absent, lacking legitimacy and discriminatory; or by offering their protection to vulnerable groups engaged in a self-defense dynamic⁷.

3. The ability of violent extremist groups to exploit inter-community tensions and structural fragilities to expand their operations is posing an increasing security challenge for the bordering Gulf of Guinea countries that face serious threat of southward transmission of the rapidly escalating Sahel conflict.⁸ The Gulf of Guinea region is highly vulnerable as it shares certain FCV dynamics such as the crisis of confidence in state institutions and the justice system,⁹ and security challenges, including poor civil-military relations, corruption, a lack of means and equipment, and poor border control. More than poverty and underdevelopment, exclusion or the perception of exclusion¹⁰ of territories or groups in the northern Gulf of Guinea region have crystallized into frustrations and ethno-religious tensions. It also provides armed groups with fertile ground for the dissemination of incitements to liberation through violence by offering the marginalized the means to protect themselves, to contest or change the status quo.¹¹ Moreover, the four Gulf of Guinea countries share communities with cross-border ethnolinguistic, religious, and family ties with neighboring Sahel countries. Thus, border porosity coupled with intense migratory flows of people, as well as shared economies, history, politics, and more importantly, frustrations, further accelerate the spread of extremism influence and violence, particularly at the peripheries of the turbulent Sahel countries. Extremist groups operating in the Sahel have also repeatedly promised to expand their operations and attacks into the Gulf of Guinea.¹²

4. Climate change poses another regional threat multiplier to the target northern areas by compounding fragilities and conflict dynamics, particularly relating to access to natural resources and migration.¹³ The targeted northern areas of the Gulf of Guinea region are anticipated to see significant increase in maximum temperature and more extreme changes in precipitation. These areas are already particularly vulnerable to the impacts of climate-related shocks, including drought and floods, given the high share of the population dependent on rain-fed agriculture, and high poverty levels that limit their capacity to cope in the present and adapt and build resilience to changing conditions over time. The

⁴ <https://r4sahel.info/en/situations/sahelcrisis> (accessed October 2021).

⁵ OECD (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development). 2020. *Geography of Conflict in North and West Africa*.

⁶ CSIS 2020.

⁷ World Bank. 2020. *Regional Risk and Resilience Assessment for the Sahel*.

⁸ Afrobarometer. 2021. *Violent Extremism in Africa Citizen Perspectives from the Sahel Epicenter and Periphery*.

⁹ According to Afrobarometer (2021), when asked how much they trust courts of law, Togolese were least trusting; only 36 percent said they trust them “somewhat” or “a lot,” while roughly half of the citizens in Côte d’Ivoire (51 percent), Benin (52 percent), and Ghana (57 percent) concurred.

¹⁰ United Nations, and World Bank. 2018. *Pathways for Peace: Inclusive Approaches to Preventing Violent Conflict*.

¹¹ World Bank. 2020. *Regional Risk and Resilience Assessment for the Sahel*.

¹² Crisis Group 2019.

¹³ “Clement, Viviane, Kanta Kumari Rigaud, Alex de Sherbinin, Bryan Jones, Susana Adamo, Jacob Schewe, Nian Sadiq, and Elham Shabahat. 2021. *Groundswell Part 2: Acting on Internal Climate Migration*. World Bank: Washington, DC.



impacts of climate change—expected to increase—coupled with high demographic growth disrupt Sahelian production systems and continually amplify the pressure on natural resources, also causing the need to change the transhumance routes with migrations from the Sahel countries to the north of Benin, Ghana, and Togo, further exacerbating local tensions. Climate change, risks and impacts interact with and compound the effects of non-climate related shocks like conflict, and affect habitability and socioeconomic circumstances in ways that may force people to migrate in distress, while simultaneously reducing their capacity to cope, adapt, and rebound.¹⁴ These impacts of climate change also disproportionately affect marginalized groups such as minorities, youth, persons with disabilities, nomadic peoples, and particularly women. Thus, needs are surging across the Gulf of Guinea where multiple crises converge, including external pressures of COVID-19 virus, conflict, and climate change, compounded and reinforced by longstanding structural fragility factors.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

5. **These overlapping external challenges further worsen the shared structural fragility factors in the lagging northern areas of the Gulf of Guinea—that demonstrate stark spatial disparities compared to the leading south.** The south which enjoys access to the sea and trade via ports is more developed and densely populated than the landlocked north. The drier and drought-prone Northern region has less favorable agricultural conditions, despite having a larger share of the population working in agriculture. These contribute to the stark north-south bifurcation of poverty—both consistent across and substantial within each of the four countries. In addition to the poverty rate, the size of households is generally highest in the northern regions of the countries. Similarly, regional disparities are also observed in access to education, with the northern regions having the lowest rate of attendance. Overall, the multi-dimensional poverty index (MPI)¹⁵ exhibits higher scores moving northward.

6. **Feelings of injustice and marginalization in the north are reinforced by the climate vulnerability context and the deeply unequal and chronic under-investment in basic services (including water and sanitation)—in combination with weaker state presence and institutional capacity, as well as lack of citizen voice.** These lagging northern areas have been historically neglected, particularly due to their territorial isolation and lower population density. Relative lack of connectivity infrastructure in a context of high vulnerability to climate-related shocks and stressors can exacerbate food insecurity. Communities in the rural northern areas also share a common lack of voice and insufficient representation in decision-making processes, generating a sense of exclusion. This negative perception about the regional disparity may undermine state legitimacy in northern communities and thus its ability to mitigate locally based triggers of conflict.

7. **The north also has markedly lower agglomeration economies, and market access, which are instead clustered in the south around administrative and economic capitals and the coast.** Although the project's target northern areas feature limited market connectivity, there are existing border market networks that often serve as hubs of formal and informal economic activity for the cross-border circulation of goods and people. By improving rural connectivity between regional markets (e.g. through

¹⁴ Clement, V., et al. 2021. *Groundswell Part 2: Acting on Internal Climate Migration*. World Bank: Washington, DC.

¹⁵ Oxford Poverty and Human Development Initiative. <https://ophi.org.uk/multidimensional-poverty-index/>. The MPI represents a standardized approach of looking at relevant poverty dimensions such as health, education, and living standards, amongst others.



roads), and increasing cross-border trade coordination among governments, this can stimulate more vibrant local economic activities and enable smaller agricultural producers to access larger marketplace.

8. **This operation will first support “thinking regionally” by facilitating a Regional Collaboration Platform (RCP) which will support the building of shared vision, coordinated regional approach, and common policies across the four states and facilitate cross-border flows of information and policy dialogue on climate change and FCV risks.** It will also build on global experience and analytical framing on lagging regions, geography of economy, FCV, and social dimensions of development and climate change.¹⁶ The RCP serves as a platform for sharing of knowledge and experience across the four countries in tackling fragility and drivers of climate change vulnerability, as well as the improvement of national institutional capacities for regional dialogue and cooperation, so as to inform integrated, consistent, and locally driven approaches to prevent FCV spillover effects.

9. **Strengthening local institutions and enhancing the voice of marginalized groups will also help build resilience amongst the burgeoning youth population against the risks of falling into illegal activities and false promises of extremists.**¹⁷ The project also supports the civil and political inclusion of youth which is critical to channel their energy and aspirations, and create space for their expression and to transform potential frustrations into constructive local actions. The gender dimension will also be integrated into the project design to ensure the project benefits vulnerable women to promote their livelihoods and economic opportunities in a safe, respectful and climate resilient manner.

Table 1: People Centered Regional Response to Fragility, Conflict and Violence drivers

People Centered Regional Response to Fragility, Conflict and Violence drivers “Think Regionally and Act Locally”	
People Centered Regional Investments	Across national borders, regional Community Centered Platforms provide a consistent approach of bottom-up, inclusive and participatory mechanisms that facilitate effective partnerships between institutions and communities for front line services delivery and local development. This harmonized approach also offers the flexibility to engage communities where they are, and develop customized solutions and maximize regional impact to common challenges, adapted to the community’s specific needs and local contexts. Uncoordinated country investments in porous border areas can lead to out-migration and expose communities to FCV risks and are less likely to have an impact on regional prevention.
Integrated Territorial Development In Lagging Regions	To counter low agglomeration economies in northern lagging communities, those regional platforms support integrated territorial regional responses for local development and resilience. It does so by leveraging economies of scale through a cluster-based approach linking investments to border area markets, creating the foundations to support local livelihoods through integrated infrastructure and enabling vital local trade to continue and grow. Investments in cross-border small-scale trade have proven to be factors that support resilience to shocks and stressors, including but not limited to those related to climate risks.

¹⁶World Development Report 2009 (Geography of Economy); 2011 (FCV), “Rethinking lagging regions” report; Africa regional report on Inclusion Matters; and “Lagging Regions, Violent Land” note all provide a very insightful framing of issues that apply to the projects’ target lagging regions, as well as opportunities for economic activities in some of the secondary towns and cross-border areas, which are all reflected in the project’s design and components.

¹⁷ UNFPA (United Nations Population Fund). 2018. *Adolescents and Youth Report: West and Central Africa*.



Social Cohesion & Prevention across Borders Areas	The participatory design processes underpinning the identification of local investments seeks to promote social inclusion, create local ownership, strengthen local institutions, and foster trust and accountability, making it a key feature of the regional approach. Target border-zone communities across countries, creating a common development buffer to FCV risks and preventing “public bads” from undermining national development gain. In the absence of a regional operation, countries may opt to spread investments across a wider geographic area, lacking the incentive to concentrate investments near borders if unreciprocated by neighbors.
Joint knowledge and Learning Agenda for Regional Strategic Coordination	Support to regional knowledge exchange platforms to access to timely and quality data and targeted analytics at the national and regional level; and inform – through regional development diplomacy – long-term strategies and priorities, including design of multi-year investments to combat FCV drivers sustainably in lagging regions. Greater strategic regional actions and cooperation can help the countries enhance long-term response to certain fragility drivers, shifting the focus from addressing symptoms to deeply rooted FCV drivers.
Some examples of such an approach include the World Bank’s Lake Chad Region Recovery and Development Project (PROLAC) and the Community-Based Recovery and Stabilization Project for the Sahel . These projects operationalize a “ think regionally and act locally ” approach. That is, regionally harmonized investments are then locally adapted to reflect country’s existing institutional arrangements and local dynamics.	

10. **The project will build on the WB’s portfolio in the Gulf of Guinea by leveraging sector programs and local delivery systems to promote a more integrated regional response to FCV and climate risks.** WB-financed operations in the region cover several sectors, including supporting access to basic services, agriculture, livelihoods, digital, and youth, among others. National programs have also supported effective bottom-up approaches to development, either by strengthening community-driven development (CDD) systems, reinforcing local government (LG) capacity, or supporting citizen engagement (CE) in the context of sector programs. This regional project advances the work in four concrete ways. First, it introduces a regional lens to local investment by harmonizing approaches for community development to maximize cross-border impacts, including by providing a structured process and space for regional dialogue and lessons sharing. Second, it concentrates investments around vulnerable village¹⁸ clusters, supporting multiple rounds of investment with a territorially coordinated approach to strengthen social cohesion as well as inclusive and climate resilient local development planning. Third, it expands the geographic coverage in northern lagging regions, focusing on border area for positive regional spillovers. Lastly, the project will continue to leverage and build on existing programs for greater sustainability and impact on beneficiaries in the selected regions.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Development Objective(s) (From PAD)

11. To improve regional collaboration and the socioeconomic and climate resilience of border-zone communities in the target northern regions of the Gulf of Guinea countries exposed to conflict and climate risks.

Key Results

12. The following PDO-level indicators will measure progress toward achievement of the PDO:

¹⁸ In the context of Ghana, “community” will replace the use of the term “village” throughout the document. Thus, investments will be coordinated in community clusters in Ghana’s context.



- People having access to project-built or rehabilitated socioeconomic and climate resilient infrastructure and services (disaggregated by sex and youth) (Number)
- Beneficiaries surveyed reporting project investments reflected their needs (disaggregated by sex and youth) (Percentage)
- Number of new job opportunities created as a result of project activities (disaggregated by sex and youth) (Number)
- Beneficiaries reporting that project investments have positively contributed to increased trust among community members (Percentage)
- Percentage of actions implemented by each country of the agreed annual joint regional action plan (Percentage)

D. Project Description

13. **The Gulf of Guinea’s complex multisectoral FCV and climate- related challenges and a vision to prevent the further spread of such FCV and climate risks call for an integrated and holistic regional response.** Accordingly, the project offers interventions based on three principles: (a) regional threats require regional responses; (b) investments should be coordinated regionally, and implemented locally, following a CDD and climate resilient approach adapted to each country context; and (c) investment targeting should be informed by solid vulnerability assessments and focused on strengthening social cohesion and resilience to climate-related shocks and stressors.

14. **Targeted investments: The project’s targeting strategy is anchored around a combination of vulnerability assessments, community-based mechanisms, and tailored interventions to strengthen social cohesion and climate resilience.** At the country level, the team conducted a rigorous vulnerability review of FCV and climate risks based on different administrative levels of the country system (see Annex 6 for more details). Results of the review were combined with other important criteria such as communities bordering Sahel and neighboring countries, available budget envelop and coverage capacity to ensure development impact, and implementation feasibility to avoid a delay in demonstrating impact to beneficiaries. These reviews will be updated through the RCP activities to regularly inform the design of the project activities. Zooming in at the community level of those identified vulnerable zones, the project will have various mechanisms to ensure that the most vulnerable members of the given zone benefit from the project, by combining village profiles where available, safety-net and other government-possessed vulnerable population’s data, and community inputs for validation of such members. In addition, specific interventions to promote social cohesion and climate resilience will be supported to further strengthen intra-/inter-community relations as well as the citizen-state relations.

15. **The project seeks to reinforce social cohesion within and between targeted communities, and to strengthen the linkages between these communities and local state institutions, thereby mitigating FCV and climate risks.** Social Cohesion includes both “horizontal” and “vertical” relationships: connecting individuals within a given community (*bonding*), connecting individuals across distinct communities (*bridging*), and connecting citizens to people or structures in a position of power (*linking*). At each stage—including diagnostic, design, implementation, and evaluation, and accompanying capacity building activities—all three dimensions will be considered.

16. **Based on the above principles and framework, the project is structured around four**



components designed to build on and enhance existing national portfolios related to CDD, agriculture, youth inclusion, and digital development. Considerations for regional impact and contribution are ensured across all the four components.

Component 1: Investing in Community Resiliency and Inclusion (US\$337.5 million, 75 percent of the total amount)

17. **This component will finance local-level investments to promote community resilience and inclusion in border areas, based on a territorial medium-term vision that is shared across the countries.** Those local-level investments will be identified and implemented with communities, LGs, and targeted groups, who will have been trained under Component 2. Local investments will follow an integrated planning and implementation approach that should be aligned with medium-term territorial development vision of the target areas. By adapting a community-driven approach, complemented by key data and relevant studies, and informed by climate science, which take into account cross-border opportunities and challenges, the component aims to support people in the target lagging regions to fully participate in their local development activities and to create inclusive and resilient communities with enhanced access to economic opportunities. Inclusion of women, youth, persons with disabilities, and other marginalized groups will be ensured through their representation (with a built-in design explained under each subcomponent) in decision making at the community committees and overall planning and implementation processes. The project will also promote activities to enhance information sharing among isolated communities and border zones across the Gulf of Guinea subregion. There are three subcomponents: 1.1) Community investments for strengthening local resilience and inclusion, 1.2) Strategic economic activity investments for local economic development, and 1.3) Youth engagement and social cohesion activities.

18. **Component 1 promotes an integrated approach to local development through complementary investments centered around the most vulnerable identified village clusters.** These clusters consist of groups of 8 to 12 neighboring villages per country, following existing administrative boundaries and/or shared economic territory, and with an average population of about 8,500 people.¹⁹ Concentrating investments at the cluster level is intended to maximize the project's impacts and promote a cross-border approach for investments. To improve access to services for climate vulnerable populations and enhance their resilience to shocks and stresses and their capacity to adapt to changing climatic conditions over time, project investments will target clusters of villages identified based on their vulnerability to climate and conflict risks. Within each cluster, communities will identify and prioritize their most pressing socioeconomic infrastructure needs (Subcomponent 1), economic opportunities linked to local markets (Subcomponent 2), and youth socio-cultural priorities and aspirations (Subcomponent 3). This process will include a participatory climate risk assessment bringing climate science together with communities' traditional knowledge, practices, and perceptions of climatic changes and impacts to help ensure that investment priorities are both climate resilient and support climate adaptation, resilience, and risk mitigation objectives. At the village level, communities are expected to benefit from multiple cycles of

¹⁹ Clusters for Togo, Benin, and Ghana will be based on Cantons, Arrondissements, and Areas. For Côte d'Ivoire, where there is no administrative division between villages and LGs, it will consist of groups of neighboring villages measured by their distance to border areas.



investments from the different subcomponents, providing the foundations for inclusive community-driven processes to strengthen local **bonding**. These priorities will in turn be reviewed, screened for climate risks, discussed, and endorsed at the cluster level, promoting **bridging** through dialogue and joint planning between different community groups. In addition, strategic market-based investments around the cluster's center will be identified to serve as a pull factor for smaller neighboring communities to benefit from positive economic spillovers and local trade. Lastly, plans will be approved and integrated into local development plans (LDPs), **linking** community activities to identified LG structures and building the capacity of LGs to support local planning, frontline service delivery, and foster social cohesion. Collectively the approach aims to strengthen social cohesion and a community's resilience to FCV and climate risks. Allocations are calculated at the cluster level to promote equity across and within village clusters, optimize project resources, and ensure efficiency gains in local mobilization efforts by targeting resources to the most vulnerable areas.

19. **This subcomponent will finance community-level public infrastructure in vulnerable village clusters at or near border areas with the aim of preventing regional FCV risks and promoting positive spillovers.** The primary objective is to increase access to local-level, climate-resilient, socioeconomic infrastructure that responds to communities' most pressing needs. The approach is therefore predicated on a CDD model, in which target communities will be involved in the selection, prioritization, and planning of subprojects. Investments will be managed by the village, LG, or PIU, with support from community facilitators to strengthen the social contract in areas where communities have seldom felt the presence of the state.

20. **The subcomponent will invest in the improvement, rehabilitation, upgrading, and/or equipment of small community infrastructure.** Communities can choose from an open menu of investments, providing the flexibility to address communities' priority needs. Water-related subprojects will only be eligible for financing when these are for improvement or rehabilitation of existing schemes. Investments in new schemes that use or risk polluting water of international waterways will not be eligible. A negative list will demarcate the boundaries of communities' options. In addition to physical infrastructure, subprojects can include accompanying equipment support to ensure the operability and quality of local service, such as chalkboards, desks, and chairs for local schools, health equipment and supplies for community health dispensaries, and other similar items. To ensure sustainability, only those subprojects that can have their operating costs covered and can be maintained and staffed will be financed. Maintenance mechanisms will also incorporate resilience measures and climate-smart design (for example, climate proofing, use of energy and resource efficiency measures, such as installation of solar panels and LED lights, and use of rainwater harvesting techniques). Community subprojects will be designed to enhance inclusion of women, youth, displaced persons, and people with disabilities in local development activities. In addition, investments will be prioritized and screened based on their contributions to build resilience, climate change adaptation and/or mitigation, including reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions; and improved natural resource management to ensure climate-smart investments. Eligible community subprojects include:

- (a) **Connectivity:** Upgrading, rehabilitation, and/or expansion of all-weather rural roads (with measures such as drainage, erosion control, and embankment stabilization to promote climate resilience); cleaning, construction, or repair of culverts and other structures; cross-border infrastructure (small lights, electricity, bridge, and so on) which can help mitigate security risks. Activities will be screened to focus on climate-



smart connectivity investments, such as road repairs with water retention for ponds or reforestation, and trees buffer on roadsides.

- (b) **Wash, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH):** Climate-resilient water and sanitation structures, including water reservoirs and water sources, supply pipes, ponds, community water supply system, pump houses and deep tube wells, drainage lines, waste disposal and composting plants, and simple hygiene and sanitation systems (for example, latrines).
- (c) **Natural resource management and climate adaptation:** Small irrigation canals, soil and water conservation measures, watershed management, flood control structures, emergency shelters, livestock mobility corridors, wells and boreholes, vaccination pens, community pond, tree nurseries, afforestation, soil preservation to improve soil fertility, restoration works, and regeneration of pasture lands to improve forage availability and carbon stocks.
- (d) **Energy and ICT:** Energy-efficient off-grid electrification (including solar power); information and communication technology (ICT)-based installations at the community; community-run radio, and communication systems.
- (e) **Social:** Rehabilitation or extension of pre-schools, primary schools, secondary schools, literacy centers, and social centers, including accompanying furniture and equipment; rehabilitation or expansion of basic health care centers or other common health services (for example, community health posts, community pharmacies, etc.), including initial stock of drugs for the clinics; as well as gender-specific investments, such as child-care facilities, to support women's economic activities, including promoting of cross-border trade. Climate proofing of the infrastructure/facilities will be supported.

21. **Resources will be allocated across four annual investment cycles at the cluster level, in alignment with existing country systems and LDPs.** The average estimated cost for community investment will be the equivalent of US\$50,000.²⁰ The estimated costs are based on a review of comparable projects and unit cost of expected subprojects per country. Investment allocations will vary depending on the population of a given community and will be specified in the project's operation manuals. In total, the subcomponent is expected to finance about 4,613 subprojects across all four countries.²¹ The total number of subprojects, designed to cover villages within identified clusters, reflects the project's targeted prevention focus and government geographic coverage priorities. It responds to the perceived risk of violent and extremist groups seeking to gain an operational foothold in marginalized communities by providing basic services in exchange for loyalty and or recruitments. By making communities the subject of their own development, strengthening links with the LG, and financing inclusive investments responsive to the most pressing local needs, the subcomponent seeks to strengthen communities' resilience to FCV and climate risks and improve social cohesion. In addition, subproject selection will emphasize investments that leverage synergies with planned inter-village local economic development activities under Subcomponent 1.2 to maximize impact. This could include, for example, developing communities surrounding a public market by improving access to basic services (such as water and sanitation), supporting access road to main arteries for increased market accessibility to improve livelihood opportunities, and other related complementary community infrastructure.

²⁰ For Benin the average sub-project cost is assessed to be US\$60,000 based on rising costs of materials and previous implementation experience through the ACCESS project. For Ghana, the average sub-project cost is assessed to be US\$60,000 based on previous implementation experience through the Ghana Productive Safety Nets project.

²¹ This includes the following number of sub-projects per country: 900 in Benin, 1,688 in Cote d'Ivoire, 1,406 in Ghana and 675 in Togo.



22. **Investments under this subcomponent will improve access to basic services that are critical for coping with and building resilience to climate-related and other shocks and stressors.** Local development planning and prioritization process will be informed by local climate diagnostics through participatory climate risk assessment and a climate filter will be applied (such as to discuss climate dimensions in identifying risks and opportunities for climate-sensitive local investments). Construction and rehabilitation of community infrastructure will also integrate climate-resilient design practices. Rehabilitated buildings will be designed to cope with seasonal flooding, landslides, and temperature extremes, as well as rehabilitated with options for greater natural light for improved energy efficiency. Roads and electricity work will be supplied by renewable energy. Rehabilitated water supply systems and drainage canals will also help address water scarcity in the region using measures such as wastewater recycling for irrigation and rainwater harvesting, and will support flood risk management. All proposed investments will be systematically screened for their contribution to improved natural resource management and climate change mitigation and/or adaptation.

23. **Investments under the subcomponent will employ local labor and expertise as much as possible during rehabilitation/works, especially for women²² and youth, with involvement of local partners and mechanisms to promote sustainability.²³** To ensure that project activities support local public health directives, including risks related to the COVID-19 pandemic, and do not put beneficiaries or laborers at risk, the project will introduce a “WASH standard” to any infrastructure that will be supported by the project.²⁴ By involving communities with strong sense of ownership, and by emphasizing climate resilience from the beginning, local investments can be better maintained (with proper mechanisms in place) and more sustainable.²⁵ Especially around the border zones, preventive measures to risks of sexual exploitation and abuse and sexual harassment (SEA/SH) will be discussed and integrated.

Subcomponent 1.2. Strategic economic activity investments for local economic development (US\$67.50 million, 20 percent of Component 1).

24. **This subcomponent aims to create short-term benefits to existing economic activities, but also to build longer-term economic sources of resilience by investing strategically in targeted local markets.** These markets serve as proxies of economic activities and potential pull factors to improve local livelihoods in the targeted village clusters, including through increasing diversification of income sources and access to less climate-sensitive income-generating activities. The economic activity generated by the newly renovated rural markets will provide opportunities for women, youth, and vulnerable populations

²² The project will target having females represent 40% of the local laborers hired for the project activities.

²³ This could adapt the “field school” approach that was found successful under the previous CDD project in Côte d’Ivoire, Post-Conflict Assistance Project (PCAP). The project also had an innovative ‘Economic Reinsertion Groups for the Environment and Nature’ (*Groupes de Réinsertion Economique pour l’Environnement et la Nature* Green THIMO), which could also be considered under the project.

²⁴ For example, a hand-washing facility to a market or a storage, and so on, also in line with any available country-level standard. For example, a decentralized local service delivery project in Benin has been working with sector ministries to develop a standard for community-driven infrastructures—and the project could benefit from those institutionalized standards.

²⁵ In addition to the above-mentioned Green THIMO, to ensure regular and sustainable maintenance, youth can be mobilized using spatial lens to form a group to take responsibility of maintenance of public works in partnership with local entities (private sectors and farmers associations) and agencies (such as *Agence de Gestion des Routes* [AGEROUTE], *Société de Développement Forestier* [SODEFOR], and so on).



in the subregion, thereby contributing to their economic inclusion, an important element in strengthening social cohesion. Particular emphasis will be given to the inclusion of youth under this subcomponent to strengthen their economic resilience and prevent youth from being lured by false promises by violent or illegal actors for alternative income-generating opportunities. In addition, the use of the CDD process for the selection of investments and their direct beneficiaries will enhance community cohesion through the realization of collectively discussed choices. The investments will be taking into account cross-border economic activities (including cross-border trade) which are very active in the subregion.

25. **The subcomponent will finance the rehabilitation of existing rural primary markets (including livestock markets) in a selection of village clusters covered by Subcomponent 1.1, as well as the development of economic activities linked to these markets with the aim of generating local employment and income.** The subcomponent will provide grants covering costs associated with: (a) the expansion, rehabilitation, upgrading, and equipping of climate-resilient public local market infrastructure—especially in border markets; this could include access road/track, buildings, stalls, warehouses, storage and cold chain facilities, solar installations/ use of solar panels for renewable energy for market infrastructure, energy-efficient lighting for security (which will promote safety for women in particular), parking and slaughter slabs, weighing devices, waste management, and climate-smart water and sanitation infrastructure; and (b) on-site economic activities carried out by Common Interest Groups (CIGs) including Producers Organizations (POs). This will allow CIGs and POs (including livestock farmers / herders POs) to invest for their members in income generating activities such as product processing and grading, marketing, selling of animal feed, etc. The rehabilitation, upgrading, and equipping of public infrastructure in the local market will be climate sensitive and adaptive, with priority given to energy-efficient and climate-friendly technologies such as solar energy.

26. **Priority will be given to village clusters that include border markets and markets playing an active role in cross-border exchanges of goods.** Consistent with the CDD approach under Subcomponent 1.1, the required investments will be identified by the communities, including local market groups (traders associations, market management committee, producer groups, agropastoral groups, and so on), and will undergo a participatory climate risk assessment process, and be subsequently discussed and consolidated at the cluster level and integrated and prioritized by LGs. With an average estimated cost of US\$150,000, the subcomponent will allow for 428 local market investments across the four countries.²⁶ Increased access to markets and robust economic activity will also help climate-impacted populations diversify their income sources and mitigate food insecurity, induced and exacerbated by climate shocks. A rapid assessment of existing rural markets was conducted during preparation phase to identify a very high number of local markets within the project's target area, confirming the strategic importance of these infrastructures and making them even more attractive and efficient in their roles. On-going mapping and geo-localization efforts of existing markets and stakeholders (management committees, traders associations, and so on) will inform the selection of investments under the subcomponent. LGs may decide to concentrate the investment on networks of markets linked to larger marketing hubs and/or specific cross-border markets to promote regional trade and economic integration.²⁷

²⁶ This includes the following number of local market investments per country: 72 in Benin, 150 in Cote d'Ivoire, 150 in Ghana and 60 in Togo.

²⁷ The market assessment could be deepened by looking at food systems in the region; for example, see: Balineau, Gaelle, Arthur Bauer, Martin Kessler, and Nicole Madariaga. 2021. *Food Systems in Africa: Rethinking the Role of Markets*. Africa



27. **Implementation will be based on three interrelated phases of work involving the identification of needs and gradual capacity building of market players, market physical upgrading, and consolidation of market maintenance.** The first year of the project will be devoted to activities that will allow both to: (a) strategically orient the investments of this subcomponent (in-depth study of the needs and the current functioning of the markets) and (b) mobilize and strengthen the Economic Agents operating at the markets. These efforts will be accompanied by a specialized technical assistance (TA) provider (to be contracted), and market community facilitators will be selected and trained (by the TA provider) as primary field-level helpers. The support to local economic development will consider local opportunities and dynamics. Key implementation steps of Subcomponent 1.2 are summarized in PAD.

Subcomponent 1.3. Youth²⁸ engagement and social cohesion activities (US\$16.875 million, 5 percent of Component 1)

28. **This subcomponent will finance youth-identified social cohesion activities and/or cluster-level community infrastructure.** This is with the aim of bringing together and empowering vulnerable youth with voice and agency to prioritize investments that benefit and matter to them and their communities. This also allows them to play a positive role to foster social cohesion, prevent violence and build climate resilience in their own and neighboring communities. This subcomponent will invest in (a) social cohesion activities and events and (b) **climate resilient and climate smart** upgrading, rehabilitation, and/or equipment of cluster-level community infrastructure—that are identified and prioritized by youth. Youth representatives (targeted 50% female)²⁹ will choose from an open menu of investments (with a negative list³⁰) at the village level, which will then be aggregated and discussed at the cluster level, and also validated by the communities and local authorities. Investments that foster social cohesion, particularly through promoting social inclusion, conflict prevention, or climate resilience will be prioritized. Eligible community sub-projects/activities³¹ could include (but is not limited to):

- (a) **Social cohesion activities and events:** Organization of sports and/or cultural events (potentially inter-village and/or cross-border),³² collaboration events that foster inter-generational/inter-group dialogues (for example, water forum), community volunteering activities, and community awareness raising activities (for example, on climate change

Development Forum. World Bank: Washington, DC; Agence Francaise de Developpement.

²⁸ Youth, as defined in the project, can range from youth 15 years to 35 years. This will be specified for each country in their respective Project Implementation Manual (PIM).

²⁹ The selection and mobilization of youth representatives (with target of 50 percent females at the cluster level) will be tailored to the specific country and local characteristics and articulated in the project's operation manuals. This could include relying on the community facilitators and/or existing list of vulnerable youth in the target areas from government agencies serving youth, village development councils, youth committees and associations, as well as local nongovernmental organizations (NGOs). Similar to subcomponent 1.1, only those subprojects that can have their operating costs covered and can be maintained and staffed will be financed to ensure sustainability. Community subprojects will be designed to enhance inclusion of women, youth, displaced persons, and people with disabilities in local development activities.

³⁰ This will draw from the negative list in subcomponent 1.1, as relevant.

³¹ Similar to subcomponent 1.1, only those subprojects that can have their operating costs covered and can be maintained and staffed will be financed to ensure sustainability. Community subprojects will be designed to enhance inclusion of women, youth, displaced persons, and people with disabilities in local development activities.

³² Cultural events could include organization of local culture heritage games (such as Aji, mankala, and so on) that bring community members together. Activities can be organized in "Arbre à palabres" or community gathering places which can help strengthen inter-generational linkages.



adaptation). A village could have village-level social cohesion activities or choose to pool resources together with one or more neighboring villages for combined social cohesion activities.

(b) **Cluster-level community infrastructure:** Upgrading, rehabilitation, expansion, or repurposing of existing land/facilities for cross-village youth-friendly recreational spaces, parks, community gathering spaces, sports facilities, and youth centers. The infrastructure will be climate resilient, include climate-smart technologies, and benefit across villages, that is, shared by at least two or more villages in the cluster.

29. **The average estimated allocation is around an average of US\$5,000 for youth-identified social cohesion activities per village or up to US\$40,000 for youth-identified infrastructure investments per cluster for a single annual investment cycle.**³³ It will be sequenced to follow after an earlier annual cycle of investment under subcomponent 1.1 to allow for learning gains. The subprojects prioritized by youth will be endorsed and integrated in LDPs, sectoral strategies, and/or regional/national strategies, as well as informed by local climate diagnostics/climate screening. Investments will be managed by relevant local institutions (including youth groups) and supported by community facilitations and partner organizations (like youth-related NGOs), depending on the country context. Investments under this subcomponent will employ local youth labor as much as possible for rehabilitation/construction works, with the close involvement of local partners and mechanisms to promote sustainability. By placing youths in the driver seat of local development, the project will provide a structured civic and social space for youths to be engaged as active agents to meaningfully promote social cohesion and peace building across communities. Together with the project's overall approach of mainstreaming youth inclusion youth throughout the project components, this subcomponent will contribute towards building positive youth identities and reduce youth's vulnerability to FCV and climate risks and strengthen horizontal social cohesion and trust with other community members.

Component 2: Building foundation and capacity for inclusive and resilient communities (US\$45 million, 10 percent of the total amount)

30. **This component will finance various training and capacity building activities that can build the foundation and capacity of local stakeholders across the Gulf of Guinea countries, especially in key four dimensions:** (a) identify and implement subprojects under Component 1,³⁴ (b) create a base for local economic ecosystem with cross-border vision that can lead to medium- to long-term territorial development in the target northern region, (c) equip targeted youth in border communities with skills to engage in project's activities, and (d) promote better understanding and practice of social inclusion and cohesion. The beneficiaries of this component will be the communities, LGs, community facilitators, local technical staff of line ministries and partners, as well as certain critical national-level stakeholders. Lessons learned of this component will also be shared across the countries under Component 3 activities. A list of types of training and capacity building activities to be covered by the component includes:

³³ The estimated costs are based on a review of comparable projects and unit cost of expected subprojects per country. Investment allocations will vary depending on the population of a given community and will be specified in the project's operation manuals.

³⁴ At the time of writing, it is unclear if social distancing measures will still be in place by the time of project implementation; the team is actively considering the incorporation of communication technology that will enable remote facilitation.



(a) Capacity building for community investments to strengthen local resilience and inclusion:

This category will strengthen the capacity of local stakeholders to drive and participate in all stages of annual investment cycles across the three subcomponents. Facilitators, in partnership with existing government structures, will drive community mobilization and communication campaigns to raise awareness and inform target communities and groups of the project's objective, approach, and activities. Specific capacity building and coaching will also be provided on the implementation of the three subcomponents, including needs prioritization, proposal development, implementation of subproject, local-level financial management (FM) and procurement, participatory monitoring of activities, maintenance arrangement, and so on, combined with trainings on key development principles that are critical to the project, such as on climate mitigation and building climate resilience³⁵, social inclusion (gender, youth, and other marginalized groups), and CE, for those communities to take a more active role in their own development.

(b) Promotion of local economic development: The project will facilitate two sets of activities: (a) training and skills development to overcome key capacity constraints for CIGs³⁶ and (b) capacity development for effective and sustainable management of the renovated/upgraded market facilities. The latter will include strengthening of maintenance committees, setting up of effective agreements between LGs and market stakeholders on the use of market fees and dues for market maintenance and development purposes, preparation of costed and itemized maintenance plans, and so on. Activities to be financed could include mapping of key actors (such as producer groups, technical service providers, financial sectors, private sector partners, and entrepreneurs) and dialogues and knowledge sharing forums to “co-create” a vision for inclusive territorial development of the target area, based on assets, constraints (such as on land and property), opportunities, ‘rules of game’, and so on. Experience and progress of these activities will also be shared at the regional forum (under Component 3) across the countries to promote the regional vision. In relation to Subcomponent 1.2 activities, this Component 2 will also finance the mobilization of a technical partner with expertise in supporting rural economic activities, strengthening CIGs, and managing and revitalizing rural markets. In addition, market community facilitators for the subcomponent (50 percent female) will be identified and trained to provide business mentoring to CIGs.

(c) Engaging youth in project-related and more publicly oriented activities to help inclusion and community cohesion:

The project will support agency and voice of youth especially in the areas where immediate economic opportunities are scarce. Youths will receive training and be deployed to undertake community facilitation and monitoring, supported by digital tools, or become videographers to document the project's CDD experience to then be disseminated to the communities as part of Component 3 activities. Inter-generational dialogue could also be a platform for community monitoring/social audits facilitated by partner non-governmental

³⁵ For example, a recently completed pilot tool of “Making communities and local development planning processes resilient to DRM and FCV risks in Guinea and the Lake Chad Region,” in collaboration with International Institute for Environmental Development, could provide a base to be adapted to the Gulf of Guinea context.

³⁶ Such as business management and FM (book-keeping, financial literacy, and savings) as well as basic digital/telecommunications literacy to improve information asymmetries regarding local market or weather conditions. It could also include training on promoting climate mitigation, climate-smart agriculture practices and production, as well as use of energy efficient tools/equipment.



organizations (NGOs) or trained facilitators to allow communities to engage in examining the project activities and use of funds and raise any concerns or questions they have in a public forum.³⁷ Another example will be to train youth in peace-building-related leadership and decision making to help improve their self-esteem and help other members of the communities (including elders) realize that the youths are also source of resilience. This will promote the creation of more space for youth to be included in broader public decision making.³⁸ Youths could also help facilitate/participate in inter-village dialogues managing natural resources to mitigate climate change and conflict risks. By providing youths with opportunities to build a stronger sense of responsibility in public affairs and belonging to the community, it is also expected to strengthen social capital, potentially reduce their vulnerability to organized crime and/or violent extremism influences—as key pathways to potential FCV spillovers,³⁹ as well as positively impact investments under the other two subcomponents.

(d) Promotion of social cohesion and prevention of violence: In this category, the project will build on global experience and good practice, with adaptations to the local context. An example could be to facilitate social and conflict analysis as an integral part of the inclusive local planning process to identify key FCV dynamics at the local level, based on which training on conflict management and reconciliation can be provided to address these without resorting to violence. This kind of approach can also help communities prioritize subprojects that can mitigate drivers of conflict (including climate risks and vulnerabilities and/or farmer-herder conflicts⁴⁰). Another activity that the project will pilot is a community-level alternative dispute resolution (ADR) mechanism, building on relevant experience that each country has that can promote both vertical and horizontal social cohesion where there is a lack of trust in the justice system of the country. This subcomponent will also include gender-focused trainings to reduce women’s barriers to engaging in economic activities and employment. The project will also encourage peer-learning opportunities among women. Support to address adverse masculinity norms and help prevent and respond to SEA/SH could include training on norms change intervention, as well as conducting mapping services and referrals for survivors of SEA/SH.

31. Implementation partners of each topic of the training and capacity building activities will be contracted in each country, while the project will support local community members including youth and women to become facilitators where feasible. Digital tools will be adapted to enhance efficiency of the training and capacity building activities and participation of youth and local communities to play an active role to become trainers or facilitators with adequate support. Training and capacity building activities will be gender sensitive and will take into account the special needs of the disabled and other vulnerable groups. Inclusion of key LG and other technical personnel will be ensured to improve their capacity to support communities and to strengthen positive relationship/partnership with community members.

³⁷ In the South Sudan Local Governance and Service Delivery Project (LGSDP, P160481; this kind of approach helped mitigate tensions in communities).

³⁸ South Sudan, LGSDP.

³⁹ Interpeace. 2016. *Beyond Ideology and Greed: Understanding New Forms of Violence in Côte d’Ivoire and Mali*. <https://www.interpeace.org/2016/11/ideology-understanding-violence/>.

⁴⁰ See, for example, a detailed case in Benin in: Acceombessy, Felicien Donat E. T. 2019. *Transhumance and Conflicts Between Farmers and Herdsmen: Links to Poverty and Inequality*. World Bank Poverty Global Practice.



Component 3: Regional Coordination Platform and Dialogue (US\$22.50 million, 5 percent of the total amount)

32. **This component aims to strengthen regional collaboration across the four target countries to support a coherent response to prevent FCV risks and manage climate and disaster risks in the Gulf of Guinea.** The component will strengthen national capacity to engage and co-lead regional dialogue, including advancing a shared vision of the subregion in their involvement with existing regional institutions such as ECOWAS where they will be able to engage and share this vision with the border Sahel countries, the Community of Sahel-Saharan States (CEN-SAD), the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), or the African Union, among others.

33. **Specifically, it will finance the establishment of an RCP under the project, structured around three key pillars:** (a) data collection and analysis, (b) knowledge generation, and (c) dialogue building. Data collection activities aim to enhance access to quality data and information to better understand complex regional and national FCV and climate dynamics. Knowledge generation activities will support evidence-based analysis for the development of regional/cross-border policy and for informing project implementation. Dialogue building activities seek to improve regional cooperation by providing solid and neutral grounds for discussion, coordination, and planning. An illustrative list of activities across the three pillars is outlined in table 2 below.

34. **Implementation of activities will mainstream climate fragility and risks to support countries better understand the climate change-security nexus, promote regional coordination on climate change and develop relevant action plans.** Other key regional topics such transhumance conflicts, cross-border trade, climate-conflict vulnerability profiles and economic opportunities (including “lessons learned” from the project’s financed activities under Components 1 and 2) will also be shared and analyzed regionally as part of data and research activities and as regional dialogues across the participating countries.⁴¹ Activities will be phased to progressively strengthen coordination and implementation capacity. Activities will also be coordinated with ECOWAS to ensure synergies, especially when dealing with Sahel countries, and maximize impact. RCP activities will inform the implementation of other project components and provide key insights and lessons to strengthen the overall CDD approach and ensure strategic investments are regionally coordinated and impactful.

Table 2: Illustrative List of Activities to Be Financed under Component 3

(a) Data Collection and Analysis	FCV Database: Collection of relevant data and indicators to improve understanding and monitoring of regional, national, and subnational FCV dynamics and climate change-related risks/ mitigation, including climate and security vulnerability mapping. Data will be centralized on national digital portals, hosted by a government agency (for example, the National Institute of Statistics or an agency in charge of information and data systems) and shared regionally via back-end systems. National stakeholders will use existing datasets and generate new ones through dedicated data collection efforts during the implementation of Components 1 and 2. ⁴²
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⁴¹ There are also regional and national organizations representing livestock herders in West Africa such as the *Association pour la Promotion de l'Élevage en Savane et dans le Sahel* (APESS, www.apess.org), *Réseau Billital Maroobé* (RBM, www.maroobe.com), and *Réseau des organisations paysannes et de producteurs de l'Afrique de l'Ouest* (ROPPA, www.roppa-afrique.org). They play an important role in representing the interest of this often-marginalized group, whom the project seeks to engage for data/research activities.

⁴² Data collection could cover the following themes related to FCV: (a) governance and economic development; (b) natural



	<p>Investments Registry: A regional mapping of community-resilient, local economic development and youth investments disaggregated by administrative level, sector, and partners. It will feature both investments financed by the project and other programs. The registry will include vulnerability profiles for communities (for example, proximity to conflict, climate change risks, and so on) and their access to key social services, including the presence of primary schools, health facilities, the proximity to nearest clean water source, road access, and access to markets. The aim is to track local economic development in each region to identify lagging communities, with a focus on border areas, and inform the project’s activities.</p>
	<p>Research Catalogue: Supports periodic identification and collection of existing FCV and climate change studies, including on local climate adaptation strategies, focused on individual countries or regions and displays them on the digital portal (the same portal hosting the FCV databases) to improve access to information and research. Key actionable messages will be extracted from the studies to move the research catalogue from a repository of documents to a living source of evidence that can inform the project implementation and policy decisions on FCV and climate change/mitigation at large.</p>
<p>(b) Knowledge Generation</p>	<p>Thematic Studies: Policy-relevant studies conducted to improve understanding of FCV dynamics and climate change in the region and inform policy and project implementation. A research agenda developed in partnership with universities or research centers will guide the thematic studies to be implemented through research grants and scholarships. Key themes discussed by all countries in preparation include: (i) governance and economic development, (ii) natural resources and climate change, including the climate change-security nexus and research on climate adaptive local solutions, (iii) social inclusion (for example, of youth and women) and social cohesion, (iv) regional trade and mobility, and (v) communal conflicts between and among farmers and herder groups.</p>
	<p>Sentiment Analysis: Development of a monitoring tool to capture positive, neutral, and negative sentiment related to FCV issues (including on exposure, sensitive, and adaptive capacity to climate shocks and events) among communities. Opinion mining will combine printed media, radio voice to text, social media, and perception surveys. The use of a standardized tool will be coordinated at the regional level and customized to each country context. Countries will also develop a data-sharing agreement to identify what data can be shared regionally. Such data will help undertake regional analyses, and the findings can be shared among countries and featured on country digital platforms.</p>
<p>(c) Dialogue Building</p>	<p>Annual Regional Forum and Thematic Workshops: An annual high-level event to discuss and agree on critical issues and strategic plans for addressing FCV risks (including climate fragility) in the Gulf of Guinea and share lessons on the project’s implementation. In addition, findings of the thematic studies will inform discussions during the annual forum. The forum will be hosted and financed by the country that is chairing the Committee for Regional Coordination (CRC) in a particular year.⁴³ Moreover, smaller and more frequent thematic workshops can be organized to facilitate collaboration and knowledge sharing on specific thematic areas and locally relevant issues (for example, youth and women empowerment, local governance, farmer-herder conflicts, climate change mitigation, and adaptation measures).</p>
	<p>Gulf of Guinea Talks: Regional ‘TED style’ Talks featuring prominent local, national, regional, and international speakers to cover critical topics on the Gulf of Guinea and prevention with a broader audience. Partners could be local universities to leverage their auditoriums and enable youth and/or media stations to participate. The talks can be live-streamed, recorded, and featured on the RCP digital platform and other popular video/local media platforms.</p>
	<p>Local Institution Dialogues: Promotes experience sharing between border area LGs and local institutions, including women and youth organizations, producer/commercial/trade associations, and farmer/herder organizations. Dialogues could be organized among clusters of border villages to help identify, prioritize, plan, and monitor subprojects and activities, including opportunities for cross-border trade and investments which can be supported by the project, as well as to encourage shared solutions to common climate risks by raising awareness on adaptation strategies. Knowledge generated through thematic studies, sentiment analysis, and field visits can be disseminated and support these dialogues, connecting citizens and local actors to the RCP.</p>

resources and climate change, including the climate and security nexus; (c) social inclusion and cohesion; and (d) regional trade and mobility.

⁴³ The forum presents an opportunity to involve regional organizations such as ECOWAS as well as development partners and other key stakeholders. Young people trained under Component 2 as videographers or/and monitoring and evaluation (M&E) agents to document community participation in local development and social cohesion activities can also contribute to share their productions during the annual forum.



35. **RCP activities will be regionally coordinated and nationally implemented.** A CRC, financed under Component 4, will facilitate coordination and regular exchanges for core project activities. The CRC will support strategic decisions, such as coordination on the phased rollout of activities, data sharing agreements, research questions to prioritize, and thematic sessions of annual forums, to strengthen the regionality of RCP activities. The CRC will be mainly formed by key designated members of the National Steering Committees, Project Implementation Units (PIUs), and partner organizations that support the delivery of specific activities. The implementation of RCP activities will require the engagement of a range of stakeholders, including (a) universities and think tanks (particularly those from the Gulf of Guinea Region); (b) international and regional organizations (for example, ECOWAS); (c) development partners and organizations working in the region (for example, French Development Agency [*Agence Française de Développement* AFD]); (d) local, regional, national, and technical government officials and policy makers (from the four countries); and (e) local NGOs, associations, and community-based organizations (CBOs). To support the research agenda, the CRC will support the establishment of an FCV regional research network through which regional/international partners and research institutes could be invited to participate (ECOWAS, African Center for Economic Transformation [ACET], Clingendael Institute, and so on). At the political level, the project will seek to engage ECOWAS, especially its Commission for Political Affairs, Peace and Security (CPAPS), on enhancing regional systems to address FCV risks in the target countries.⁴⁴

36. **Component 3 will also finance the use of digital innovations to underpin RCP activities.** A digital portal will be developed for each country to mirror the RCP investments by allowing the hosting of data, research, and key insights to influence investment decisions. The digital portal functions will mirror RCP investments by providing digital visualization of its core activities and supporting actionable diagnostics to inform policy making. Some examples of potential functions include (a) e-Catalog, creating a digital library of research and reports by region; (b) map composer and sector diagnostics, providing system-generated diagnostics drawing on an integrated data center to display information on key trends, gaps, and alerts to guide local investments; (c) a project tracker to identify the types of investments across the region; and (d) vulnerability clusters to identify communities most vulnerable to conflict and climate risks. In addition, Component 3 will create a mechanism to identify, nurture and support piloting of innovative digital solutions within the countries to advance communities' socioeconomic resilience and inclusion; and promote social entrepreneurs and social enterprises which have potential for replication and scaling up through public- private –people partnerships benefitting the rural and vulnerable communities.

37. **In addition, a simple and innovative CDD application will be introduced to support community committees, facilitators, and LG engagement throughout annual investment cycles.** The CDD application will be customized to reflect the institutional arrangements and processes for each country and enhance two-way communication between communities and the Government. The digital tools will be gradually rolled out to ensure a simple user experience, and any needed modifications will be made before their scale-up. The use of simple digital solutions is expected to strengthen the project's CDD approach by ensuring a regular flow of information; providing guidance throughout different stages of the subproject,

⁴⁴ Coordination with ongoing regional initiatives, such as the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded Reacting to Early Warning and Response Data in West Africa (REWARD) Project will be prioritized.



supporting climate screening and planning; as well as enhancing transparency on subproject approvals, available funding allocations, community needs, and financed investments. The CDD app will furnish community facilitators with local weather forecasts and climate diagnostics at the cluster level and provide key tasks to orient local actions that can support climate-smart planning. Based on the diagnostic and sharing of communities' own knowledge and risk management strategies, communities will prioritize climate-smart investments or local climate actions with the support of trained community facilitators (e.g. prioritizing adaptation activities like flood control structures). The CDD application will also help advance regional knowledge on climate change by supporting the collection of local data on climate risks and indicators which will feed back into the FCV database, to inform broader regional dialogue (see also Annex 7 for more information on how the CDD app will help build climate resilience). Moreover, the CDD application will also advance social inclusion objectives by tracking the needs and aspirations of different groups as recorded through focus group discussions, highlighting when their preferences are matched with actual investments. Collected data will also feed into the RCP to inform regional dialogue on addressing FCV dynamics and climate change. The component will finance software development, servers and hosting, training activities, and smartphones for community committees and facilitators.

Component 4: Project Management (US\$45.0 million, 10 percent of the total amount)

38. **This component will support project management and coordination at the regional, national, and subnational levels for the effective implementation of project activities.** Project management areas covered by the component include planning, implementation, and technical oversight of program activities; social and environmental safeguards management and monitoring; overall FM and procurement; preparation of work plans, budgets, and progress reports; communication and public awareness campaigns; M&E arrangements, including the setup of a management information system (MIS); setup and management of a project beneficiary feedback mechanism; and measures for enhanced transparency and accountability including potential use of ICT platforms. Coordination activities will support the establishment and operation of an CRC, national steering committees (NSCs), and technical national and subnational committees. The component will finance CRC and PIU staff-related costs; operating costs, including equipment, vehicles, fuel, and office space at national and regional levels; communications costs; targeted national and regional capacity building activities to strengthen overall project management; and operating costs related to the procurement, supervision, auditing, and evaluation of project activities.

39. **The component will support CRC coordination activities and finance the four national PIUs, including their regional antennas (RAs), to facilitate the overall management of the project.** Relevant government agencies at the regional, national, subnational, and local levels will be involved in the implementation process with adequate capacity-building support. The CRC will be chaired on a rotating basis by each of the four countries. The country chairing the CRC will assume its secretariat functions and costs. Selected members from the national PIU will be seconded to staff and participate in CRC activities to support regional coordination and harmonization of activities. Data produced under Component 3 will support CRC coordination and feed directly into national supervision and oversight. The component will also strengthen the PIUs' capacities to monitor project activities, including engagement of civil society organizations (CSOs) and communities in participatory climate risk assessment and monitoring agreed climate action plans to strengthen climate adaptation and mitigation through identified project investments.



40. **Project management will be done in close coordination with security forces, given the potential risks of operating in vulnerable and remote communities at or near porous borders with the Sahel’s conflict-affected areas.** Social risks, including on human security, will be regularly monitored by the PIUs using a system that includes monitoring and mitigation mechanisms at the community, subnational, and national levels as well leveraging ICT and other innovations for remote monitoring. Annex 9 includes more details on security risks assessment and implementation security measures in the project target area. A security protocol for the PIU staff and beneficiaries who participate in project activities will be detailed in the Project Implementation Manual (PIM).

Component 5: Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC) (US\$0)

41. **This zero-budget component will serve as a contingent emergency funding mechanism that could be triggered in the event of a natural or man-made disaster and/or health crisis** such as pandemics through formal declaration of a national emergency, or upon a formal request from the respective Governments. In the event of such a disaster/crisis, funds from the unallocated expenditure category or from other project components could be reallocated to finance emergency response expenditures to meet urgent needs. The operations manual will describe in detail the implementation arrangements for the immediate response mechanism.

Legal Operational Policies

	Triggered?
Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	Yes
Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60	No

Summary of Assessment of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Environmental Risk Rating

Overall the project is expected to have a positive environmental impact due to the integration of climate-resilient design practices in construction and rehabilitation of community infrastructure, promotion of renewable energy use, technical options to improve energy efficiency and natural resource management and climate change mitigation or adaptation in targeted Project areas. However, it is expected that the project will support expansion, rehabilitation, upgrading, and equipping of public infrastructures that might be associated with potential environmental risks and adverse impacts. Potential occupational health and safety (OHS) issues are associated with nuisances related to noise emissions and dust rising, exposure to hazardous waste, and injury. Activities to be supported to improve community resiliency related to the restoration of landscapes through afforestation, and tree nurseries development, construction of small irrigation canals, agriculture livelihoods and pond activities, as well as water supply systems could involve potential use of fertilizers and pesticide, disruption of natural habitats and ecosystem services they support including water and soil pollution risk linked to Waste and Hazardous Materials Management. Based on the nature and medium-scale of the activities, the project risks and impacts will be substantial, site specific



and reversible with potential transboundary adverse impacts. Furthermore, the levels of Borrowers' capacity in terms of environmental impacts and risks management are diverse. In some respects, the implementing agencies' experience with ESF is limited, their capacity will be further strengthened in line with Bank's ESS during project implementation.

Social Risk Rating

The social risk rating for the project is substantial. This rating is based on the nature of the activities and the environment in which project activities will take place. The project will be implemented in a very fragile environment, with annual droughts, floods and high incidences of poverty in all countries. The high fragility and poverty incidents are triggers for increased social tension, which exacerbate inequalities and exclusion. The proximity of the project areas to the Sahel and the prevailing level of poverty makes the region more vulnerable to terrorism. In addition, conflicts between communities and between herders and farmers are common in these areas. Associated-security risks include: (i) assets destruction; (ii) serious injury and death for workers; (iii) disruptions to the implementation of project activities through temporary or permanent suspensions; and (iv) movement of people and physical abuse, loss of livelihood. A security risk assessment (SRA) will be prepared before the Project Appraisal and a Security Management Plan (SMP) will be prepared and adopted before Project effective date. There are risks that certain villages and local authorities are more dominant than others and that therefore some benefits from the project will be spread unevenly, therefore stakeholder engagement, avoiding elite capture and strong individual community participation will be key. It will be important that the stakeholder engagement processes are systematically held with youth representatives to avoid elders using youth merely as pawns to promote their own interests. The northern regions are generally more traditional and therefore an increased effort will need to be made to systematically include women to reach the desired representation, otherwise, there is a risk for exclusion and underrepresentation by women. There is some risk that the small-scale upgrade and rehabilitation works will cause temporary economic and physical displacement through possible land acquisition or the utilization of existing land. Resettlement frameworks (RFs) have been developed for all countries to outline the resettlement principles and once the actual sites of the projects are known, if required, the PIUs will develop Resettlement Plans (RPs) in line with the RFs. Employment to build the small scale infrastructures and rehabilitation works will come largely from local communities for rehabilitation works, especially women and youth, which makes it important that working conditions are clearly defined and monitored to ensure that there is no child labor, workers receive correct payments, and that there are no incidences of discrimination or sexual abuse. Besides the parties' participation activities foreseen in the Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP), the nature of the Project requires social interaction at different levels and may consequently generate risks of Coronavirus (COVID-19) spread. The SEP, the Labor Management Procedures (LMP) and the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) include risk prevention and mitigation measures to prevent the propagation of COVID-19. Failure to adopt an inclusive approach to participation and stakeholder engagement can undermine ownership of local investments and/or generate an inappropriate choice of investments, including those linked to the strengthening of climate resilience. The Project will endorse a participation approach that considers the different levels of power and influence of the stakeholders and embraces processes that support significant consultation of all parties, particularly of women, youth and other vulnerable groups. An absence of functioning grievance mechanisms



(GMs) and health and safety procedures has been noted by SDSs across the portfolio, therefore, an emphasis will need to be placed on these aspects to ensure that the social risks are not exacerbated.

Sexual Exploitation and Abuse/Sexual Harassment (SEA/SH) Risk Rating

This project has been scored as moderate risk for sexual exploitation and abuse /sexual harassment (SEA/SH), as per the World Bank SEA/SH draft risk assessment tool developed for social protection projects, as well as GBV expert assessment. Country-level factors that contribute to SEA/SH risk include, as noted above, the high fragility and poverty context. Project-level factors include likely interaction between male project staff/workers and women, particularly those from the community, during infrastructure works, as well as the position of power that project workers may have over women’s access to project benefits (employment/livelihoods). Cross-border regional trade in goods and services is very dynamic and represents a critical source of employment and income in the affected areas, especially for women. Because of the flexibility it affords, the small startup capital it requires, and the earning opportunities it offers in border areas where no other alternative is available, women make up the largest share of informal traders. As the project will aim to support women in these activities, it is important that the heightened risks for SEA/SH caused by border authorities seizing women's goods (especially if the female trader is illiterate and/or lacks the necessary legal documents) or requiring sexual favors to trade are taken into consideration and are mitigated against in each country. The profile of the PIU social experts requires knowledge of gender mainstreaming and, ideally, in SEA/SH risk prevention and in offering a safe, ethical, survivor-centered response when cases come forward.

E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

42. **Gulf of Guinea Regional level.** The project will form an CRC, composed of representatives of the four countries, to ensure strong commitment by each of the participating countries to lead and contribute to regional dialogue and collaboration. The main role and responsibility of the CRC is to coordinate activities of the project with a strong and common regional vision, promote knowledge sharing, and lead planning and implementation of Component 3.

43. **National level.** At the national level, lead ministry and executing agency in each country are stated in the table 3 below. The national PIUs in each country will be responsible for managing the project at the national level, including financial, procurement, and safeguard management as well as M&E in accordance with WB guidelines and procedures. The national PIUs will be headed by project coordinators, supported by a core team of specialists in procurement, FM, social and environmental safeguards (including SGBV aspects), and M&E, as well as technical specialists such as on CDD/rural development, infrastructure, agriculture livelihoods, knowledge management, ICT, and additional specialists as needed for each country) that will be financed by IDA. For project implementation, the PIUs will contract firms, NGOs, CSOs, and consultants as needed to implement project activities.

Table 3: Lead ministry and executing agency for each country

Country	Lead Ministry	Executing Agency
Benin	General Secretariat of the Presidency	Technical Secretariat for Coordination of the Social Cohesion Project (<i>Secrétariat Technique à Coordination du Projet de Cohésion Sociale, SETCO</i>)



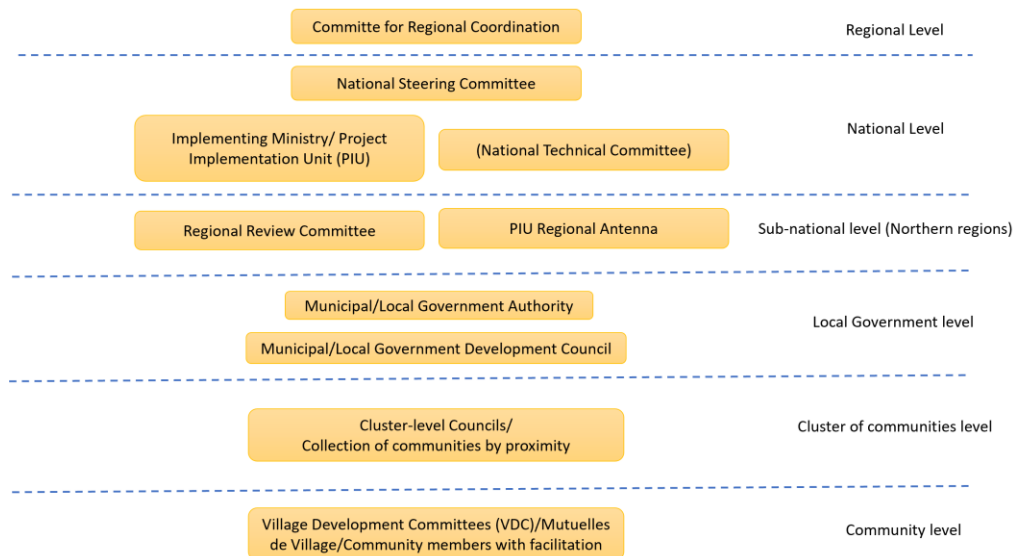
Côte d'Ivoire	Prime Minister's Office	Cotton and Cashew Council (CCA)
Ghana	Ministry of Local Government, Decentralisation and Rural Development (MLGDRD)	Local Governance and Decentralisation Directorate
Togo	The Ministry of Community Development, Youth, and Youth Employment (<i>Ministère du Développement à La Base, de La Jeunesse et de L'Emploi des Jeunes</i> MDBJEJ)	National Community Development Support Agency (<i>Agence Nationale d'Appui au Développement à la Base ANADEB</i>)

44. Given the multi-sectorial nature of the project and the importance of coordinating across expertise and mandates of different ministries and agencies, the NSC will also be established in each country, whose role is to coordinate closely with the CRC at the regional level and to provide strategic guidance and oversight to the lead Ministry and the PIU of each country, including approval of annual plans budget, reports, and so on.

45. **Subnational and community level.** In each country, the project will have villages at the driver's seat to identify and manage subprojects, in close coordination with local government units (LGUs), who have the mandate to lead development planning and implementation of those villages. At the village level, the project will build on existing structures such as village development committees, with additional community facilitation activities. Those identified needs will be discussed and coordinated at the level of cluster of villages, which will then be endorsed by the LGU. At the LG level, village level, and cluster level needs will be consolidated into their official LDPs. After endorsement by LGs, subprojects will be screened further for safeguards and fiduciary due diligence and be financed by the project.

46. **Overall, the project will have the following structure to manage regional collaboration and dialogue, as well as day-to-day implementation on the ground** (Figure 1 below).

Figure 1. Institutional arrangement





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