



Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 08-Oct-2023 | Report No: PIDA36674



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country Congo, Republic of	Project ID P181184	Project Name Additional Financing to the Climate-Resilient and Inclusive Livelihoods Project	Parent Project ID (if any) P177786
Parent Project Name Climate-Resilient and Inclusive Livelihoods Project (ProClimat Congo)	Region WESTERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA	Estimated Appraisal Date 02-Oct-2023	Estimated Board Date 10-Nov-2023
Practice Area (Lead) Environment, Natural Resources & the Blue Economy	Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Republic of Congo	Implementing Agency Republic of Congo - Ministry of Planning, Statistics, and Regional Integration

Proposed Development Objective(s) Parent

To strengthen landscape management and increase the use of improved livelihood activities in targeted communities

Proposed Development Objective(s) Additional Financing

To strengthen landscape management, increase the use of improved livelihood activities, and reduce food insecurity in targeted communities.

Components

- Strengthening Capacity of Institutions and Promoting Social Cohesion
- Strengthening Investments in Sustainable and Resilient Agriculture and Natural Capital Management
- Promoting Inclusive, Climate-resilient Livelihoods and Value Chains
- Project Management, Monitoring, and Evaluation
- Contingent Emergency Response
- Responding to Immediate Food and Nutrition Security Needs

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)

SUMMARY

Total Project Cost	50.00
Total Financing	50.00



of which IBRD/IDA	50.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS

World Bank Group Financing

International Development Association (IDA)	50.00
IDA Credit	50.00

Environmental and Social Risk Classification
Substantial

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

- The Republic of Congo is a lower-middle-income country in Central Africa with a gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of US\$2,214 (2021).** Located in the Congo River Basin, it covers an area of 342,000 km². Its population is 5.7 million, 47 percent of whom are under the age of 18. More than half of the population is concentrated in the two main cities of the country: Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire. The territory is one of the least dense in Africa with 14.8 inhabitants per square kilometer.
- Congo’s economic activity improved in 2022 but has yet to recover from the fallout of the recent crises.** Economic activity in Congo is estimated to have increased by 1.5 percent in 2022, following the contraction of 2.2 percent recorded in 2021. The share of the population living below the international extreme poverty line increased slightly from 52 percent in 2021 to 52.5 percent, in 2022. Headline inflation is projected to remain under control at 3 percent¹ in 2023, although food prices have witnessed a 4.6 percent average increase.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

- A confluence of several factors is contributing to the high levels of food insecurity in Congo.** These include: (i) chronically low agricultural productivity; (ii) high cost of agricultural inputs; (iii) high incidence of poverty; and (iv) recurrent climatic shocks, mainly floods. The food security situation was exacerbated by the COVID pandemic and Russia’s invasion of Ukraine,² which pushed up prices of agricultural inputs and food, driving even more people into extreme poverty, and acute food and nutrition insecurity. Congo

¹ Perspectives économiques au Congo, AfDB 2023

² Russia is Congo's main grain supplier with 35 percent share of the market.



relies heavily on food imports for domestic food consumption (80 percent of the food consumed), and a rapid assessment done by United Nations (UN) agencies in May 2022³ indicates that the disruption of imports because of Russia’s invasion of Ukraine led to a 40 percent increase in food commodity prices.

4. **It is expected that food insecurity will increase in the future.** The WFP Hunger Map shows that, despite a decline, the number of people with insufficient food consumption remains persistently high, representing about 32 percent of the population. In addition to this high proportion, the number of people using crisis or above-crisis food-based coping strategies is rising. During the period May-August 2023, it increased by 17 percent. This trend, in combination with the recent food price increase, suggests that the number of food insecure people is likely to increase in the future⁴.

5. **Considering the poor food security situation, the Government of Congo prepared a National Food Security Resilience Plan (NFSRP) covering the period 2022-2023 to boost food and nutrition security.** The NFSRP was approved in July 2022 and comprises the following thematic streams: (i) promoting alternatives to food imports; (ii) facilitating food supply across the country from production areas to consumers; (iii) stabilizing food prices; (iv) supporting smallholder farmers to increase production; (v) enforcing laws related to prices and taxes and; (vi) protecting and assisting vulnerable people. The budget required to implement the NFSRP is estimated at US\$242.84 million. In addition, UNHCR requires US\$37.40 million to provide food and humanitarian assistance to refugees and people displaced due to flooding. Due to fiscal constraints, the Government is mainly unable to finance the NFSRP and has reached out to donors, development partners and the private sector for support. While other partners are still clarifying their support, a financing gap of US\$127.16 million remains to-date. The proposed AF will contribute to narrowing this financing gap and will mainly focus on the “protecting and assisting vulnerable people” and “supporting smallholder farmers to increase production” themes of the NFSRP. The AF is consistent with the World Bank’s Country Partnership Framework (CPF; Report No. 126962-CG) objective of increasing social protection coverage to a larger number of vulnerable people (i.e., Objective 2.3 under Focus Area 2 – “Reduce Fragility and Build Human Capital for Improved Social Inclusion”) and also aligned with the spirit and substance of interventions proposed under Objective 1.3 (Improved Agricultural Productivity and Commercialization) of Focus Area 1 – “Strengthen Economic Management to Create an Improved Climate for Private Sector- Led Growth”.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Original PDO

To strengthen landscape management and increase the use of improved livelihood activities in targeted communities

Current PDO

To strengthen landscape management and increase the use of improved livelihood activities in targeted communities

Proposed PDO

³ Système des Nations Unies : Effets socio-économiques de la guerre ukrainienne sur l’économie congolaise (mai, 2022)

⁴ <https://hungermap.wfp.org/>



to strengthen landscape management, increase the use of improved livelihood activities, and reduce food insecurity in targeted communities.

Key Results

Area under sustainable and resilient agriculture practices (Hectare)-Revised upwards

Land area under sustainable landscape management practices (Hectare)

Beneficiaries using improved livelihood activities supported by the project (Number)-Revised upwards

Net greenhouse gas emissions mitigated (Ton CO2 eq/year)

People reached with emergency food assistance (Number) – New

D. Project Description

6. Several of the parent Project activities are designed to contribute to addressing food insecurity in the medium to long-term. These include support to the establishment of early warning systems for farmers' climate preparedness under Component 1, investments in sustainable and resilient agriculture under Component 2, and activities targeting increased food production and trade under Component 3 as part of the value chain support to agriculture. The AF augments this support through a combination of an immediate short-term response focused on improving access to food for the most vulnerable, and a more medium-term response focused on increasing food availability through increased local production.

7. As part of the AF the following changes will be made to the parent Project: (i) modification of the PDO and project activities; (ii) changes in project costs; (iii) changes in the results framework; and (iv) changes to target areas.

8. **Change to Project Development Objective (PDO):** The development objective of the parent project is "to strengthen landscape management and increase the use of improved livelihood activities in targeted communities". The proposal introduce new activities to improve food security in the short to medium-term. To reflect this added explicit focus on food security, the proposal is to revise the PDO thus: "to strengthen landscape management, increase the use of improved livelihood activities, and reduce food insecurity in targeted communities".

9. **Changes to Project Components/Activities:** The following changes to components and activities are introduced with the Additional Financing:

10. **Component 1: Strengthening Capacity of Institutions and Promoting Social Cohesion.** Under this component, the parent Project finances activities supporting institutional and community capacity to build inclusive livelihoods in a changing climate and ensure inclusive participation in such processes. An estimated US\$5 million in AF resources will be used to expand the scope of Subcomponent 1.1 (Building Institutional Capacity on Sustainable and Resilient Agriculture and Natural Capital Management at the National, Departmental, and Local Levels). This work will aim at strengthening the government's capacity and information system on monitoring food security crises and market prices. The Project will strengthen the capacity for inter-institutional coordination on monitoring food security and climate risk to facilitate early warning and early action and minimize the costs of future food security crises. The AF will finance: (i) intergovernmental coordination and capacity building within the Ministry of Agriculture, Livestock, and Fisheries (Ministère de l'Agriculture, de l'Élevage, et de la Pêche, MAEP) and other government institutions involved in food security crisis preparedness; (ii) the preparation of the Food Security Crisis Preparedness Plan (FSCPP); (iii) collection, processing, and publication of agro-meteorological



information; and (iv) introduction of the Cadre Harmonisé (CH)⁵ among the national surveys on food security conducted in the country. The information on food security crises and market prices will also be disseminated through the community-based Early Warning and Response System (EWRS) for climate preparedness that is part of the parent project design under Subcomponent 1.2.

11. **Component 3: Promoting Inclusive, Climate-resilient Livelihoods and Value Chains.** Under this component, the parent Project provides support to MSMEs, cooperatives, and livelihood groups engaged in agriculture, forestry, non-timber products, and ecotourism as economic/livelihood activities, targeting beneficiaries in specific landscapes. The proposal is to allocate US\$27 million in AF resources to expand such livelihood support to food-insecure people under a new Subcomponent 3.4 (Supporting Food Production) that will target smallholder farmer households.

12. The proposed activities under the new subcomponent will allow the Project to specifically reach the households most affected by the food crisis, in line with the rationale of CRW financing. Beneficiaries will be identified through community consultations and social mobilization tools. In line with the parent project's focus on inclusive development, selection criteria will be designed to prioritize households that are part of particularly vulnerable and marginalized groups. The new subcomponent will finance the procurement and distribution of inputs for sustainable and resilient agriculture at production and post-harvest storage. It will reach at least 100,000 smallholder farmers with improved, drought-resistant seed varieties, organic fertilizers, and pesticides, livestock and fish feed, basic tools for primary production, small-scale drainage and irrigation infrastructure, and small facilities for storage and value-addition. Priority will be given to women farmers. The subcomponent will also finance technical assistance to improve the capacity of farmers to aggregate, store, process, and add value to food products, and promote sustainable and resilient agriculture techniques to reduce producers' vulnerability to climate change. Implementation will be done by competitively selected service providers as under the parent project.

13. **Component 6: Responding to Immediate Food and Nutrition Security Needs.** As part of the AF, a new "Component 6" estimated at US\$13 million, is proposed as an addition to the Project to address immediate food and nutrition security needs of the vulnerable. Support under this component will prioritize hotspots of food insecurity and will therefore potentially be extended to areas outside the landscapes prioritized under the parent project. Component 6 will be implemented in its entirety by WFP as a Project Implementing Entity (PIE) through the signing of output agreements, good and related services delivery contracts, and/or Technical Assistance agreements with the Government, as applicable. This is based on its track record in addressing food insecurity in the country and ability to rapidly scale up activities. Component 6 will consist of the following sub-components:

14. **Sub-component 6.1: Distributing food and food vouchers.** This subcomponent will support provision of food using two different modalities, the application of which would be decided based on market conditions and specific needs of different locations and communities. Direct food distribution will be considered where food supply is limited and the logistics for such distribution exist. Vouchers will be considered in situations of functioning and well-supplied markets from which beneficiaries could redeem their entitlement. The size and composition of food baskets will be tailored to local preferences,

⁵The *Cadre Harmonisé* is a unifying tool that helps to produce relevant, consensual, rigorous, and transparent analyses of current and projected food and nutrition situations. It classifies the severity of food and nutrition insecurity based on the international classification scale through an approach that refers to well-defined functions and protocols.



demographic profile, activity levels, local coping capacity, and existing levels of malnutrition and disease, considering supply constraints and availability. Relevant assessments that have already been conducted by UN agencies will be used and will be complemented through additional work as needed. Beneficiaries will be identified by communities through a participatory process involving local leaders. This activity is expected to benefit 9,000 beneficiaries, 60 percent of whom will be women.

15. **Sub-component 6.2: Labor-intensive works (LIPW):** This subcomponent will support the payment of 6 months of daily wages for 68,000 participating laborers selected among the most food insecure (this is expected to also benefit their households). The goal is to give immediate income to the most food insecure, so that they can access food in exchange for their labor. Daily wages will be provided in cash or value vouchers as this activity would only be implemented where food is available in the market. The key differences between this subcomponent and similar activities under the parent project (subcomponent 2.1) include: (i) inclusion of areas (based on prevalence of food insecurity) beyond the geographical boundaries of the parent Project; (ii) the selection criteria for works to be supported (which will be defined in the Project Implementation Manual), which will focus primarily on improving food security; (iii) works selected will be conducted by the most vulnerable, food-insecure households (while the parent project relies on service providers that are encouraged to use local labor) whose selection may build on vulnerability criteria used by WFP; (iv) works will be smaller in scale compared to works financed under the parent project; and (v) works will be selected among those that have already been identified by the communities or that can be identified at the early stages of developing the local Project Investment Plans (PIPs). UN agencies in Congo are already implementing such activities. For example, WFP does so particularly in the Pool Department, targeting 1,500 households under the rubric of “Food for Assets”, and could scale them up with additional funding.

16. **Sub-component 6.3: Managing Malnutrition:** This subcomponent will support an integrated nutrition security intervention, targeting children under the age of five, and pregnant and lactating women and girls (PLWG). The nutritional needs of children and of pregnant and lactating mothers will be addressed through specialized feeding programs such as Blanket Supplementary Feeding (BSF)⁶ and, Targeted Supplementary Feeding (TSF).⁷ Where necessary, support will also be extended to the integrated management of severe acute malnutrition (SAM) through screening and treatment of SAM children and infants and young child feeding. Specific nutrition programs and eligible beneficiaries will be identified based on surveys and predetermined criteria which is to be implemented through a facilitated community targeting process.

Legal Operational Policies

Triggered?

Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50

Yes

⁶ BSF is one of the approaches used to support food insecure households and help to prevent wasting in children under five during periods where food availability may be insufficient.

⁷ TSF is a program where regular (every three or six months) nutritional screening is done in the community followed by provision of blended food.



Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60

No

Summary of Assessment of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

The main environmental risks include potential adverse environmental impacts such as Risk of soil and water pollution due to oil spills and pesticide use; Risk of lung diseases; Disruption of community activities; Risk of construction accidents; Reduction of vegetation area; Waste generation; Loss of cultural heritage; Degradation and risk of loss of vegetation cover; Loss of ecosystem services; Disruption of sensitive habitats and ecosystems with risk of migration of certain mammals; Decrease in biological diversity.

The main social risks include i. possible temporary or permanent physical and/or economic displacement impacts from project activities as well as restrictions on access to legally designated parks and protected areas, particularly under component 2; ii. impacts on livelihoods through infrastructure construction and rehabilitation activities; iii. the risk of disturbance of habits and customs and desecration of worship/cultural sites; iv. risks of exclusion of communities if the selection criteria of beneficiaries is not inclusive, transparent and/or fair, particularly among vulnerable and marginalized groups including women, indigenous peoples, persons with disabilities, ex-combatants, refugees, and Internally Displaced People (IDP); v. occupational Health and Safety, and adverse impacts on community health; vi. labor influx and vii. risks of gender-based violence (GBV), and sexual exploitation and abuse/sexual harassment (SEA/SHS).

E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

26. **Changes to Implementation Arrangements:** MPSIR will continue to be the project implementing agency, acting through a PIU. To facilitate timely and efficient implementation of project activities, the parent project PIU will be strengthened with additional staff including a Food Security Specialist, an Environment Safeguards Assistant, a Social Safeguards assistant, a Financial Management Assistant, and a Procurement Assistant. The PIU will also be supported by WFP, acting as a specialized supplier or provider of technical assistance in implementation of the project. This will guarantee both the timely and effective implementation of planned activities.

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APPROVAL

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