



Additional Financing Appraisal Environmental and
Social Review Summary
Appraisal Stage
(AF ESRS Appraisal Stage)

Date Prepared/Updated: 11/15/2023 | Report No: ESRSAFA621



I. BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Region	Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency(ies)
Liberia	WESTERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA		
Project ID	Project Name		
P181083	Rural Economic Transformation Project Second Additional Financing		
Parent Project ID (if any)	Parent Project Name		
P175263	Liberia: Rural Economic Transformation Project		
Practice Area (Lead)	Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Board Date
Agriculture and Food	Investment Project Financing	10/30/2023	12/19/2023
Estimated Decision Review Date	Total Project Cost		
10/19/2023	93,000,000		

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Proposed Development Objective

To improve productivity and market access for small holder farmers and agri-enterprises for selected value chains in project participating counties.

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

No

C. Summary Description of Proposed Project Activities

The proposed second AF will mainly finance the scaling-up of a road corridor rehabilitation under the parent project. This road corridor has been prioritized for its contribution to markets access and overall food security. The AF will include the following changes: (i) modification of project activities; (ii) changes in project costs; and (iii) changes in the results framework. The AF will deploy additional credits in the amount of US\$76 million from IDA, and an additional grant in the amount of US\$9.0 million from the Liberia Reconstruction Trust Fund.



Component 1: Improving the Enabling Environment for Agribusiness Development (IDA US\$3 million): No change is proposed to this component.

Component 2: Enhancing Competitiveness and Market Access through Productive Alliances (IDA US\$14 million): No change is proposed to this component.

Component 3: Agri-Marketing and Road Infrastructure Investments (original project US\$31.5 million; with AF US\$116.5 million): Component 3 costs will be increased by US\$85 million (US\$76 million from IDA and US\$9 million from the TF) to scale-up investments in infrastructure. The AF will scale-up activities will focus on financing the construction of an additional 85 km of the Southeastern Corridor, spot improvement to feeder roads leading to the corridor, and the related monitoring consultancy services. This includes 75 km from Toetown to Zwedru and a 10 km spur connecting the Southeastern Corridor to the Cote d'Ivoire border. This road section links the southeastern part of Liberia, where about a third of its population dwells, to the capital city of Monrovia as well as the Freeport of Monrovia. This investment is key to providing an economic lifeline for inaccessible rural areas with high incidence of poverty. It will also support the economic integration of the region with the rest of Liberia and neighboring countries and foster regional trade with Côte d'Ivoire and Guinea. In addition, construction of this segment to an all-weather standard will support the food security crisis response by closing a critical gap in road connectivity that constrains market access and agricultural production in Nimba County.

The road will be constructed under a design-build approach based on an existing conceptual design. Works will include full construction of a two-lane carriageway (3.75-meter-wide lanes and 1.5-meter paved shoulders) with bituminous surfacing along the existing right-of-way, with associated drainage structures, and road furniture. In the urban zones, the road section will have 1.5-meter-wide block paved pedestrian walkways on both sides with concrete side drains, and disability inclusive access as required. The works will also provide several minor cross-drainage structures, culverts, and bridges over streams and rivers. The pavement will have a 20-year design life. The designs and works will incorporate road safety measures through pre-investment, design, and post-construction safety audits. About US\$2 million of the additional resources will finance spot improvements to critical sections of feeder roads linking targeted agricultural production zones to the primary road corridor. The AF will also fund an estimated US\$5 million resettlement compensation cost for the original 40km road section as well as the additional 85km length of road proposed under this additional financing.

Component 4: Project Coordination and Management and Contingency Emergency Response (IDA \$6.5 million): No change is proposed to this component.

Component 5: Support to Food Security (IDA US\$30 million): No change is proposed to this component.

The change in the results framework is to revise the length of 'Road construction' from 40 kilometers to 125 kilometers

D. Environmental and Social Overview

D.1 Overview of Environmental and Social Project Settings

RETRAP operates in all four regions (Northern, Central, Western, Northeast, South and Southeast) of Liberia within 15 Counties including Bong, Nimba, Grand Bassa, Bomi, Grand Cape Mount, Grand Gedeh, Grand Kru, Maryland,



Montserrado, Margibi, Sinoe, Lofa, River Cess, River Gee, and Gbarpolu Counties. The social and cultural dynamics in these regions differs from one county to another. Many of these counties have been severely impacted by a decade and half long civil war, the Ebola and COVID-19 pandemics. Since the end of several years of armed conflict and extreme insecurity in 2003, Liberia has experienced an end to large-scale organized violence, and seen improvements in the experiences and perceptions of a wide range of other forms of violence. Security challenges in the country are still pervasive. Specific to this Project, violence and crime remain genuine threats in the daily life of many Liberians, and sexual violence in particular remains widespread. The international community is supporting the Government's efforts in conflict mitigation and peace building. The country faces widespread poverty, inadequate access to basic services, very poor living conditions, food insecurity, political fragility, and weak infrastructure. The parent project acknowledged that there is profound inequality between women and men in Liberia, which ranks 156th out of 162 countries on the inequality index between the sexes. Liberia's significant strides toward economic growth, educational parity, and greater protections for women's rights have not yet translated to equal opportunities for women. Women still comprise the majority of laborers in the informal economy with 74 percent of all female workers in the informal sector, and 41 percent of university-educated women working informally, compared to 24 percent of university-educated men. The underdeveloped and gender-blind infrastructure adds additional challenges for women particularly in rural areas. Investment in mobility infrastructure particularly in rural environments may help women increase their income, as it ensures access to markets where they can sell their products. As in the parent project, the monitoring and evaluation will collect sex-disaggregated data.

The 15 counties generally experience a unimodal rainfall which starts from mid-April to late October, and the dry season from mid-November to mid-April. Average annual rainfall along the coastal belt is over 4,000 mm and declines to 1,300 mm at the forest-savannah boundary in the north. The counties have varied ecosystems including mineral ores, forests, grasslands, mangroves, wetlands, rivers, lakes and the continental shelf, hosting several birds, mammals, reptiles and insect species. There are several protected and proposed protected areas across the counties and are in the form of national park, strict nature reserve, nature reserve, national forest, and Game reserve. The protected areas include: Sapo National Park, Nimba National Park, Mount Nimba Strict Nature Reserve, Lofa-Mano National Park, Gio National Forest, Gibi National Forest, Wonegizi Nature Conservation, Cape Mount Conservation, Wologizi forest, Belle Forest, Yomo Forest, Grebo Forest. There are also 8 Important Bird Areas (IBAs) within 15 counties, and some of them are located within the national parks. These include Wologizi and Wenegizi Mountains in Lofa County; Lofa-Mano and Cape Mount in Grande Cape Mount County; Nimba Mountains in Nimba County; Zwedru and Cavalla River in Grand Gedeh County; and Sapo in Sinoe County.

The rich biodiversity is being threatened by land degradation, overexploitation of resources through excessive harvesting or hunting, introduction of exotic species and ineffective institutional arrangements. The main causes of environmental degradation in the selected counties include uncontrolled logging, fuelwood harvesting, cultivation of annual and perennial non-timber crops, encroachment by human settlement, and unsustainable mineral and sand mining activities.

There are possible occurrences of few patches of natural habitats in the area of influence of the roads. In addition, ESIA reports for the 40km under the parent project and its Biodiversity Management Framework (BMF) developed and disclosed in March 2022, indicated the possible occurrence of some animal species of conservation value such as the critically endangered Western Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes verus*). It also shows that the Zwedru Proposed Protected

Area, which lies about 5 km away from the road section at Toe Town, is an Important Bird Area. The ESIA for the 85km will determine the risks and impacts of the road construction activities on the protected areas. Detail biodiversity baseline information about the 85km will also be provided upon completion of a biodiversity field survey.



D.2 Overview of Borrower’s Institutional Capacity for Managing Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

There are no changes to the implementation arrangements under the proposed AF. The environment and social risks rating under the parent project is substantial and performance remain Satisfactory. The implementation responsibilities of the parent project will be retained. The PIUs at Ministry of Agriculture (MOA) and the Infrastructure Implementation Unit (IIU) of the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) will retain the overall environmental and social risk management responsibility of AF-supported activities. The Ministry of Agriculture (MoA), as the principal implementing agency on the parent project, through its Project Management Unit (PMU) will be responsible for the overall project implementation and will collaborate closely with other relevant Ministries and their respective Departments and Agencies, including with the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) on the road works component of the Additional Finance project. The Infrastructure Implementation Unit (IIU) of the MPW will continue to lead the implementation of the road construction activities under Parent and AF Project.

The PMU of MOA has dedicated Environmental specialist, Social Specialist and Gender Specialist that oversee environmental and social risk management while the IIU of MPW has a Resettlement, Environmental and Social Safeguards (RESS) Division with a dedicated Environmental Specialist and Social Specialist supported by four additional staff overseeing environmental and social risk management. The both of the parent project will continue their support to the AF to ensure that E&S risks are adequately assessed and managed. County Level Environmental and Social Focal Points designated under the parent project shall be maintained throughout Project implementation. Liberia continues to struggle with limited capacity of qualified and competent environmental and social professionals in government ministries, departments, and agencies. However, both the MoA and MPW have been implementing the parent project including the Smallholder Agriculture Transformation and Agribusiness Revitalization Project (STAR-P, P160945) and IDA financed transport projects (e.g., Liberia Road Asset Management Project (LIBRAMP, P125574), respectively, in Liberia with appreciable level of safeguards management experience in World Bank-funded projects. However, MPW/IIU and MOA/PMU experience and exposure to handle a complex project such as RETRAP with likely cumulative impacts and potential associated facilities is still limited. Considering the limited experience of the ministries and PIUs in implementing ESF projects, coordination, and collaboration between the two ministries and implementation units will be monitored closely. In addition, the Project Team at MOA and IIU have benefited from trainings on the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) and are gradually gaining experience working under the World Bank ESF. Their capacity would continue to be built to improve on the management of project environmental and social risks and impacts and to ensure effective coordination of the national and subnational level implementation of environmental and social risk mitigation measures. Capacity building requirements have been incorporated into the parent project ESMF and ESCP to be carried out as required throughout the project implementation.

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II. SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL (ES) RISKS AND IMPACTS

A. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

Substantial



A.1 Environmental Risk Rating

Substantial

The environmental risk classification for the parent project is substantial and remains substantial for the Additional Financing. The classification is based on the potential environmental risks and impacts, the sensitivity of the recipient environment and the capacity of the implementing agencies to manage the risks. The project’s adverse environmental risks and impacts under the parent project mainly emanate from interventions under Components 2 (Enhancing Competitiveness and Market Access through Productive Alliances) and 3 (Agri-Marketing and Road Infrastructure Investments). Component 3 which is the focus of the AF, will focus on the expansion of the 40km road corridor to 125km of the Southeastern Corridor. This includes the upgrading of a 75km road from unpaved road to paved road Toetown (X: -8.55477189/ Y: 6.31928094) to Zwedru (X: 8.13974545/ Y: 6.05981848) and a 10 km spur connecting the Southeastern Corridor through Toe Town-Senewen Twon (X: -8.56151887/ Y: 6.4141161) to the Cote d’Ivoire border (X:-8.5208152/ Y: 6.4640613). This could contribute to destruction of natural habitats, soil erosion, depletion of biodiversity, water contamination etc. Literature review of both the ESIA and BMF for the 40km section of the corridor under the parent project show the below findings, however, these findings will be verified in a detailed biodiversity field survey: (i) The proposed road corridor is close to the Zwedru Proposed Protected Area and the Gio National Forest (ii) The road corridor transects a considerable tract of forest, but detailed botanical surveys are non-existent in the area. There is a considerable amount of riverine forest in the corridor, (iii) critically endangered, endangered, vulnerable, and endemic mammal species are expected to be present and/or crossing close to the road sections. The critically endangered Western Chimpanzee (*Pan troglodytes verus*) and African Forest Elephant (*Loxodonta cyclotis*), the endangered Pygmy Hippopotamus (*Choeropsis liberiensis*), the endemic (vulnerable) Nimba Otter Shrew (*Micropotamogale lamottei*), and the three endangered and vulnerable species of pangolins registered in Liberia are expected to be present. The Zwedru Proposed Protected Area, which lies about 5 km away from the road section at Toe Town, is an Important Bird Area. Reptiles including lizards, skinks and snakes, different fish species, and large number of invertebrates such as dragonflies and damselflies are expected to be found in the project area. The status of these species is unknown, but it is expected that some could be of conservation value. No studies of invasive species have been conducted in the region within which the road sections occur, but some of the common faunal and floral invasive species found in Liberia’s terrestrial and freshwater environments are expected to be found in the project area. The forests around the project area provide ecosystem services to the local communities such as the use of forests for sacred rituals, provision of food, herbal medicine and other economic services such as charcoal production. Some tribes in the project area believe that chimpanzees are their ancestors. Elephants have an important cultural value among some if not all groups in the project area. Many people rely on bushmeat hunting in the project area. The road works may pose occupational and community health and safety issues including noise, dust, fumes, vibration, risks of manual handling, mechanical hazards, trips, slips, falls, etc. The environmental risks and impacts associated with the additional 85 km of road development under AF will have the same level of impacts and risks associated with the 40 km of road works proposed in the parent project. The borrower has agreed to undertake appropriate actions to improve environment and social oversight as recommended in previous Implementation Support Mission (ISM). These actions include: (i) finalization of the Environment and Social Screening for propo

A.2 Social Risk Rating

Substantial

The social risk rating for the proposed AF is substantial, same as the parent project. Social risks associated with the additional financing relates to interventions under component 3: Road Infrastructure Investments which can lead to temporary or permanent land acquisition, restrictions on land use and involuntary resettlement. In particular, permanent and or temporary economic or physical displacement are anticipated under the rehabilitation of the 125



km road corridor(40km under the parent project and 85km under AF2). Poor labor and working conditions for direct and contracted workers, lack of functional grievance mechanism, and intra-communal tensions over implementation issues and lack of respect for their cultural heritage; potential legacy issues related to the impacts of previously proposed road construction activities by the Government of Liberia on the 85 km stretch for which structures were marked and affected people captured but could not proceed because of funding. The road works activities will also include the road diversions and detours. Potential for economic or physical displacement for these activities cannot be ruled out. Sites for these activities will be screened for E&S risks and impacts using the project ESMF screening tool and appropriate mitigation measures put in place to address the risks and impacts during implementation. While use of local labor is anticipated, use of migrant workers and risk of use of child labor and/ or forced labor cannot be ignored. This could be mitigated by ensuring that local labor laws and the requirements of ESS 2 are followed and Labor management procedures and plans are defined.

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

B.1 Relevance of Environmental and Social Standards

ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

Relevant

The AF will scale-up activities under component 3 and focus on financing the upgrading of an additional 85 km of the Southeastern Corridor. The activities will also include spot improvements to feeder roads leading to the corridor, culverts, block paved pedestrian walkways on both sides with concrete side drains, and disability inclusive access. These interventions could lead to bushland clearing, earthworks and handling and disposal of hazardous substances. Potential environmental risks and impacts could include deforestation, forest degradation, soil erosion, loss of natural habitat, depletion of biodiversity and may exacerbate climate change problems. Additionally, the environmental risks and impacts could include generation of dust, noise, fumes, and vibrations, waste from workers and equipment repairs may contaminate soil and water bodies in project communities. Excavation of soil from borrow sites for road construction could lead to destruction of vegetation and development of dangerous pits which could serve as death traps and breeding grounds for disease-borne vectors. Project workers could be exposed to occupational health and safety risks including exposure to mechanical hazards. The project design includes innovations to counteract some of these potential adverse risks and impacts.

Given the nature and scopes of the project and the risks and impacts cannot be determined at once, the Borrower has prepared under the parent project an ESMF that sets out the principles, rules, guidelines and procedures for identifying and managing the potential environmental and social risks and impacts.

The ESMF was cleared by the Bank and disclosed in-country on 04/28/2021 and on the Bank’s external website on 04/30/2021. The said ESMF will be updated 90 days after effectiveness to include the AF activities as well. An Environmental and Social Impact Assessment and Environmental and Social Management Plan was prepared for the 40 km road corridor under the parent project. Both the ESIA and ESMP were cleared by the Bank and respectively disclosed in-country and on the Bank’s external website on 04/30/2021 and 05/1/2021. The ESIA and ESMP will be updated to include baseline data on the biodiversity survey while a separate ESIA will be prepared for the proposed 85 Km road corridor under the AF. In addition to the ESIA, a biodiversity field survey including studies on potential critically endangered western chimpanzees in the project area as well as an assessment of the potential E&S risks and impacts associated with the operational phase of the intervention will be conducted on the 40 Km Road corridor. The studies have delayed, however, procurement processes have been initiated by the Project. Extension of the

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biodiversity survey to the 85 km road corridor will be predicated upon findings of the 40 km road section. The separate ESIA and Biodiversity Survey Reports for the 85km will be cleared by the Bank and disclosed prior to finalization of road designs and disbursement for road-construction related works, to mitigate potential risks of further delays in conducting this assessment.

These instruments shall be disclosed in-country and on the Bank external website. The ESCP of the parent project has been updated to document material measures and actions that are required to achieve compliance with the ESSs. The overall social risk of the AF is substantial. In addition to the 40 km road originally proposed under the parent project, the AF will finance additional 85 km extension road from Tappita to Zwedru to the Ivory Coast Boarder with a total stretch of approximately 125 km. The RAP for the 40 km under the parent project was prepared, cleared and disclosed in-country and on the Bank’s external website on 04/30/2021. The proposed 85 km road corridor will have potential risks and impacts akin to the parent project. They include temporary and permanent land take which could lead to physical and economic displacement and cumulative social impacts. Apart from the proposed 85 km road construction and rehabilitation corridor, which is known, detailed designs and road diversion requirements for the corridor are not known at this stage. In the absence of this information, the RPF prepared for the parent project shall guide the preparation of site-specific RAPs when the details are known and implemented prior to commencement of civil works. The RPF was disclosed in-country and on the Bank external website on 04/28/2021. The parent project ESMF disclosed in-country on 04/28/2021 and on the Bank external website 04/30/2021 will be used to screen the subprojects under the AF to identify related social risks and impacts on people and communities to guide the preparation of site specific instruments (e.g. ESIA, ESMP and RAP), to address social risks and impacts that may be identified. The ESMF and RPF will be updated 90 days after effectiveness to include the AF activities. The risks related to Gender Based Violence (GBV) for the road works are addressed under ESS1, ESS2 and ESS 10.

The client will also benefit from capacity building activities to streghten capacity for effective implementation of the E&S instruments as provided in the updated ESCP. The project E&S capacity building plan developed include tailored measures/requirements to build and maintain needed capacity of implementing agencies for implementing and coordinating E&S-related issues.

ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions

Relevant

This standard is relevant as the AF will involve various types of project workers (direct, contracted and primary supply workers). There will not be any community workers engaged for the project, nor are any migrant workers anticipated to be engaged, given the locally available labor force for corridor work.

Workers involved in advancing the Project activities may be exposed to discrimination, inequalities and unfairness and/or some degree of occupational health and safety (OHS) risks including injuries; snake bites and animal attacks; manual handling of construction tools and machinery and associated injuries; slips, trips; falls, stress; collision with machinery; entanglement with machine parts; vibration disorders, noise induced hearing disorders; dust and fumes inhalation, etc. The existing LMP captures the relevant risks to project workers as well as the required mitigation measures.

To ensure the health and safety of workers during the construction and maintenance of project roads, the contractors will be required to prepare and implement C-ESMPs and an Occupational Health & Safety Plan (OHSP) following the World Bank Group Environment, Health and Safety (EHS) Guidelines and the project Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) prior to commencement of civil works. The OHSP will also include procedures on



incident and accident investigation and reporting, recording and reporting of non-compliance, emergency preparedness and response procedures, and continuous worker training/awareness. The C-ESMP and OHSPs prepared by contractors shall be cleared, approved and monitored by the IIU Environmental and Social (E&S) specialists in coordination with the MOA PIUs E&S Specialists.

While the number of direct workers and contractor workers for the 85 km corridor cannot be estimated at the current stage, no large-scale labor influx or labor camps are expected as use of local labor is anticipated. In line with ESS2, the use of forced labor and the use of child labor under the age of 18 for hazardous work is prohibited. The Liberia Labor law requires all workers to have the right to healthy conditions and protective equipment whilst at work, among other measures. The Labor Management Procedures prepared as a standalone document, for the parent project, include measures to ensure that workers hired are provided appropriate labor and working conditions in line with the local laws and consistent with ESS2 and shall be updated and adopted for the AF. The impact of COVID-19 pandemic on labor and working conditions is improving as workers interact with each other without restriction. However, the project will be implemented under the prevailing national COVID-19 protocols. The Labor Management Procedures set out the requirements including GRM for workers and code of conduct to prevent and address any sexual harassment, intimidation and/or exploitation within the project. All staff hired by the project will be required to sign and adhere to a standardized code of conduct. The proposed AF will not alter the types of workers proposed by investments except to facilitate increased investment in component 3 activities. The LMP prepared under the parent will be updated 90days after effectiveness to include the proposed AF activities .

ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management

Relevant

This standard is relevant. Road rehabilitation activities are likely to pollute the environment as a result of soil erosion from clearing of native vegetation; discharge of sediment or water into nearby stormwater drains or waterways; emissions of noise, dust, or odors that cause nuisance or potential health impacts; the escape of litter; or excavation or importation of unsuitable fill materials. Implementation of the road rehabilitation subproject may result in the generation of hazardous and non-hazardous waste, including spoil material, used oil, etc. These investments will also require resource materials more specifically stone, soil, sand or gravel, cement and bitumen. These have been identified and mitigation measures included in the sites specific ESIA and ESMP which are being prepared for the road construction works and will be disclosed for the AF. During the implementation phase, the selected contractor will develop the contractor’s ESMP inclusive of a waste management plan for collection, transportation, and disposal of waste in a manner consistent with ESS3. The contractor will be required to obtain from licensed quarries and plants during implementation.

The Borrower under the parent project has put in place mechanism to assess impacts from waste generation, and effluent discharge expected from agriculture production, food processing, application of agrochemicals and pesticides, construction works including road rehabilitation, drains, culverts etc. and other project-supported activities. Under the AF, relevant mitigation measures into the subproject specific ESMPs and ensure adherence to conducted activities in line with the GIIP and WB EHS guidelines.

GHG Emission Estimates: The Project will contribute to carbon sequestration, as it is a negative emission project. The project has conducted an estimate of GHG savings taking into account the net savings from the production of the selected commodities - rubber, cassava and vegetables; the processing of livestock manure and organic waste from

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processing facilities and agro-logistic centers into compost; reduction in fertilizer and pesticides use through proper soil and crop management, use of energy efficient equipment at agro-logistic centers; training and adoption of afforestation and soil conservation practices, promotion of renewable energy and net GHG emission technologies. etc. The result of the GHG Accounting analysis shows that the Project will constitute a carbon emission savings of 33,568 tons of CO2 equivalent per year for 20 years.

ESS4 Community Health and Safety

Relevant

This standard is relevant. The proposed interventions under the parent project and its AF (subcomponent 3) will contribute towards the construction of the road and will pose health and safety risks to workers and communities through emission of dust, fumes, gases, noise, vibration, and traffic and road safety risks. However, the parent project and AF will present the following risks and each of these risks will be mitigated by adopting appropriate risk mitigation measures.

The road design, construction and maintenance processes would incorporate road safety enhancement measures through pre-investment, design, and post construction safety audits. Specific road safety measures will include defining the Built Environment including the road design and vehicle design, enforcement of strict application of the law, teaching good road behavior through awareness campaigns (e.g., adherence to speed limits, road traffic signs, shelter parking, pedestrian/zebra crossing, etc.) and promotion of roadside medical care and access to para-medics in the “Golden Hour”, or the hour immediately following a road accident during which the provision of first aid can greatly enhance the prospects of the accident victim’s survival. The contractor(s) will develop a ‘traffic management plan’ to be approved by the IIU and implemented throughout the subproject implementation. Excavations from road construction activities may pose risks to communities if effective barriers/fencing are not installed, and water-filled pits may serve as breeding grounds for disease-borne vectors which may be a nuisance in communities. Other health issues anticipated include Sexually Transmitted Diseases (STDs), such as HIV/AIDs, associated with labor influx, and spread of COVID-19 in project communities through project workers and vice versa. Moreover, spray drift from agrochemicals, e.g., pesticides could pollute neighboring communities and adversely affect their health. Furthermore, the project design of agri-market infrastructure, processing facilities, road and other infrastructure will incorporate necessary structural measures for adaptation to climate and geophysical hazards considering safety risks to the communities. The structural measures will include universal access the market facilities. The ESMF developed for the parent project includes practical mitigation measures and protocols to safeguard workers and communities from these health and safety risks including COVID-19 protocol to prevent or minimize the spread of the virus to project community and among workers. The ESMF will be applicable to the project AF.

Security Risk: Security challenges in the country remain pervasive following the civil wars. The project, as part of sites specific instruments, e.g., ESIA and/or ESMP, will assess security risks and include appropriate mitigation in the ESMP.

ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement

Relevant

The ESS5 is relevant. In addition to the 40 km road originally proposed under the parent project from Tappita to Toe Town, the AF will finance additional 85 km extension road from Toe Town to Zwedru to the Ivory Coast Boarder with a total stretch of approximately 125 km. RAP for the 40 km under the parent project was prepared, cleared and disclosed



in-country and on the Bank’s external website on 04/30/2021. Ministry of Public Works has requested the Ministry of Finance to transfer RAP implementation cost (approx. US\$1.1 million) to RAP designated account. The RAP shall be implemented prior to commencement of civil works. The proposed 85 km road corridor will have potential risks and impacts similar to the parent project involving temporary or permanent land acquisition and associated physical and economic displacement. Since the 85 km section of the 125 km is known at the AF preparation stage, a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) for the proposed road works should have been carried out prior to project appraisal and board approval. However, given the length of the corridor, capacity of the client and the required amount of time and resources to adequately prepare the RAP, the project shall prepare and implement the RAP prior to commencement of civil works, as agreed in the ESCP.

As specific subproject’s locations of some components are not known during preparation, the project shall update and adopt the Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) developed for the parent project and disclosed in-country on April 28, 2021 and on the World Bank external website on April 28, 2021 to guide the preparation of site-specific instruments during implementation. GoL will provide funding for resettlement cost. These requirements have been included in the ESCP.

ESS6 Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources

Relevant

The anticipated land clearing resulting from road works under the AF and the expansion of farmlands under the parent project will potentially cause deforestation, forest degradation and destruction of natural habitat with adverse impacts on biodiversity. The use of pesticides, if not properly selected, could terminate several useful flora and fauna. The Project’s adverse risks and impacts on ESS6 have been assessed in the ESMF and will be subsequently assessed in the specific ESIA and ESMPs to be prepared for subprojects with mitigation measures following the mitigation hierarchy. The ESIA prepared for the 40 km road corridor under the parent project has indicated the possibility of potentially critically endangered western chimpanzees in the project area. Also, other biodiversity of conservation importance may be found in the area. Since the ESIA study relied extensively on literature published in 2015 on “Conservation status of Chimpanzees” by Tweh et al., 2015, the ESCP requires that a biodiversity field survey (BFS) and Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) preparation for the 40km road corridor. The BFS scope may extend to the 85 km road corridor proposed under the AF and will be predicated on the findings from the 40 km road corridor survey. On potential project risks and adverse impacts on biodiversity including the potential critically endangered chimpanzees, the project will screen all subproject activities including a detailed screening for biodiversity impacts, to be conducted by a biodiversity specialist taking into account available studies, involving field visits and documented with supporting evidence. The Terms of Reference (TOR) for the biodiversity survey for the 40 km road corridor has been developed and a consultant is being recruited for the survey. All activities/subprojects with significant impacts which cannot be effectively mitigated will be excluded from the project financing and this requirement is emphasized in the parent project ESCP. The requirement to screen and exclusion of significant impactful activities will be applied to all project activities, including subprojects to be financed under parent project and AF. Where subprojects present some mitigable risks and impacts on biodiversity and avoidance of such impacts is not possible, the project will prepare and implement a Biodiversity Management Plan (BMP) including measures and actions to mitigate impacts as required by the ESMF and consistent with ESS6. Such BMPs will be finalized, reviewed, cleared by the Bank, and disclosed before commencement of the activity.

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

Not Currently Relevant

There are no indigenous peoples/sub-Saharan African historically underserved traditional local communities in the project area.

ESS8 Cultural Heritage

Relevant

This standard is relevant. Liberia has very rich cultural resources and heritage. Most Liberians have great respect for their cultural properties, and cultural properties may be found at any place. The forests around the project area serve as sacred sites for rituals for some tribes. An assessment of impact of project activities on cultural heritage at potential project sites is included in the existing ESMF and will be subsequently assessed in the site-specific ESIA. Preparation process and mitigation hierarchy will be applied during the management of the project's potential risks and impacts. "Chance Find Procedures" have been included in the ESMF of the parent project and will be included in the ESIA and ESMP to be prepared for sub-projects. Additionally, chance find clauses will be included in works contracts requiring contractors to stop construction if cultural heritage is encountered during construction and to notify and closely coordinate with the relevant mandated Government authority for the salvaging and restoring of such cultural heritage in accordance with national law.

ESS9 Financial Intermediaries

Not Currently Relevant

No financial intermediaries are involved in the project.

ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure

Relevant

The standard is relevant. Project stakeholders include farmers, farmer-based organizations, national and subnational government agencies, road users and transport associations, local communities, in particular women, youth and vulnerable groups including persons with disabilities and the aged; private sector transport business, entities in the agribusiness value chain; civil society organizations, nongovernmental organizations, and other service providers.

Meaningful stakeholder engagement is vital to ensure inclusive participation of those who may be adversely impacted, promote stakeholder buy-in, manage public expectations and navigate political-economy situations. Such engagement will need to address key stakeholders across the project counties and along the corridors of influence to understand various perspectives of impacts and benefits, and how adverse impacts will be experienced, mitigated and similarly, how benefits of the interventions can be enhanced.

The AF will not introduce new stakeholders than those envisaged in the original SEP, as it seeks to facilitate increased investment in activities already covered by the parent (existing) project. However, the existing SEP will be updated 90days after effectiveness to include the AF activities. Similarly, the Grievance Redress Mechanism which has been established in all the counties with the support of the project E&S specialists will continue to be relevant and functional for the activities funded by the additional financing. The MOA shall prepare, adopt, and implement a GBV/SEA/SH Action Plan proportionate to the project manage the risks of GBV/SEA/SH, 6 months after effectiveness.

Public Disclosure



B.2 Legal Operational Policies that Apply

OP 7.50 Projects on International Waterways No

OP 7.60 Projects in Disputed Areas No

B.3 Other Salient Features

Use of Borrower Framework No

No Borrower framework will be used.

Use of Common Approach No

N/A

C. Overview of Required Environmental and Social Risk Management Activities

C.1 What Borrower environmental and social analyses, instruments, plans and/or frameworks are planned or required during implementation?

Update existing ESIA and ESMP with baseline Biodiversity Survey Reports for the 40km under the parent project and prepare a new ESIA and ESMP and Biodiversity Field survey report for the additional 85km under the AF which will be cleared by the Bank and disclosed prior to finalization of road designs.

Adapt the ESMF, RPF, SEP and LMP of the Parent Project for the AF.

Develop RAP for the 85km which shall be cleared by the Bank and disclosed prior to commencement of civil works

III. CONTACT POINTS

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IV. FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

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V. APPROVAL

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Practice Manager (ENV/SOC)	Oznur Oguz Kuntasal Cleared on 12-Oct-2023 at 15:55:44 EDT
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