



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

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 29-Nov-2021 | Report No: PIDISDSA33178



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country Congo, Republic of	Project ID P177969	Project Name Additional Financing: Republic of Congo Statistics Capacity Building Project	Parent Project ID (if any) P133731
Parent Project Name CG-Statistics Capacity Building Project	Region AFRICA WEST	Estimated Appraisal Date 04-Jan-2022	Estimated Board Date 03-Mar-2022
Practice Area (Lead) Poverty and Equity	Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Ministry of Economy and Finance	Implementing Agency National institute of Statistics

Proposed Development Objective(s) Parent

The objectives of the project are to (i) strengthen the National Statistical System in the production and, dissemination of timely and robust statistics relevant for policies and decision making, and (ii) promote the demand for statistical information.

Components

- Component 1: Improving the Institutional and Organizational Framework of the NSS
- Component 2: Improving the Production, Dissemination, and Use of Statistics
- Component 3: Project Management

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)

SUMMARY

Total Project Cost	10.00
Total Financing	10.00
of which IBRD/IDA	10.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS

World Bank Group Financing

International Development Association (IDA)	10.00
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IDA Credit	10.00
Environmental Assessment Category	
B-Partial Assessment	
Decision	
The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate	

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

The Republic of Congo (RoC) is a lower-middle-income country in Central Africa with an undiversified oil-dependent economy. The economy remains undiversified and highly vulnerable to shocks, especially volatile oil prices. After some stability during the second half of the 2000s, Congo's economic performance has fallen short of the target growth rate needed to achieve the 2025 Sustainable Development Goals. Between 2011 and 2015, the economy grew at a rate of 4 percent, compared to the projected growth rate of 8.5 percent set forth in the country's National Development Plan (NDP). The situation deteriorated between 2015 and 2020 with an average growth rate of -5.2 percent, mostly due to a high dependency on oil revenues. In fact, if the poor performance of the oil sector has caused this economy's contraction, the situation got worse with the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic at the end of the 2010s. Country's economy was hit by the containment measures in response to the pandemic and by the loss of oil export revenues due to the slump in external demand. Initially projected to grow at 4.4 percent in 2020, GDP is estimated to have contracted by 7.9 percent in 2020. Both oil and non-oil sectors were severely impacted, contracting by an estimated 7.7 percent and 8.3 percent, respectively.

The poverty rate, at the national poverty line and based on the national household survey, was estimated at 41% in 2011, varying from 69.4% in rural areas to less than 22% in Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire. Since 2011, no new national household poverty survey has been made available. However, simulations based on the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) 2014-2015 show a decline by 4.7 percentage points in 2015. Moreover, there is an increase in the extreme poverty incidence from 39% in 2015 to nearly 53% in 2020 as the result of the economic crisis triggered by the oil-price shock of 2014-2016, and the COVID-19 pandemic shock in 2020. The country's statistical capacity score is only 50 out of 100, which puts RoC in the 38th position in the region. This relatively poor score reflects not only the inability of the statistical system to provide reliable, timely, and accurate data over time but also the fact that coverage is far from meeting the basic requirements for an operational and effective statistical system. The overall score also shows that on various quality dimensions, performance has been insufficient, and there are concerns about methodological inadequacies underlying data production and the accountability and efficiency of resource utilization (e.g., surveys are not coordinated).

Sectoral and Institutional Context

Statistical activity in Congo is governed by Statistical Law No. 36-2018 of October 5, 2018 on official statistics. It establishes the National Statistics System (NSS), while setting out its mission and its components as well as the tools for coordinating its activity. This law also sets out the principles which must govern statistical production. While the Higher Statistics Commission remains the guiding body for national statistical policy and in consultation with the producers and users of



official statistics, it relies for its mission on the National Statistics Institute (*Institut National des Statistiques, INS*) which, in accordance with Law 35-2018, is responsible for coordinating the technical coordination of the activities of the NSS. The institutional framework clearly defines the roles and responsibilities of each party comprehensive and aims for the cohesion and balance of the NSS. Despite a satisfactory legal framework, the coordination and governance of the NSS are not effective due to its low application. Organs and tools coordination are not operational and finally the organic links between the different structures of the NSS are weak, causing the main problems affecting statistical production. In fact, the INS continues to function without staff regulations and autonomous budget and does still not fully exercise its role as NSS coordinator.

A number of results are obtained or expected with the support of the Republic of Congo Statistics Capacity Building Project (PSTAT) including:

- The construction of a new building for the INS and the Center for Applied Statistics and Planning (CASP) by 2023, with the purpose to improve the working environment for the staff for better productivity in the production and dissemination of statistical data.
- The population cartography work of the fifth Population and Housing Census; and the data collection of the enterprise census.
- The data collection of the Non-Standard Unit (NSU) survey under the household budget survey.
- The regular collection of price statistics, and the collection, validation, and publication of statistics bulletins on foreign trade in goods and services.
- The staff training plan developed for the INS technical staff.
- The training of 26 students in regional statistics schools in West Africa.
- The collection of information through high-frequency phone surveys to better understand the adverse effects of the COVID-19 pandemic.

Despite the implementation of the PSTAT and the important place of statistics within the monitoring and evaluation system of the NDP, statistical production remains low in both quantity and quality. In fact, statistics for other vital and strategic areas (agriculture, employment, civil status, justice, etc.) are still relatively rare or incomplete and less developed, while emerging areas (environment and gender) and social protection do not have appropriate mechanisms for the production of statistics. Moreover, the quality of the data remains low in view of the state of coordination of the NSS, the obsolescence of the production standard of National Accounts and the huge delay of the housing and population census (*recensement général de la population et de l'habitat, RGPH*).

The NSS is not able to fully assume its role in providing statistical data to inform, monitor and evaluate development policies and programs implemented by the Government. This is partly because of the weakness of human, financial and material resources. First, the NSS has very few qualified and motivated human resources despite a fairly large supply of statistician personnel. Then, the inadequate financing system does not mobilize sufficient financial resources for the realization of statistical activities and depends in part on technical and financial partners' support. Finally, the working conditions including the offices and the Information Communication Technology (ICT) infrastructure of the NSS are in a dilapidated state.

While the working conditions and ICT challenges are being improved through the construction of the INS-CASP building complex with the support of the project, some expected achievements under data production and human resource development are compromised because of a financial gap. Funds to complete the population census by carrying out the enumeration operation as well as the post-census activities remain insufficient. The population cartography was completed in June 2020 with the support of the project, and therefore requires the population enumeration as a next



phase, without prolonging the time between the cartography and the enumeration activities. This is because a prolonged population enumeration creates a time gap which requires another revision and adjustment of technical prerequisites including the already completed population cartography. Additionally, if preparatory works for the harmonized household living conditions survey are finalized and the NSU survey makes it possible to value the consumption basket of households during the main survey, there is a need of additional funds to follow the robust approach adopted by the WAEMU countries which is based on two waves rather than a single data collection. Finally, given the financial constraints, the project is not able to support the training activity beyond the academic year 2020-2021. As the result, most of students currently still engaged in studies will lose their scholarships, compromising the completion of their training.

A new National Strategy for the Development of Statistics (NSDS), developed with the support of the African Development Bank and the World Bank's statistics projects, is about to be validated. It will present more detailed information on the statistics diagnostic in the country, the main strategic axes to support the development of the NSS, an action plan, a financing and resources mobilization plan, as well as the institutional mechanism for implementing, monitoring and evaluating the NSDS.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Original PDO

The objectives of the project are to (i) strengthen the National Statistical System in the production and, dissemination of timely and robust statistics relevant for policies and decision making, and (ii) promote the demand for statistical information.

Current PDO

The objectives of the project are to: (i) strengthen the NSS in the production and dissemination of quality statistics relevant for policies and decision making; and, (ii) promote the demand for statistical information.

Key Results

Key results under this AF include:

- Completion of the Population and Housing census
- Completion of the Households and Budget Survey
- Training and hiring trained statisticians for the National Statistical System

D. Project Description

Component 1: Improving the institutional and organizational framework of the NSS. The project is supporting human resources development by supporting the training of 27 students (out of which one female) in regional statistics schools in West Africa. The CASP is being reformed and its organizational, functional aspects as well as the curriculum provide to students are being evaluated and revised. A staff training plan was also developed for INS technical staff. The project is supporting infrastructure development of the INS and CASP by helping construct and furnish the INS-CASP complex, purchase IT equipment and software for INS staff, and by renting office spaces for the INS until the new complex is completed.

Component 2: Improving the production, dissemination and use of statistics. The project supported the census cartography work of the fifth Population and Housing Census; the data collection of the enterprise census and; the data collection of the NSU survey under the household budget survey. The project is also supporting price statistics by



collecting base prices in the cities of Brazzaville, Pointe-Noire, Dolisie, Ouessou and Owando to produce the national harmonized consumer price index from January to June 2021; and since 2020. In addition, the project is supporting the INS collect, validate, and publish statistics bulletins on foreign trade in goods and services. The above-mentioned activities included different types of capacity building activities including on-the-job trainings, experience sharing sessions, and training of trainers for INS and NSS staff.

Component 3. Project Management. Under the additional financing, this component will continue to support activities to strengthen the capacity of the PIU for the day-to-day coordination, implementation and management of the project.

Activities to be financed through the proposed AF. As officially requested, three existing activities will be supported by this AF including: i) the population and housing census and the national household budget survey which fall under the Component 2, Improving the Production, Dissemination, and use of Statistics, increasing the component allocation from US\$13.8 million to US\$22.64 million; ii) the scholarship program which is part of the Component 1, Improving the Institutional and Organizational Framework of the INS, with an increase of the total amount from US\$12.8 million to US\$13.06 million. In addition to these three activities, it is also necessary to allocate more funds under Component 3, Project Management, to ensure that the project management unit will always have the optimal staffing capacity to ensure effective management of the project activities beyond December 2021. This component should increase from US\$6.3 million to US\$7.2 million.

E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements remain the same as for the parent project.

The INS, the main executing agency of the NSDS, is responsible for project coordination (Project Implementation Entity - PIE). The Project Implementation Unit (PIU) will be located in the INS if possible and will be responsible for day-to-day project management. The PIU team will be the same as for the parent project which consists of staff from the INS and consultants.

The Project Steering Committee (PSC): The PSC is the same as for the parent project. It is headed by a representative of the Ministry in charge of statistics and consists of representatives of the INS and key ministries, development partners, and data users; it will oversee, promote, coordinate, support, monitor, and evaluate progress. The PSC and the High Commission of Statistics will identify the goals and the NSS mission and promote awareness of these throughout the INS, emphasizing shared values that should be reflected in achieving the goals.

Work program and budget allocation: The PIU will prepare an integrated multi-year work plan based on activities planned under the proposed project. Each year the budgeted work plan will be derived from the multi-year plan and submitted for PSC review and then World Bank approval.

Project policies and procedures will be published in an implementation manual, which will be adopted by the PSC.



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

The PSTAT was initially classified as environmental category C during its preparation in 2014. At the request of the Government of the Republic of Congo, on July 22nd, 2017, the World Bank granted the project additional financing of twenty-five million dollars (USD 25,000,000). In view of the negative environmental and social impacts associated with the INS-CASP complex construction sub-project in Component 1, the project has been reclassified to Category B. The construction sub-project of the complex mainly concerns the construction of two new buildings, namely: The INS building: 1 building comprising a basement, a ground floor + 5 floors and 1 CASP building: Ground Floor +1 Floor. In addition to these two buildings, there are related works such as: technical premises, guardhouses, sanitation works, green spaces, roads and utilities and sports platforms. The INS-CASP complex construction sub-project is located in the Ouenzé commune in the Mpila district. It is an undeveloped plot of land. It is a non-built land located in the domain of the former agricultural mechanization center of Mpila whose cadastral references are cadastral references are as follows: Section U, block 114, plot 2, Arrondissement 5 Ouenzé, department of Brazzaville. The vegetation on the project site is characterized by associations of various crops, including cassava (*Manihot exculenta*), okra (*Abelmoschus esculentus*), beans (*Phaseolus vulgaris L.*), sorrel (*Hibiscus sabdariffa*), maize (*Zea mays*); the presence of exotic species: *Cassia siamea*, *Terminalia mantaly*, *Pinus caribaea*, *Eucalyptus spp.*) and fruit species: *Mangifera indica* or mango, *Dacryodes edulis* or safoutier, *Persea americana* or avocado) and *Carica papaya* or papaya.

G. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Albert Francis Atangana Ze, Environmental Specialist
Fabena Divine Babindamana Nee Niemet Gampika, Social Specialist

SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	The construction works of this building complex are likely to have adverse environmental and social risks on the biophysical and socio-economic environments. Thus, to manage these various risks and mitigate the adverse environmental and social impacts associated with the works. Thus, an environmental and social framing was carried out through the elaboration of the Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) and the Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF). These tools



		made it possible to (i) identify and assess the environmental and social impacts of the project components and (ii) define the principles of compensation and the institutional arrangements to be put in place for project implementation. In accordance with the provisions of these tools, an Environmental and Social Impact Statement (NIES) and a Brief Resettlement Plan (PSR) were developed.
Performance Standards for Private Sector Activities OP/BP 4.03	No	Not relevant
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	No	Not relevant
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	Not relevant
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	The project does not include any activity that necessitates the use of pesticides. Thus the policy is not triggered.
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	Yes	During excavation works, chance finds may occur, the project will develop a chance find management procedure which will be annexed to the environmental and social impact statement.
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	No	Not relevant
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	Yes	The project triggered OP 4.12 because of the construction of the new building to house the statistics offices in Brazzaville, which was expected to have an impact on local populations. A Summary Resettlement Plan (SRP) was developed, validated, and implemented. The implementation report of this SRP was shared with the World Bank on November 6, 2020. A revised version was shared on April 13, 2021, prior to the project restructuring. A GRM was also developed and made operational. In addition, a GRM relating to the project staff and the workers has been elaborated. This GRM should be operational before implementation in the project area.
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	Not relevant
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	Not relevant
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	Not relevant



KEY SAFEGUARD POLICY ISSUES AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

A. Summary of Key Safeguard Issues

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

The activities to be funded by the project are limited mainly to building human resources capacity, creating career development conditions, making NSS more attractive institution. The project will also support the production of relevant data in sectors as health, education, demographic, Human development and employment for decision-making. Equipment like computer hardware and data management system are also expected to be financed under the project.

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

The construction sub-project of the INS-CASP complex mainly concerns the realization of the works of two new buildings including. These works will generate direct and indirect employment opportunities for local residents for cleaning and maintenance work, contribute to the improvement of the quality of service and benefits offered to users, improve training conditions and improve working conditions.

In addition, the project could lead to degradation of air quality by dust and exhaust fumes, deforestation during the preparation of the land base, modification of soil texture and pollution of soil and groundwater by oils, loss of crops and fruit trees, loss of playground (football field), generation of waste (solid and liquid), emission of noise and vibrations, the impacts of the opening and exploitation of quarry deposits and borrow pits, the risk of delay in the execution and increase in project costs.

From the social perspective, the project will bring positive benefits to beneficiaries, including Building a social registry ; Ensuring equity in distribution and allocation of government resources including funds among regions for education, health, and other services ; Identifying vulnerable and specific population groups and addressing gender and inequality issues. However, potential social risks and impacts may include risk of gender-based violence, Sexual Exploitation and Abuse (SEA), and Sexual Harassment (SH), social conflicts due to the presence of workers and local populations. In addition, there are degradation of the living and working environment of local residents, the development of infectious diseases, the disruption of the mobility of people who used the site as a shortcut to reach part of the Mpila district and the Avenue de l'Indépendance, the risks of degradation of physical cultural remains.

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

Three types of mitigation measures are foreseen to reduce the suspected impacts during the implementation of the different components and activities foreseen in this project implementation of the various components and activities planned under the project:

☒ Measures to be integrated by the promoter during the technical design of the project: These include Installation of reflective films on glazing exposed to sunlight; Installation of energy-saving compact fluorescent and iodine bulbs; Choice of energy-saving equipment during construction and renovation; Installation of presence detectors (switching lights off and on) in the rooms and corridors and corridors;

☒ Normative measures to be complied with by the promoter and its contractors: The aim is to ensure that the project complies with the applicable regulations, in particular Compliance with environmental and social regulations, Compliance with mining regulations, Obligations to respect environmental and social clauses



- ☐ Specific mitigation measures to reduce the suspected negative effects on environmental and social components sensitive to project activities: these are all the mitigation measures that are implemented throughout the course of the work.
- ☐ Keep the GRM including management of GBV/SEA/SH complaints operational.
- ☐ Development of a GBV plan.

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

The general coordination of PSTAT is ensured by an Inter-ministerial Steering Committee (CP), chaired by the Director of Cabinet of the Ministry in charge of Statistics, and whose secretariat is ensured by the Director of Studies and Planning of the Ministry in charge of Statistics; the coordination and general supervision of PSTAT. The National Institute of Statistics is the technical structure of the PSTAT. It will, among other things, take an active part in the validation of the environmental study report and the supervision of the implementation of the ESMP as part of the implementation of the NIES. The PSTAT Project Coordination Unit (PCU) is responsible for the day-to-day management of the project, including technical, administrative, procurement, environmental, social, communication, financial and accounting aspects. The PCU has recruited two environmental and social safeguard specialists to implement the environmental and social activities of PSTAT. Over the course of the project's implementation, the teams have gained experience and, above all, a great deal of sensitivity to the safeguard aspects. However At this stage, the project has a full-time environmental safeguard specialist. The latter will follow up on social safeguards in place of the social safeguards specialist.

5. Identify the key stakeholders and describe the mechanisms for consultation and disclosure on safeguard policies, with an emphasis on potentially affected people.

The project will involve several stakeholders in its implementation such as sectoral technical ministries, beneficiary populations, representatives of civil society and other stakeholders concerned by the project.

The project consultation process will be ongoing throughout the implementation of the additional funding. The project will also organize stakeholder consultations during the review of the safeguards instruments.

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

Environmental Assessment/Audit/Management Plan/Other		For category A projects, date of distributing the Executive Summary of the EA to the Executive Directors
Date of receipt by the Bank	Date of submission for disclosure	
13-Apr-2021	14-Apr-2021	
"In country" Disclosure		
Congo, Republic of		
14-Apr-2021		
Comments		



Resettlement Action Plan/Framework/Policy Process

Date of receipt by the Bank

13-Apr-2021

Date of submission for disclosure

14-Apr-2021

"In country" Disclosure

Congo, Republic of

14-Apr-2021

Comments

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

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

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

OP/BP/GP 4.01 - Environment Assessment

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

Yes

If yes, then did the Regional Environment Unit or Practice Manager (PM) review and approve the EA report?

NA

Are the cost and the accountabilities for the EMP incorporated in the credit/loan?

Yes

OP/BP 4.11 - Physical Cultural Resources

Does the EA include adequate measures related to cultural property?

Yes

Does the credit/loan incorporate mechanisms to mitigate the potential adverse impacts on cultural property?

Yes

OP/BP 4.12 - Involuntary Resettlement

Has a resettlement plan/abbreviated plan/policy framework/process framework (as appropriate) been prepared?

Yes



If yes, then did the Regional unit responsible for safeguards or Practice Manager review the plan?

Yes

Is physical displacement/relocation expected?

No

Is economic displacement expected? (loss of assets or access to assets that leads to loss of income sources or other means of livelihoods)

Yes

Provide estimated number of people to be affected 40

The World Bank Policy on Disclosure of Information

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

Yes

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

Yes

All Safeguard Policies

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

Yes

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

Yes

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

Yes

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

Yes

CONTACT POINT

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APPROVAL

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