



# Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 30-Jul-2021 | Report No: PIDA30015



**BASIC INFORMATION**

**A. Basic Project Data**

Country Cameroon	Project ID P173240	Project Name Program for the Acceleration of the Digital Transformation of Cameroon	Parent Project ID (if any)
Region AFRICA WEST	Estimated Appraisal Date 26-Jul-2021	Estimated Board Date 27-Sep-2021	Practice Area (Lead) Digital Development
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Republic of Cameroon	Implementing Agency Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications, Ministry of Agriculture	

Proposed Development Objective(s)

The Project Development Objectives (PDO) are to increase digital inclusion and the use of digital agricultural solutions by selected agricultural value chain actors.

Components

- Component 1: Enabling Strategy, Policy, and Regulation for Digital Inclusion and Transformation
- Component 2: Digital Connectivity and Inclusion
- Component 3: Facilitating the Implementation of Data-Driven Solutions in the Agricultural Sector
- Component 4: Project Management and Citizen Engagement

**PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)**

**SUMMARY**

<b>Total Project Cost</b>	100.00
<b>Total Financing</b>	100.00
<b>of which IBRD/IDA</b>	100.00
<b>Financing Gap</b>	0.00

**DETAILS**

**World Bank Group Financing**



International Development Association (IDA)	100.00
IDA Credit	100.00

Environmental and Social Risk Classification

**Substantial**

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

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Other Decision (as needed)



## B. Introduction and Context

- 1. Cameroon is a lower-middle-income country with a gross domestic product (GDP) per capita of (current) US\$1,534 and a poverty rate that has remained almost unchanged.** GDP last stood at 4.0 percent in 2019<sup>1</sup> and is expected to decline because of the economic impact of the COVID-19 pandemic, with the 2020 GDP growth estimated at –2.5 percent.<sup>2</sup> According to the most recently available data,<sup>3</sup> poverty as a percentage of the 25.9 million<sup>4</sup> population was estimated at 37.5 percent in 2014 with 90 percent of poor individuals living in rural areas and 69 percent in the agroecological zones of the North region.<sup>5</sup>
- 2. Cameroon’s growth pattern reflects an economy that is little diversified and unattractive to private-sector investment.** Its agricultural sector employs around 46 percent of the total population, but its contribution to the GDP amounted only to 14.4 percent in 2018 and productivity is below its potential, mainly due to the low use of mechanization, inputs, and irrigation. The secondary sector’s contribution to GDP growth is also quite limited, relying mostly on extractives and light manufacturing. The largest contributor to GDP growth is the tertiary sector, driven by large public investments and relatively unsophisticated retail trade and food services activities, but tertiary activities such as information and communications technology (ICT) remain underdeveloped.<sup>6</sup> The ICT sector’s<sup>7</sup> revenues increased significantly between 2012 and 2015 and reached an estimated XAF 576 billion (US\$933 million)—or 2.9 percent of GDP—in the most recently reported year of 2016.<sup>8</sup> This percentage puts Cameroon behind comparable African countries, where the sector’s contribution to GDP is twice (Benin, Côte d’Ivoire, and Mali) or three times (Senegal) as high. The new National Development Strategy 2020–2030 (*Stratégie Nationale de Développement 2020–2030 pour la transformation structurelle et le développement inclusif*, SND30) of the Government of Cameroon (GoC) emphasizes on the structural transformation of the economy that involves the intensification of high-productivity service sectors and technology catch-up.
- 3. Cameroon also faces a range of socioeconomic gender disparities.** With respect to economic opportunity, women predominate in agriculture (47.9 percent versus 39.5 percent for males),<sup>9</sup> while men participate at higher rates in both industry and services.<sup>10</sup> However, women tend to cultivate food crops such as maize, cassava, rice, and plantains, and rear small animals such as chicken, while men cultivate cash crops, including coffee and cacao, and breed cattle. Women also tend to possess fewer agricultural assets, have less access to financing,<sup>11</sup> and dedicate a much larger share of their time (16 percent) to unpaid domestic and care work than men do (5 percent).<sup>12</sup> Thus, even when men and women grow the same crops, yields from male-managed plots tend to be higher than those of female-managed plots. Women and girls are more likely than men and boys to work in the informal sector,<sup>13</sup> be self-employed, and live in poverty.<sup>14</sup> While Cameroon’s legislation does not explicitly discriminate against women, indirect factors—such as restricted capacity to offer guarantees—make it difficult for women to access credit. As a result, informal street businesses and marketplaces tend to be dominated by women, while modern shops, industries, and offices are almost exclusively run by men. Women and girls in Cameroon, particularly in rural areas, face additional educational, health, and time constraints that affect their labor market participation and productivity.<sup>15</sup>
- 4. In addition to being highly exposed to natural hazards, Cameroon has become increasingly vulnerable to the instability and violence that have characterized neighboring countries.** The country is highly exposed to natural hazards such as floods, sea level rise, and droughts, which are all amplified by climate change and pose a threat to agricultural production and infrastructures such as telecom networks.<sup>16</sup> Increasing temperatures and changes in precipitation are likely to reduce livestock and cereal crop productivity and could also adversely affect high-value perennial crops. In particular, food security will continue to be threatened by the projected impacts of global climate change and extreme weather on crop nutrient content and yields, livestock, fisheries and aquaculture, and land use. Climate changes have already affected crop suitability in many areas of the country, resulting in changes in the



production levels of main agricultural crops. Floods and landslides can seriously damage digital infrastructures, by unearthing and cutting buried optic fiber cables or damaging power sources and electronic equipment. The country has also experienced several destabilizing developments in recent years: since 2012, recurrent Boko Haram attacks in the Far North region have killed over 1,800 civilians and 175 soldiers, displaced hundreds of thousands,<sup>17</sup> and severely disrupted the local economy. In addition, the country has been dealing with an armed anglophone secessionist movement in the Northwest and Southwest regions, as well as insecurity fueled by a refugee crisis in the East and Adamawa regions.<sup>18</sup>

5. **Cameroon also lacks resilience to crises such as the COVID-19 pandemic, which further test the country's political and economic ability to weather a situation of such scale and whose effects remain difficult to predict. The COVID-19 crisis is also expected to continue disrupting food supply and demand** due to the disease's health impacts on supply chain workers, the limitations imposed on mobility, and the higher costs of doing business that stem from restricted supply chains and a tightening of credit. Demand will likely suffer from higher uncertainty and a precautionary spending behavior, in addition to containment efforts that reduce people's ability to spend. Moreover, border closures, quarantines, and disruptions to supply chains and trade are likely to restrict people's access to adequate food sources, exacerbating the high levels of food insecurity that already characterize Cameroon. In this setting, digital technologies offer a means for governments, individuals, and businesses to cope with social distancing, ensure business continuity, and prevent service interruptions.

<sup>1</sup> The World Bank, World Development Indicators (WDI), 2019, GDP (current US\$) - Cameroon. <https://data.worldbank.org/indicator/NY.GDP.MKTP.CD?locations=CM>.

<sup>2</sup> The World Bank, Sub-Saharan Africa Macro Poverty Outlook. <http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/355511492207273048/data-cmr.pdf>.

<sup>3</sup> The World Bank Group, *Poverty and Equity Brief*, October 2019.

<sup>4</sup> The World Bank, WDI, 2019. <https://data.worldbank.org/country/cameroon>.

<sup>5</sup> 80 percent of the poor belong to the three agroecological zones: the Sudano-Sahelian, the Western Highlands, and the Guinean Savannah zones (Source: Systematic Country Diagnostic for Cameroon, Report No. 103098-CM).

<sup>6</sup> The World Bank Group. *Country Partnership Framework for the Republic of Cameroon for the Period FY17–FY21*. Report No. 107896-CM, February 28, 2017.

<sup>7</sup> Mobile and fixed telecom operators, internet service providers, and telecom value-added services providers.

<sup>8</sup> MINPOSTEL (Ministry of Posts and Telecommunications of Cameroon). *Annuaire statistique des télécommunications et TIC au Cameroun*, Edition 2017; The World Bank, WDI, 2016. <https://data.worldbank.org/country/cameroon>.

<sup>9</sup> 2018 figures. The World Bank, Gender Data Portal. <https://datatopics.worldbank.org/gender/>.

<sup>10</sup> 2018 figures. The World Bank, WDI, 2018. Employment in services (41 percent male; 38 percent female) and industry (17 percent male; 11 percent female).

<sup>11</sup> JICA (Japan International Cooperation Agency) and TAC International, Inc. 2015. *Country Report of Gender Profile (Cameroon) (English)*. December 2015.

<sup>12</sup> 2014 figures. The World Bank, Gender Data Portal. <https://datatopics.worldbank.org/gender/>.

<sup>13</sup> Approximately 23 percent of women are self-employed in the informal sector, where access to credit is one of the top constraints facing businesses.

<sup>14</sup> Country Partnership Framework for Cameroon (for the period FY17–FY21).

<sup>15</sup> Country Partnership Framework for Cameroon (for the period FY17–FY21).

<sup>16</sup> The World Bank, Climate Change Knowledge Portal.

<https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/cameroon/vulnerability>.

<sup>17</sup> As of October 2019, there were around 799,000 internally displaced people in Cameroon and over 387,000 refugees from neighboring countries, of whom 72 percent were from the Central African Republic. (Food and Agricultural Organization of the United Nations, *Response Overview for Cameroon*, October 2019).

<sup>18</sup> International Crisis Group, Watch List 2018. <https://www.crisisgroup.org/global/10-watch-list-2018>.



Sectoral and Institutional Context

6. **The insufficient development of the broadband internet market is impeding the development of the country’s ICT sector.** Cameroon’s overall digital performance ranks poorly on the global scale (113 out of 121 countries in the 2019 Network Readiness Index<sup>19</sup>). While the mobile telephony market matured progressively between 2011 and 2020 (Figure 1), Cameroon’s fixed and mobile broadband internet market had limited growth, with the number of subscriptions increasing slowly and the penetration rate stagnating since 2016 (Figure 2). The wide gap between broadband coverage and broadband subscriptions suggests that affordability and digital literacy might be the most critical bottlenecks for increased internet adoption in Cameroon. There is high mobile broadband (3G, 3.5G, and 4G) coverage: while 3G and 3.5G networks of Mobile Telephone Network (MTN), Orange, and Viettel reached 85 percent, 79 percent, and 89 percent of the population, respectively, as of October 2020, MTN’s 4G network covered 60 cities and towns, while Orange’s 4G network covered 60 percent of the population.<sup>20</sup> However only 23 percent of households nationwide had an internet subscription—mobile or fixed—in 2019 (**Error! Reference source not found.**), and this percentage is much lower in rural areas, especially in the Center, Northwest, and Adamawa regions.<sup>21</sup> According to January 2021 data,<sup>22</sup> the price of 5 GB of fixed broadband internet was 20.8 percent of gross national income (GNI) per capita in Cameroon (global rank: 159 out of 179 countries), while the price of 1.5 GB of mobile broadband internet was 3.9 percent of GNI per capita (global rank: 142 out of 188 countries).

7. **In addition, available data suggest the existence of a gender divide in the access to and use of digital services.** Gender-disaggregated data in this area are limited; nevertheless, available figures point to some disparities. A small survey published by the Web Foundation suggests that 36 percent of women and 45 percent of men are internet users, and that one in five women reports online harassment; however, this study was limited to poor urban areas.<sup>23</sup> More women also report knowing what the internet is than men, and they participate equitably in terms of email and internet usage.<sup>24</sup> The available data skew heavily toward urban areas, but given that rural women typically have less access to education, skills development, and income generation, it is likely that they have more difficulties accessing affordable internet, mobile services, and devices.

Figure 1. Growth of Mobile Telephony Subscriptions and Penetration Rates in Cameroon

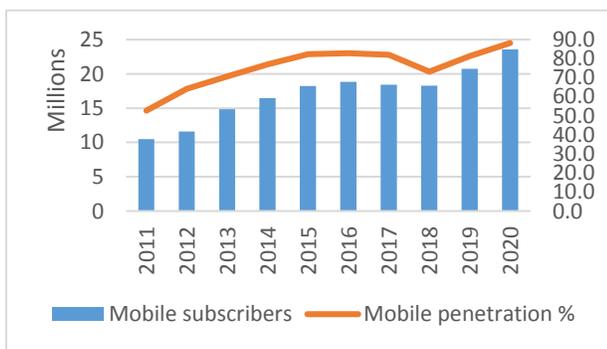
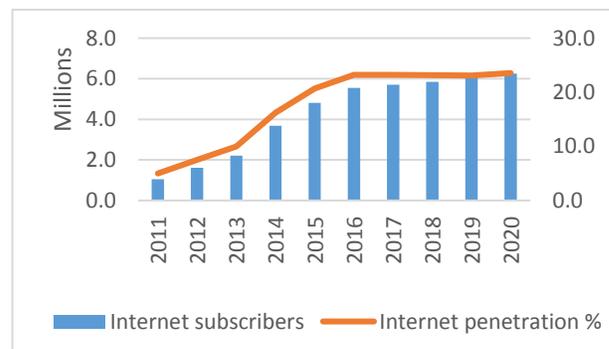


Figure 2. Growth of (Fixed + Mobile) Broadband Internet Subscriptions and Penetration Rates in Cameroon



Source: TeleGeography, ITU, Internet World Stats, MINPOSTEL, World Bank.<sup>25</sup>

8. **A diagnostic of Cameroon’s digital economy, conducted in FY19 as part of the Digital Economy for Africa (DE4A) initiative,<sup>26</sup> confirmed these weaknesses and identified main bottlenecks to address to increase broadband connectivity.** Cameroon still lacks the strategies, policies, and regulations as well as the institutional capacity to properly stimulate growth and innovation, foster competition, and facilitate investment. These constraints are exacerbated by



the sector regulator's inability to implement reforms necessary to reduce prices, improve service quality, provide incentives for private sector-led innovation, and ensure a safe and secure online environment. In particular, and despite the presence of several competing retail operators, the growth of the internet market appears stalled primarily by relatively high retail prices that cascade from high wholesale prices applied to these retail players. The government-owned fixed operator Cameroon Telecommunications (CAMTEL) maintains a monopoly over the country's international access and significant national terrestrial fiber networks. Combined with the regulatory weaknesses mentioned above, high wholesale prices imposed on retail operators by CAMTEL cascade to underperformance in the retail markets in terms of quality and costs, despite the presence of competitive retail mobile telephony and broadband markets. Finally, some geographic areas remain totally uncovered, and internet access remains limited and/or of low quality in many rural areas, creating a concrete digital inclusion issue.

9. **A more developed ICT sector can foster a digital transformation in Cameroon's high-potential agricultural sector that can greatly benefit from the introduction of digital services to enhance efficiency and competitiveness.** Despite its potential to meet food demand and improve the living conditions of the rural population, high transactional costs and information asymmetries throughout the sector inhibit the use of a more productive agricultural system.<sup>27</sup> Digital technologies can lower barriers to on-farm efficiency and reduce transaction costs, presenting an opportunity to tackle multiple market failures by reducing the transactional costs of matching buyers and sellers across input, output, and financial markets in the food system and by better targeting support to poor and vulnerable farmers with digitized services.

10. **Africa has witnessed substantial growth in digital transformation of agriculture, with over 70 percent of Digital Agriculture Technology (DAT<sup>28</sup>) enterprises founded in the last 10 years and a few serving the Cameroonian market.**<sup>29</sup> Recent innovations include farm management software, e-marketplaces, advisory services, and pest- and disease-tracking systems. For instance, Jangolo is a farm management mobile application that supports farm productivity; serves 8,000 farmers in Cameroon; and provides a platform for bookkeeping, logistics, sales, training, and access to the market prices.<sup>30</sup> AgroSpaces and AGRO-HUB provide market links to remove price asymmetry between

<sup>19</sup> The Portulans Institute and the World Information Technology and Services Alliance, Network Readiness Index 2019.

<https://networkreadinessindex.org/nri-2019-countries/>.

<sup>20</sup> TeleGeography. Data retrieved June 15, 2021.

<sup>21</sup> MINPOSTEL, *Annuaire statistique des télécommunications et TIC au Cameroun*, Edition 2017.

<sup>22</sup> ITU, World Telecommunication/ICT Indicators Database, 2021. <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/publications/wtid.aspx>.

Alliance for Affordable Internet: [https://a4ai.org/extra/baskets/ITU/2020/fixed\\_broadband\\_basket](https://a4ai.org/extra/baskets/ITU/2020/fixed_broadband_basket) and [https://a4ai.org/extra/baskets/ITU/2020/mobile\\_broadband\\_basket](https://a4ai.org/extra/baskets/ITU/2020/mobile_broadband_basket) and

<sup>23</sup> 2015 figures. Internet Sans Frontières. 2016. *Women's Rights Online: Report Card Cameroon*.

<sup>24</sup> Gillwald, et al. 2010. *Gender Assessment of ICT Access and Usage in Africa*.

<sup>25</sup> Adapted from: TeleGeography, March 2021; International Telecommunication Union (ITU). <https://www.itu.int/en/ITU-D/Statistics/Pages/stat/default.aspx>; Internet World Stats 2020. <https://www.internetworldstats.com/stats1.htm>; MINPOSTEL, *Annuaire statistique des télécommunications et TIC au Cameroun*, Edition 2017, and the World Bank, WDI (2019). <https://data.worldbank.org/country/cameroon>.

The market contraction between 2017 and 2018 is due to new regulations on the identification and registration of subscribers.

<sup>26</sup> DE4A initiative: <https://www.worldbank.org/en/programs/all-africa-digital-transformation>. Key findings were shared in a large workshop with public and private stakeholders before they were publicly disseminated by MINPOSTEL.

<sup>27</sup> Amungwa, F. A. 2018. "Appraisal of Innovations in Agricultural Extension and Advisory Services in Cameroon." *J Adv Plant Sci* 1:206. <http://article.scholarena.co/Appraisal-of-Innovations-in-Agricultural-Extension-and-Advisory-Services-in-Cameroon.pdf>.

<sup>28</sup> Also referred as 'agritech' in this document.

<sup>29</sup> The World Bank. 2019. *Scaling up Disruptive Agricultural Technologies in Africa*.

<sup>30</sup> African Harvesters Agribusiness Hub and Serah Odende. 2018. *We Provide the Farmer What the Market Needs - Jangolo Farms*. <https://africanharvesters.com/2018/07/13/provide-farmer-market-needs-jangolo-farms/>.



farmers and buyers, making it possible for farmers to earn more by connecting them to importers, buyers, and processors. The support ecosystem around entrepreneurship has also been growing, and Cameroon now ranks fifth in West Africa in the number of technology hubs, with 18 reported in 2019.<sup>31</sup> To reap the full benefits of the recent surge in agritech innovations, public policy and investment must focus on the enabling environment and complementary investments that accelerate the digital transformation of the agrifood system.

### C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Development Objective(s) (From PAD)

The Project Development Objectives (PDOs) are to increase digital inclusion and the use of digital agricultural solutions by selected agricultural value chain actors.

Key Results

#### To increase digital inclusion

- Broadband penetration (number of broadband subscribers per 100 people) in project areas, including the percentage of female broadband subscribers
- Average monthly retail price (XAF) of mobile broadband services
- Number of end users and public servants reached through targeted trainings on digital services, including the percentage of women

#### To increase the use of digital agricultural solutions by selected agricultural value chain actors

- Number of beneficiaries who have adopted digital agriculture solutions to improve their access to agricultural markets, including the percentage of women
- Number of productive partnerships established between agritech entrepreneurs and farmer groups, professional and inter-professional associations, and individual farmers, including the number of productive partnerships established with female farmers.

### D. Project Description

11. **The proposed project is designed to accelerate digital transformation in Cameroon through three main complementary components on the supply and demand sides of the digital economy, with a focus on accelerating the digitalization of the agriculture sector.** These components are designed to improve the foundational enabling environment for a vibrant, safe, and inclusive digital economy; fill digital infrastructure gaps in rural areas that the private sector could not tackle alone; and develop digital services in the agricultural sector. The agricultural sector presents a large potential for growth that digital services could help tap into compared to other economic sectors, as well as opportunities to replicate easily impactful initiatives that have been successful in other countries. Other sectors

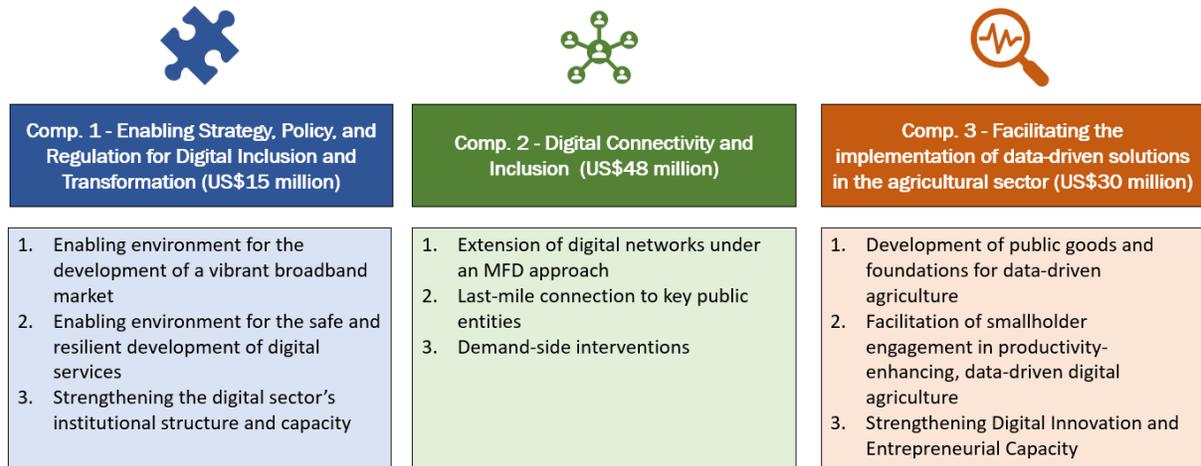
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<sup>31</sup> Global System for Mobile Communications Association (GSMA), Dario Giuliani and Sam Ajadi. 2019. *618 Active Tech Hubs: The Backbone of Africa's Tech Ecosystem*. <https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/blog/618-active-tech-hubs-the-backbone-of-africas-tech-ecosystem/>.



(health, education, tourism, and so on) will benefit indirectly from the enhanced digital foundations, but the digitalization of these sectors is not directly addressed through this project.

Figure 3. Main Project Components



12. **The overall design, especially the interventions in Component 2, complies with several overarching principles for public intervention in the digital sector:**

- (a) **Minimum required intervention.** The GoC should intervene only in cases of clear market failure and only to the extent necessary to overcome market failure and complement/catalyze private investment. It should attempt to achieve its objectives in close collaboration with the private sector, through the least-disruptive means possible, and only increase the scale or degree of intervention as the market failure appears persistent.
- (b) **Pro-competition approach.** The GoC's intervention should be engineered to increase competition even when infrastructure competition is not viable, that is, service-based competition should be attempted instead. The Government should support open-access wholesale principles.
- (c) **Comprehensive and collaborative approach.** Stimulating and aggregating demand contributes to lower investment risks and increases the utilization of the infrastructure. The more the infrastructure (ducts and poles, buildings, fiber networks, and so on) is shared, the lower the cost to connect end users.
- (d) **Coherent vision.** Intervention should be based on clear sectoral policy objectives and regulations implemented in alignment with these policy objectives. Both policy and regulation should follow the three principles outlined above.

13. **Inclusiveness and climate change mitigation measures are fully incorporated in the project's design.** The project will assess the effects of heavy rainfall, floods, heat waves, severe droughts, and geophysical hazards, and incorporate appropriate mitigation measures within the proposed activities, including the installation of the last-mile physical infrastructure and the rollout of digital agricultural technologies (for example, redundancy of equipment and infrastructure for resilience purposes). The choice of technologies will incorporate climate change mitigation measures, for example, the use of renewable energy to power electronic, the deployment of remote/virtual systems for operations and maintenance to limit transportation, and the digitization of documents to reduce the use and transport of paper.



14. **The project’s gender interventions are aligned with the World Bank IDA-19 theme, the World Bank’s 2016–2023 gender strategy,<sup>32</sup> and the Digital Development Gender Strategy.<sup>33</sup>** Activities in this project will empower women in Cameroon to leverage digital technologies productively. The resulting social and economic effects will lead to a closing of the digital gender gap, reduced constraints for jobs, and a removal of barriers to women’s ownership and control of assets. The project will finance several activities to address the gender divide, at the policy, strategic, and capacity-building levels. A technical assistance (TA) will include the extension of the universal service fund to support rural broadband connectivity and facilitate access for women in rural areas; the development of a digital strategy with the integration of gender equality considerations;<sup>34</sup> the development of a privacy and data protection law; and the modernization of the cybersecurity and cybercrime law, including a focus on technology-facilitated gender-based violence (GBV) and online safety. Findings and recommendations from this TA will be strengthened through the financing of activities such as gender-focused digital inclusion capacity-building programs, the development of last-mile infrastructure and services with more benefits and promotions to women in public services, and the reduction of job constraints.<sup>35</sup> The project also includes agritech activities that target women (financing, mentorship, and networking for entrepreneurs), with the equitable participation of women and people with disabilities through solutions tailored to their needs. PDO indicators and intermediate results will reflect the impact of these measures by including gender-disaggregated figures.

**Performance-Based Conditions**

15. **To support the implementation of foundational reforms in the ICT sector and ensure the compliance with the aforementioned principles for public intervention, 14.5 percent of the project hinges on the achievement of performance-based conditions (PBCs).** Linking a share of disbursement to the achievement of PBCs (listed in Table 1) will incentivize primarily the implementation of the institutional capacity reforms supported under Component 1, which are critical for the achievement of the overall development objectives. Given the importance of reforms for digital sectoral growth and the private sector’s expected significant contribution to that growth, these conditions are primarily linked to reforms. The project will finance the cost incurred for the verification of these conditions.

**Table 1. Performance-Based Conditions**

PBCs	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3
<b>PBC 1. Facilitating private investments (supply) and adoption (demand) of digital services</b> <b>[Value: 7% of credit]</b>	PBC 1.1. The Borrower has validated a comprehensive mapping of the supply and demand for digital connectivity, including existing and planned private investments <b>[Value: 2% of the credit]</b>	PBC 1.2. The Borrower has adopted new policies and regulations to modernize the telecom regulatory framework, including online trust regulations and a cross-sectoral (for example, roads and electricity transmission lines) investment strategy <b>[Value: 5% of the credit]</b>	

<sup>32</sup> World Bank Group. 2015. *World Bank Group Gender Strategy (FY16–23): Gender Equality, Poverty Reduction and Inclusive Growth*. Washington, DC: World Bank. © World Bank. <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/23425>.

<sup>33</sup> The Digital Development Gender Strategy - March 2021 (WBG).

<sup>34</sup> Increasing gender-disaggregated data collection, access to the internet, gender-sensitive training sessions, entrepreneurial opportunities for women-led small and medium enterprises (SMEs), and mobile financing for female agritech entrepreneurs.

<sup>35</sup> Such as greater digital literacy and skills, gender equality awareness, and better wages.



<p><b>PBC 2. Optimizing of the use of existing public digital infrastructure</b></p> <p>[Value: 7.5% of credit]</p>		<p>PBC 2.1. The Borrower has adopted wholesale regulations (for example, access regulation, transparency regulation, price controls) for the international capacity and national connectivity (that is, backbone) markets</p> <p>[Value: 5% of the credit]</p>	<p>PBC 2.2. The Borrower has adopted a strategy for the strategic repositioning of CAMTEL</p> <p>[Value: 2.5% of the credit]</p>
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16. **PBC 1. Facilitating private investments (supply) and adoption (demand) of digital services (for Component 2).** To avoid crowding out the private sector and to properly dimension network extensions, a mapping of supply and demand for digital services nationwide is necessary. In particular, this mapping should adequately capture the private investment plans, and more importantly the potential for additional private sector investments, should the regulatory environment allow private market players to effectively roll out their own infrastructure without undue restrictions (PBC 1.1). To increase the extent of private sector participation, a comprehensive revamp of the telecom sector’s policy, legal, and regulatory environment is required (PBC 1.2).

17. **PBC 2. Optimizing of the use of existing public digital infrastructure (for Components 1 and 2).** As mentioned earlier, CAMTEL benefits from a de facto monopoly over essential areas of the national telecom infrastructure, and the high wholesale prices imposed by CAMTEL on other operators for the use of its infrastructure result in relatively high retail prices and low-quality services, limiting the adoption of internet services by both citizens and businesses. Three concessions (nationwide mobile telecom network, nationwide fixed telecom network, and electronic communications transport network) were awarded to CAMTEL in March 2020, as a prior action of the ongoing Third Fiscal Consolidation and Inclusive Growth Development Policy Financing (P168332). These concessions clarify the regulatory framework under which CAMTEL is operating and offering telecom services. In particular, the transport concession granted to CAMTEL allows the authorities to supervise and properly regulate how CAMTEL’s competitors are able to access and use infrastructure owned and operated by CAMTEL, through the adoption of wholesale regulations<sup>36</sup> (PBC 2.1) established through Subcomponent 1.1. To accompany this evolution and ensure that its assets are optimally serving the wholesale and retail digital markets, CAMTEL’s strategic positioning will have to be adjusted to increase service- and infrastructure-level competition. This repositioning—performed through Subcomponent 1.3—may take different forms (potentially a structural separation), depending on market evolution and the GoC’s overall strategic vision, and will necessarily require strong political will and substantial technical support (PBC 2.2).

**Description of Components**

**Component 1: Enabling Strategy, Policy, and Regulation for Digital Inclusion and Transformation (US\$15 million)**

18. **This component will support the GoC in improving the strategic, policy, and regulatory environment for the emergence of a vibrant, safe, and inclusive digital economy.** Specifically, it aims to establish an enabling environment for the development of a vibrant broadband market, expand the reach and coverage of digital broadband networks in rural areas, ensure last-mile connectivity to key public entities in these areas, foster an enabling environment for the

<sup>36</sup> Such as access regulation, transparency regulation, and price controls.



safe and resilient development of digital services, and strengthen the digital sector's institutional structure and capacity. Component 1 is articulated around three subcomponents, as detailed below.

*Subcomponent 1.1: Enabling environment for a vibrant broadband market (US\$8 million)*

19. **This subcomponent will provide support for the review and strengthening of the legal, regulatory, and policy framework that governs the telecom sector—a critical step to increase access to quality, affordable broadband.** This subcomponent will finance TA activities to help the GoC with the following:

- (a) The development of a digital strategy for the next 5–10 years, with the integration of cybersecurity and data protection as well as gender equality considerations.<sup>37</sup>
- (b) The revision of the telecom sector's licensing policy framework (to promote the migration of existing licenses to a simpler framework and to place operators on a level playing field), of the spectrum management (including the optimization of frequency usage and the reallocation of frequencies used by analog television), and of the sectoral taxation regime, to the extent that any reform would not lead to what could be construed as an act of expropriation.
- (c) The extension and effective operationalization of universal service through the preparation of tenders for the deployment of broadband in rural areas and the launch of programs tailored to women and vulnerable groups, as well as the use of funds to promote and finance shared access to radio infrastructure (for example, towers, antennas, and fiber) in Cameroon's remote areas, the locations of targeted public institutions to be served in rural areas, and the user requirements for internet bandwidth.<sup>38</sup>
- (d) The development of an e-waste management strategy to reduce the digital sector's carbon and environmental footprint through e-waste collection, dismantling, refurbishing, and recycling.
- (e) The development of an action plan for improving the resilience of digital networks (that is, ensuring they are built according to resilience international standards and norms) and digital services to support post-disaster recovery and emergency communications, including the creation of a master Geographic Information System (GIS) infrastructure system, a GIS data recovery system, and an early warning system supported by mobile operators and internet service providers. The plan will be aligned with the GoC's overall disaster risk management (DRM) strategy and include action plans to improve post-disaster recovery and emergency communications and implementation of infrastructure disaster response and recovery drills in partnership with the GoC and the private sector.

20. **This subcomponent will also finance TA focused on sectoral regulations to help the GoC with the following:**

- (a) The preparation of the strategy for the sector's regulator, including strategic, administrative, and operational plans.
- (b) The effective regulation of wholesale markets (in particular international and national fiber optic connectivity), the definition of an ex ante asymmetric sector regulation approach (to facilitate the entry

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<sup>37</sup> Including improving the collection of gender-disaggregated data (for example, internet penetration by age, gender, and location), reducing gender gaps in access to and use of the internet, gender-sensitive training programs, entrepreneurial opportunities targeting women-led SMEs, and mobile financing for female entrepreneurs.

<sup>38</sup> This activity will rely on the development of geospatial data. The project will cooperate with the World Bank's Geospatial Operations Support Team to develop detailed technical specifications.



of new players), the development of an appropriate regulatory framework for over-the-top (OTT) operators,<sup>39</sup> and the operationalization of efficient cross-border interconnections.

- (c) The strengthening of the regulator's ability to monitor—and as needed, regulate—the prices and service quality of retail markets, to produce statistical data, and to manage disputes between operators.

**21. This subcomponent will also finance TA activities focused on cross-sectoral strategies and policies to help the GoC with the following:**

- (a) The establishment of a framework for public rights-of-way to help ensure fiber deployment under harmonized technical requirements and at reasonable costs, and the review of networks construction code.
- (b) The development of a collaborative framework between governmental agencies to facilitate infrastructure sharing through access to other public infrastructure (for example, electricity grid, pipelines, and roads) to lower the cost of fiber deployment, including the potential requirement for publicly funded projects to invite telecom companies to invest.

**22. Finally, this subcomponent will finance training sessions and the acquisition of equipment focused on policy and regulation:** (a) training sessions and capacity-building programs to MINPOSTEL, the Telecommunications Regulatory Agency (*Agence de Régulation des Télécommunications*, ART), and the National Agency for Information and Communication Technologies (*Agence Nationale des Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication*, ANTIC), which is the agency/regulator handling cybersecurity and domain names, and (b) the acquisition of critical equipment for ART (for example, for broadband service quality monitoring and spectrum interference monitoring).

*Subcomponent 1.2: Enabling environment for safe and resilient digital services (US\$4 million)*

**23. This subcomponent will provide support for the review and strengthening of the online trust environment, critical to securing digital services' adoption.** This subcomponent will finance TA activities focused on

- (a) The development of a data protection law<sup>40</sup> (aligned, as much as possible, with the provisions of Convention 108<sup>41</sup>), the modernization of the cybersecurity and cybercrime law (in alignment with the Budapest Convention<sup>42</sup>), and the modernization of the law on electronic transactions and e-signatures;
- (b) The assessment of critical infrastructure's risks, including climate change risks;
- (c) The development and implementation of a methodology for the identification of one or two project-specific critical sectors (such as telecom and agriculture), operators, and assets, as well as the

<sup>39</sup> Over-the-top (OTT) refers to digital content, typically—but not limited to—video content, provided through a high-speed internet connection.

<sup>40</sup> To the extent that activities contemplated in components 2 and 3 involve the collection/processing of personal data, disbursements with respect to these activities should be contingent on the elaboration of the data protection law.

<sup>41</sup> Convention for the Protection of Individuals with Regard to the Processing of Personal Data: [https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014\\_2019/plmrep/COMMITTEES/LIBE/DV/2018/09-10/Convention\\_108\\_EN.pdf](https://www.europarl.europa.eu/meetdocs/2014_2019/plmrep/COMMITTEES/LIBE/DV/2018/09-10/Convention_108_EN.pdf).

<sup>42</sup> The Convention on Cybercrime of the Council of Europe (CETS No.185): <https://www.coe.int/en/web/conventions/full-list/-/conventions/treaty/185?module=treaty-detail&treaty-num=185>.



establishment and implementation of a regulation around asset protection depending on criticality levels; and

- (d) The development of incident response plans.

**24. Finally, this subcomponent will finance training sessions and the acquisition of equipment focused on cybersecurity:**

- (a) Training sessions and capacity-building programs, especially for dedicated network security entities such as ANTIC's Computer Emergency Response Team (CERT) and computer security departments of other governmental agencies. These training sessions and capacity-building programs will include modules on the risks, threats, and mitigation strategies of online violence against women, including developing safety features for digital platforms, practical tips for online safety, and legal and policy frameworks for responding to incidents of online violence.
- (b) The acquisition of software and hardware equipment for CERT/ANTIC, such as firewalls, intrusion detection and prevention systems, anti-malware tools, network access control products, and security information and event management products.

*Subcomponent 1.3: Strengthening the digital sector's institutional structure and capacity (US\$3 million)*

**25. This subcomponent will support the GoC's efforts in developing a comprehensive, strategic vision for digital reform adopted at the highest political levels, especially the strategic repositioning of key public stakeholders in the digital sector.** A successful, strategic reorganization of the ICT/digital sector will translate into improved quality of service,<sup>43</sup> lower service costs, wider adoption of digital services, and higher fiscal revenues for the GoC. Critical for the success of this strategic reorganization is the repositioning of state-owned operator CAMTEL that has already been initiated by the GoC, with the award of three operating licenses to CAMTEL in March 2020 for the fixed, mobile, and electronic communication transport businesses, which are expected to trigger organizational challenges at CAMTEL.<sup>44</sup> Strong regulatory reforms supported under Subcomponent 1.1, particularly those related to national connectivity<sup>45</sup> and international connectivity,<sup>46</sup> will help curb the current monopolistic positioning of CAMTEL and trigger the need to change the operator's strategic positioning. Specifically, this subcomponent will finance the following activities:

- (a) TA for (i) the review of the objectives, mandates, and strategic positioning of CAMTEL; (ii) the support to CAMTEL at the strategic, organizational, operational, and marketing levels to adapt to the new regulatory environment, embrace technological innovation, and address legacy organizational difficulties; and (iii) the reorganization of the institutional arrangements of the telecom sector to clarify the mandates of the

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<sup>43</sup> In terms of unit prices of internet bandwidth (related to communications traffic speeds), as well as reliability of service.

<sup>44</sup> The concessions awarded open the way to a proper regulation of the operations of CAMTEL in those markets and, in the longer term, to a functional separation of CAMTEL for a more efficient and transparent management and forceful regulations. Challenges potentially include the reorganization into separate divisions, the change in staffing allocations, the split of management and accounting systems, and the creation of coordination layers.

<sup>45</sup> This is the terrestrial fiber optic backbone network operated by CAMTEL that distributes connectivity throughout the country, for which other operators face regulatory impediments to lay down their own infrastructure.

<sup>46</sup> All landing stations for fiber optic submarine cables (South Atlantic 3/West Africa Submarine Cable, West Africa Cable System, Africa Coast to Europe, and South Atlantic Inter Link) that link Cameroon to the global internet are operated by CAMTEL.



- different key ministries and public entities (for example, MINPOSTEL, Ministry of Communications, ART, and ANTIC).
- (b) Targeted support (equipment, capacity building, and so on) to entities that promote digital skills and digital entrepreneurship (technology parks, training centers, and incubators)<sup>47</sup> in the project's areas. This includes providing support to organizations that target marginalized communities, including at-risk youth, low-income women, and rural populations.
  - (c) Training sessions and capacity-building programs in digital transformation for government officials.
  - (d) TA to support the adoption, in the project's areas, of several digitally enabled 'frontier technologies' related to climate change adaptation and mitigation (for example, connected street lightening, green cloud computing, and smart grids).<sup>48</sup>

## Component 2: Digital Connectivity and Inclusion (US\$48 million)

26. **This component will support the GoC in reducing the geographic and societal digital divides in Cameroon through a comprehensive strategy that relies on the Maximizing Finance for Development (MFD) and 'resilient connectivity' approaches.** Typically, connecting citizens who live in rural regions with low population density, difficult terrain, and no major highways is not economically justifiable to private operators, as many of them cannot generate a return on their investment. In addition, rural populations are also often the poorest and, hence, have a lower ability to pay than city dwellers, making business cases even less viable. Addressing these challenges is key to reducing the digital divide and promoting the generalization of digital services. Higher access and usage of broadband across the territory will increase the profitability of investments in international and national broadband connectivity. This component will be fostered by the digital strategy, policy, and regulation measures supported in Component 1 to stimulate private sector-led investment to expand the geographic coverage of broadband networks and to better serve government institutions across the country under an MFD approach. This component will include the key elements of 'resilient connectivity' to help support citizens and emergency responders during crises (for example, civil unrest, disease outbreaks such as COVID-19, and climate-related disasters), such as sufficient bandwidth for peaks in demand; the ability to restore service access; strong network resilience; good management of network congestion; continuity of government and critical service functions; and available connectivity to strategic entities, such as hospitals, pharmacies, emergency centers, and transportation hubs.

### *Subcomponent 2.1: Extension of digital networks under an MFD approach (US\$20 million)*

27. **This subcomponent aims to fill the network coverage gaps in digital infrastructure, notably in rural areas where telecom operators are unwilling or unable to invest without public support, focusing on areas that maximize the social and economic impacts.** This subcomponent will support the deployment of fixed and/or wireless telecom networks for the expansion of digital services' coverage. The project will focus on areas that meet the following criteria: (a) an overall lack of infrastructure and absence of future expansion plans by telecom and broadband operators; (b) an expected sizeable and unsatisfied demand for digital services; (c) the feasibility and safety of engaging in on-site interventions, considering the areas affected by civil unrest, conflict, terrorism, natural disasters, and climate change; and (d) a geographic overlap with the interventions of Component 3. Given the modification of the regulatory framework envisioned through Component 1, the conditions for investment will significantly evolve for private operators; as a result, an extensive mapping exercise will be required to precisely determine those areas of intervention, considering the new policies and regulations (for example, rules determining the ability of operators to lay down fiber, rules on the mutualization of infrastructure, and coverage obligations).



28. **This subcomponent will include a TA, developed in close collaboration with telecom operators and internet service providers,** to map the availability and demand of digital infrastructure and services and identify areas subject to market failures, with enough breadth, accuracy, and granularity for the preparation of the technical specifications of the tenders to cover the selected areas and entities with digital infrastructure. The TA will focus on gathering data related to the deployment of digital services in Cameroon and presenting them in a friendly manner to policymakers. This task will require strong coordination between the public stakeholders (ministries, state and local institutions, regulators, and CAMTEL) and the private sector. The produced digitalized maps will be hosted by the ART, and real-time access will be granted to MINPOSTEL and other public entities (for instance, with ministries in charge of transport and energy, to improve coordination in infrastructure roll-out) and the telecom operators, with proper access rights associated to each type of user. The maps will be constantly updated under the leadership of ART through regular and mandated information requests to all telecom infrastructure owners. The mapping will pinpoint the precise areas of Cameroon that are targeted by the project (Subcomponent 2.1) and the entities and sites to which the project will bring connectivity (Subcomponent 2.2), and it will focus on

- (a) **Infrastructure and service mapping.** The current availability of the digital infrastructure and service availability, to be validated through consultations with the private sector;
- (b) **Demand mapping.** The demand topology and quantification of digital services (voice and data) to address the needs of end users (rural farmers, female entrepreneurs, and local public administrations), considering gender gaps in access, affordability, and usage; and
- (c) **Investment mapping.** Mapping the existing and planned investments in digital infrastructure by the private and public sectors. This will highlight investments that would be made purely by the private sector under the new policies and regulations and thus make explicit to policy makers the impact of policies and regulations conducive to private investments in the sector.

29. **This subcomponent will then assist the authorities in elaborating the detailed strategy to roll out digital connectivity through a competitive bidding process for areas where market failure is confirmed.** The network rollout will target only the areas with evidence of market failure by awarding capital subsidies to telecom operators through a competitive bidding process. This approach will aim to select the most economically advantageous offers (that is, the combination of a reverse tender process that favors the bidder asking for the lowest amount of project funds and a standard tender process favoring the bidder achieving the best output) among telecom operators, which will be responsible for the installation, operation, and maintenance of the network access infrastructure on an open-access basis, in exchange for a capital subsidy paid after the works are completed and validated by a commission established to accept such works. It is expected that the strategy will define an approach with multiple, geographically-delimited public-private partnership (PPP) projects being tendered and then implemented in parallel. The TA will guide this effort by incorporating the following principles in the tendering process:

- (a) **Technological neutrality.** The type of network access will be selected by the bidders, based on their own assessment of the most appropriate technology.<sup>49</sup> Quality requirements will be established, and retail service price caps set in accordance with regional benchmarks.

<sup>47</sup> For instance, the African Center of Excellence in Information and Communication Technologies (*Centre d'Excellence Africain en Technologies de l'Information et de la Communication*), the Digital Center of Orange, the education programs of the Fondation MTN, and so on.

<sup>48</sup> Other than DAT covered under Component 3.

<sup>49</sup> For instance: fiber optic networks, passive telecom towers, a fully active radio access network deployed by a mobile network operator, a low-cost 'microsite' alternative deployed by third parties for rural areas targeted by the project who then sell their



- (b) **Climate change resilience and adaptation.** The impact of climate change will be incorporated in the design of technical solutions, for instance, to increase resilience to landslides and accelerated erosion and to ensure the sustainability of these solutions by preventing environmental degradation and reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions (for example, the use of solar power or other renewable energy sources for active equipment and overall compliance with 'Green ICT standards'<sup>50</sup>).
- (c) **Future-proofed governance.** The chosen governance model, which will be developed in close collaboration with the private sector, will ensure that Cameroon sets up and implements a future-proofed governance mechanism for any contract(s) awarded, in which the open-access principle is fully enforced.
- (d) **Open and transparent tendering process.** It is expected that bidders will be primarily national telecom network operators. However, specialist tower operators (towercos) may also bid to provide the passive infrastructure, and there may be scope for innovative technology models.<sup>51</sup>

30. **Based on these principles, this subcomponent will assist the authorities in elaborating a 'Matching Grants for Broadband' Manual for the use of project funds, as well as in preparing tender documents.** This manual, which will be integrated into the Project Implementation Manual (), will describe the major transaction cycles and fund flow processes in this component and will allow PPP projects to be launched. These processes would cover the authorization procedures for transactions, financial and accounting policies, budgeting procedures, financial forecasting procedures, procurement and contract administration monitoring procedures, and auditing arrangements. This TA will include the preparation of the relevant tender documents, which cover (a) the prioritization, mapping, and clustering of the targeted areas; (b) the access services to be offered and their corresponding service-level agreements; (c) the infrastructures that will be financed, as they relate to the telecom, power supply, and power storage elements (climate adaptation and mitigation measures will be integrated as requirements); (d) the terms of the open-access arrangement; (e) the contract award mechanism;<sup>52</sup> (f) the public communication of results; and (g) the effective implementation and monitoring of the contracts with the financing of the private entity.

31. **Once all TA interventions of this subcomponent (mapping, strategy, and Matching Grants for Broadband Manual) are achieved, this subcomponent will support the tendering process and subsequently the implementation phases of the PPP projects.** This activity will establish and support a competitive and transparent process to involve the telecom operators in providing network access infrastructure in targeted areas of Cameroon, in line with the Matching Grants for Broadband Manual. The activity will then support the implementation phase of the PPP projects, in collaboration with all relevant stakeholders and in line with the overall strategy developed earlier.

*Subcomponent 2.2: Last-mile connection to key public entities (US\$15 million)*

32. **Leveraging the network coverage extension under Subcomponent 2.1, this subcomponent will support the digital connections of key public entities and sites within the areas of intervention,** such as agricultural centers,

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services to mobile network operators

<sup>50</sup> ITU-T, Green ICT Standards and Supplements.

<https://www.itu.int/net/ITU-T/lists/standards.aspx?Group=5&Domain=28>.

<sup>51</sup> Any operator that is successful in winning a tender would be required to apply for a license to operate in Cameroon, if it does not already have one.

<sup>52</sup> Note: This will include the structuring of the contracts, eligibility rules for bidders, and eligibility and evaluation rules for submitted projects. The latter encompasses not only the amount of project funds requested but also the population and geographical coverage requirements, services delivered and minimum speeds, quality of service guarantees, compliance with open-access principles, and commitments made by other private actors to access the deployed infrastructure through the wholesale market or through national roaming.



hospitals, local governmental offices including decentralized territorial units (*collectivités territoriales décentralisées*, CTD), schools, and universities. This subcomponent will be implemented in parallel with Subcomponent 2.1; that is, the tenders of Subcomponent 2.2 will be conducted jointly with the tenders of Subcomponent 2.1. The project intends to cover the following entities:

- (a) **Rural hospitals and health centers.** To enable telemedicine, facilitate instant diagnosis by city-based specialists, give medical staff the opportunity to enroll in online training sessions, and allow patients to access and control their health information online. This is relevant in the case of a health crisis such as COVID-19.
- (b) **CTDs.** To facilitate the adoption of e-government services and thus improve efficiency, boost service quality, lower costs, and increase transparency.
- (c) **Rural schools and universities.** To (i) enable access to instructional offerings that are unavailable locally due to cost constraints, small class sizes, or lack of subject area teachers; (ii) improve instructional effectiveness through more engaging, customizable, and interactive activities; (iii) enhance access to quality educational services; (iv) facilitate data collection and analysis to track student performance; (v) provide educators and adult learners with access to professional development opportunities; and (vi) streamline and automate administrative functions. Connecting rural schools and universities to broadband will be a strong enabler for ongoing education projects, namely the Cameroon Education Reform Support Project (P160926) and Cameroon - Equity and Quality for Improved Learning Project (P133338).
- (d) **Agricultural centers, especially those targeted by Component 3.** To (i) provide schools and the training and animation centers of the Ministry of Agriculture and Rural Development (*Ministère de l'Agriculture et du Développement Rural*, MINADER) and Ministry of Livestock, Fisheries and Animal Industries (*Ministère de l'élevage, des pêches et des industries animales*, MINEPIA) with multimedia centers; (ii) set up an e-learning system for schools and training and animation centers; (iii) design a digital platform for the monitoring and management of schools and training and animation centers; (iv) ensure the construction, development, and maintenance of multimedia centers within each training and animation structure; and (v) equip the Centers for Education and Community Action with small agricultural demonstration equipment for income-generating activities.

33. **The project intends to finance telecom equipment, devices, and internet subscriptions to deliver a comprehensive connectivity solution to the beneficiaries.**<sup>53</sup> The financing will primarily cover

- (a) An up-front commitment to the pre-purchase of internet bandwidth from telecom and broadband operators under indefeasible right of use contracts over a period of five years, with the condition that operational and maintenance costs are covered by the GoC after the closing date;<sup>54</sup>
- (b) The acquisition of digital equipment such as antennas, modems, hot spot routers, wireless routers, access points, and repeaters (powered by renewable energy when possible) to enable Wi-Fi at selected locations such as school campuses, parks, and playgrounds;

<sup>53</sup> The financing of connectivity for public enterprises will be done in a way that does not squeeze out private-sector providers. Beneficiaries are listed in Section II-C.

<sup>54</sup> This subsidy may not be needed if retail prices are regulated.



- (c) The acquisition of broadband-enabled devices and their installation in selected locations while incorporating specific needs to ensure business continuity for key government functions during crises such as COVID-19; and
- (d) The acquisition of power supply equipment and power-charging units. Equipment that relies on solar panels, or more broadly on renewable energy, will be installed whenever possible, and legacy equipment that contribute heavily to GHG emissions (such as diesel generators) will be replaced whenever appropriate by 'greener' technologies.

*Subcomponent 2.3: Demand-side interventions (US\$13 million)*

34. **This subcomponent will finance interventions that seek to increase the demand for broadband services in the targeted areas and beyond.** Supply-side interventions and network infrastructure alone will not drive broadband adoption to scale. As noted in the *Connecting Humanity* report,<sup>55</sup> "in Sub-Saharan Africa, around 80 per cent of those covered by a 4G network are not connected because of the lack of affordable access,<sup>56</sup> limited relevant content and the skills to benefit from Internet access. Such realities disclose economic and social disparities that affect the rate of adoption, use, and ultimately the opportunity to benefit from broadband access." Therefore, it is imperative to focus on and invest in complementary initiatives that stimulate demand for broadband services, with a special focus on closing the digital gender divide.

35. **Financed interventions target the specific bottlenecks associated with (a) device affordability, (b) digital literacy and awareness, and (c) availability of locally relevant digital content.** Specifically, this subcomponent will support the following:

- (a) **Financing mechanisms to improve the affordability of handsets.** Mechanisms will be implemented to partially subsidize or facilitate the payment for devices by end users, such as spreading the cost of a handset over several years. These mechanisms will have a target of at least 50 percent female beneficiaries, and they may offer vouchers/guarantees that cover up to 60 percent of acquisition and maintenance costs for handsets, digital payment devices, and other assets. These mechanisms will complement measures on the taxation regime (for example, reduction of import duties for digital equipment), potentially taken after the taxation study conducted through Subcomponent 1.1.
- (b) **Training and capacity-building programs to increase digital and financial literacy<sup>57</sup> rates for key public entities and end users, especially the youth, women, and people with disabilities.** These programs will incorporate gender-inclusive design elements to maximize women's training participation and employment outcomes, including in-person training, online training modules, peer learning, and mentorship. These activities will leverage 'women in technology' networks to target women and girls, as well as women's centers, youth organizations, nongovernmental organizations (NGOs), and community associations whose aim is to help people with disabilities to (i) ensure their equitable social, political, and economic participation and (ii) design training programs to better suit their needs. Design features will

<sup>55</sup> ITU. 2020. *Connecting Humanity - Assessing Investment Needs of Connecting Humanity to the Internet by 2030*.

<sup>56</sup> According to the 2019 Affordability Report of The Alliance for Affordable Internet (A4AI), only 10 out of 45 African countries have affordable internet, calculated as 1 GB of mobile prepaid data of 2 percent or less of average monthly income. See: A4AI. 2019. *Affordability Report 2019, Africa Regional Snapshot*. [https://1e8q3q16vyc81g8l3h3md6q5f5e-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/AR2019\\_Africa-Regional\\_Screen\\_AW.pdf](https://1e8q3q16vyc81g8l3h3md6q5f5e-wpengine.netdna-ssl.com/wp-content/uploads/2019/12/AR2019_Africa-Regional_Screen_AW.pdf).

<sup>57</sup> Basic skills: web research, online communication, and mobile money transfer. Intermediate/advanced skills: e-commerce platforms, online banking and investing, online freelancing, and tech entrepreneurship jobs.



also seek to address additional constraints that create barriers to participation—including affordability, access, safety, and childcare and elderly care responsibilities. In-person training and capacity-building programs will be held in locations that women feel safe traveling to, with physical accommodations for beneficiaries with disabilities, meals provided on-site and transport stipends. Where possible, programs will offer spaces to provide childcare or will connect beneficiaries with affordable childcare programs. Opening and closing hours will be friendly to women. Programs may offer women-only training cohorts led by female trainers, to ensure women feel comfortable actively participating in sessions. Additionally, this subcomponent will support the activities of Component 3, namely the design and preparation of e-agriculture modules, the provision of the software to build the capacity of students and trainers, the setup of a digital library to facilitate access to documentation for learners in the rural sector, and the acquisition of the on-farm management software.

- (c) **Impactful communication campaigns to enhance awareness around digital services and the possibilities and opportunities they enable, including the development of attractive, media-rich, language-specific content and services.** Communications campaigns will be context-specific, addressing the needs, challenges, and realities of marginalized and underserved populations, including rural communities, women, and people with disabilities. Such content and services could be pushed out to end users through web portals and mobile applications, which will be developed in closed interaction with the sector’s stakeholders. Communications campaigns will also supplement digital engagement with traditional media. As women and rural communities face a gap in internet usage, social media messages should be supplemented by print, radio, and graphic communications. The program will also partner with community-based women’s groups, religious leaders, and local community leaders to co-develop communications campaigns.

### **Component 3: Facilitating the Implementation of Data-Driven Solutions in the Agricultural Sector (US\$30 million)**

36. **This component will support the GoC in facilitating the implementation of data-driven solutions in agriculture to boost innovation in a strategic economic sector.** Targeted interventions of this component will contribute to increasing the use of digital agricultural solutions by smallholder farmers in Cameroon, improve business continuity of key public agricultural services, and support digital entrepreneurship ecosystem. As an indirect outcome, this component will also contribute to enhancing resilience to climate change and climate co-benefits by promoting climate-smart farming technologies and livestock management systems.

37. **This component will contribute to the achievement of Cameroon’s Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs) for the pledge, adaptation, and mitigation of climate benefits.** Cameroon’s NDC pledges to reduce 2035 emissions by at least 32 percent of the ‘business-as-usual’ levels (CPF FY17–FY21). With agriculture accounting for about 70 percent of the reduction of emissions targeted by 2035, the proposed project will further Cameroon’s goal to achieving its NDC pledges.

38. **Core beneficiaries of this component will include farmer groups and individual farmers working in the selected agricultural value chains.** The agritech startups and entrepreneurs can choose to work with any individual farmers and farmer groups with no restrictions on value chains. The eligibility of the e-voucher beneficiaries will be determined based on their ability to provide the beneficiary contribution to match the subsidy amount in Subcomponent 3.2. The climate vulnerability context of target farmer groups and individual farmers will be considered when selecting e-voucher beneficiaries and matching grant beneficiaries. Recognizing that women have less access to



and control over assets that can be used as loan collateral, the program will provide targeted financial incentives and assistance to female farmers.

*Subcomponent 3.1: Development of public goods and foundations for data-driven agriculture (US\$7 million)*

39. **The subcomponent will first provide support to the development of three digital agriculture management information systems to improve policy making at the national and regional levels by leveraging the digital data information systems:** (a) gender-disaggregated agropastoral statistics in Cameroon, (b) an information platform for improving animal health in Cameroon, and (c) an interactive mapping of cultivable soil systems in Cameroon. The three proposed information systems will provide (a) different types of foundational data crucial for subsequent development of digital agricultural tools, (b) data-driven analytical tools for practitioners and policy makers, and (c) standardization of agricultural data in Cameroon.

- (a) **Digital information system for agropastoral statistics in Cameroon.** This activity will focus on the implementation of a digital system for the collection, reporting, centralization, processing, and dissemination of agropastoral statistical data that would allow the collection of a large amount of national data and its quick and easy repatriation through the internet on a dedicated server and the dissemination of this statistical information in real time on a web platform designed for this purpose. This data system will register and map a large proportion of the population vulnerable to climate variability, and that data will be used to provide timely and predictable disaster information to deliver early warning and preparedness to agro-pastoral communities. This early warning system will contribute to climate adaptation outcomes through improved traceability and resilience. It will also help curb GHG emissions from the livestock industry through optimized energy consumption, transport, and reduced losses and response costs.
- (b) **Information platform for improving animal health in Cameroon.** This activity involves providing technical support to MINEPIA for the development of a functional information system with a georeferenced database, alert, and response system in the livestock, fisheries, and animal industries sub-sector. It will set up an epidemiological surveillance information system for the early detection of disease outbreaks, operationalize the Animal Health Emergency Operations Center and Special Rapid Intervention Unit (*Unités spéciales d'intervention rapide*) mobile teams, and strengthen the capacities of veterinary services and actors in the livestock sectors in epidemiological surveillance and crisis management. This activity will also contribute to the One Health Initiative and reduce the spread of climate-sensitive zoonotic diseases by improving disease surveillance and response, increasing the capacity to forecast, and improving animal health service delivery.<sup>58</sup>
- (c) **Interactive mapping of cultivable soil systems in Cameroon.** This interactive digital soil management system will provide a platform to produce detailed maps of soil types, properties, crops, and production techniques recommended to the different agroecological zones of Cameroon. The data system will be leveraged to improve soil management techniques, including staggered planting dates, soil water conservation techniques, optimal soil fertilizer recommendations for farmers (as was done by the Ethiopian Soil Information System [EthioSIS] project mentioned in section F).

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<sup>58</sup> The impact of climate change on animal health may be either direct or indirect and may be due primarily to changes in environmental conditions, including air temperature, relative humidity, precipitation, and frequency and magnitude of extreme events (for example, heat waves, severe droughts, and extreme precipitation events). Source: Lacetera, Nicola. 2019. "Impact of Climate Change on Animal Health and Welfare." *Animal Frontiers* 9 (1): 26–31.



40. **This subcomponent will also aim at strengthening the enabling environment on the supply side, with a focus on capacity building and coordination between MINEPIA, MINADER, and affiliated agencies.** The activities include the following:

- (a) **Regulatory framework strengthening.** The project will support activities that aim to improve the regulatory framework for agricultural markets and digital agricultural technologies. The project, through the e-voucher activity, will also assess and improve the regulatory environment to better enable female farmers to gain access to and control over assets that can be used as loan collateral.
- (b) **Skills and human resources development.** The project will invest in developing a core group of policy makers or 'change agents' within MINADER and MINEPIA with higher capacity to lead digital solutions, who will champion the digital transformation agenda. The training programs will focus on strengthening the human resource capabilities at MINADER, MINEPIA,<sup>59</sup> and affiliated agencies. The project will seek to ensure at least 50 percent women's participation.
- (c) **Agricultural Data Unit establishment.** The project will establish an Agricultural Data Unit and staff it with statisticians, data scientists, agriculture experts, and policy makers to contribute to the project's sustainability. This would ensure the translation of agricultural data into insights for policy makers within MINADER and MINEPIA. The human resources for this Agricultural Data Unit will be supported through partnerships and will coordinate with other public and private sector stakeholders such as universities and research institutions.
- (d) **Online platform for administrative procedures at MINADER and MINEPIA (e-agropastoral procedures).** The project will invest in the development of a web-free access platform for administrative procedures at MINADER and MINEPIA. This platform will allow the submission and management of selected procedures that will save cost and time for farmers and livestock owners and improve the quality of public services provided by these ministries.

*Subcomponent 3.2: Facilitation of smallholder engagement in productivity-enhancing, data-driven digital agriculture (US\$16 million)*

41. **This subcomponent will support the targeted agricultural input subsidy program through e-vouchers.** An e-voucher is an instrument that provides a timebound, partial, and diminishing subsidy for the purchase of key farm inputs. Eligible farm households will receive an e-voucher that will partially cover the purchase of eligible inputs aligned with the Manual of Agricultural Input Subsidy Procedures. The eligibility criteria will consider the climate vulnerability context of farm households to better target and maximize climate co-benefits. The menu of e-voucher inputs will prioritize climate-smart agriculture (CSA) technologies such as heat- and drought-resistant seed varieties, integrated soil and fertility management, and on-farm irrigation equipment as part of the menu of inputs offered through the program. By providing access to CSA inputs and subsidizing farmers' adoption costs, this activity could contribute substantially toward climate co-benefits through improved fertilizer application, efficient water and energy use, improved storage, and reduced food losses.

42. **This subcomponent will target the subset of value chains targeted by existing agricultural projects, as well as value chains that were identified as strategic for structural transformation<sup>60</sup> in SND30.** The first phase will target a

<sup>59</sup> At both the centralized and decentralized levels.

<sup>60</sup> According to SND30, the structural transformation of the economy involves the intensification of the manufacturing industry as well as high-productivity service sectors and technology catch-up, resulting in increased productivity of agriculture and its



total of four value chains: two crop value chains (cassava and rain-fed rice) and two non-crop value chains (fish and milk). The second phase will learn from the rollout of the first phase and will include four additional value chains: two cash crop value chains (coffee and cashew nut) that are among the top-priority ones for MINADER and two livestock value chains (pork and poultry) that are among the top-priority ones for MINEPIA. Beneficiary selection will be based on the e-voucher manual of the project and the ability of the farmer(s) to contribute to the e-voucher. The e-voucher manual will follow the guidelines of the Manual of Agricultural Input Subsidy Procedures adopted by the Prime Ministerial Decree on August 28, 2019. In addition to financing women’s investments in the targeted value chains, the World Bank will also invest in specific activities geared toward women’s groups, and support communication strategies that target behavioral changes on issues related to access to land, new technologies, maternal care, and child-feeding practices.

43. **Participating households will pay for a portion of the inputs’ cost (referred to as the ‘beneficiary contribution’ in Table 2) and use the e-voucher to pay for the remaining portion.** For each participating household, this support will be provided for three consecutive crop cycles. The e-vouchers will have an accumulated value over that period, and the value of the voucher will be distributed across the three consecutive crop cycles (see table 2).<sup>61</sup> Through this mechanism, the program will aim to raise the per-farm spending on inputs, thereby raising the output and income per farm. The subsidy percentage will remain the same across the different value chains; however, the subsidy amount will vary based on the estimated average farm spend for each value chain.

Table 2. Operation of the E-voucher Scheme for an Individual Farmer

	First Crop Cycle	Second Crop Cycle	Third Crop Cycle
<b>Subsidy/voucher amount<sup>a</sup> (%)</b>	67	50	33
<b>Beneficiary contribution (%)</b>	33	50	67

Note: a. ‘subsidy’ and ‘voucher’ are used interchangeably.

44. **MINEPIA and MINADER will hire a voucher management agency (VMA) to develop, launch, and implement this activity.** The VMA for the e-voucher program will generate systematic and transparent reporting on the flow of funds, investment in inputs triggered by the project, and sales of promoted inputs by commodity. This market intelligence will be shared with input suppliers to increase the private sector’s confidence that the project is creating demand and to justify their investments in delivering future inputs. The responsibilities of the VMA will also include training MINADER and MINEPIA to manage the implementation of the e-voucher program, as well as providing tailored, periodic training to e-voucher beneficiaries on the use of inputs acquired through the e-voucher.

modernization due to increased demand for agricultural produce. The following value chains were identified as important for the increase of agricultural production and productivity, and for their significant contribution to the development of agro-industries in Cameroon: rice, maize, cocoa/coffee, cotton, sugar, palm oil, rubber, banana, plantain, wood, milk, cashew, sorghum, cassava, potato, fish, and honey.

<sup>61</sup> The World Bank team is working with MINEPIA and MINADER to calculate the exact amount based on the average spending of a farmer in each of the value chains.



*Subcomponent 3.3: Strengthening digital innovation and entrepreneurial capacity (US\$7 million)*

45. **This subcomponent will support the acceleration of existing local agritech innovations by establishing basic conditions for digital transformation in rural agricultural training centers and by connecting beneficiary farmers to agritech entrepreneurs.** The project will support the following activities under this subcomponent:

- (a) **Establishment of basic conditions for the digitalization of agriculture in targeted rural agricultural training centers of MINADER and MINEPIA.** This activity will support the digitalization of rural agricultural training and animation centers managed by MINADER and MINEPIA. The modernization of these centers will be carried out at the infrastructure level (digital connectivity, equipment, and devices) and the software level (digital skills training). Digital agriculture skills training will include designing and preparing e-agriculture modules, providing the software to build the capacity of the students and trainers, setting up a digital library to facilitate access to documentation for learners in the rural sector, and acquiring the on-farm management software. The program will seek to ensure that at least 50 percent of enrolled trainees are women. Additionally, the program will incorporate gender-sensitive design features, including hiring female trainers, offering women-only training cohorts, ensuring training locations are easily and safely accessible by women, and ensuring that training times are convenient for female trainees.
- (b) **Agritech Challenge Innovation for startups offering digital agricultural solutions.** The project will support the following activities to accelerate the growth of the high-potential local agritech startups:
  - i) **Landscape analysis** to determine the agricultural sector's needs, identify the existing agritech startups, and highlight the key features that Cameroonian farmers look for in agritech solutions. This study will identify barriers to women's entrepreneurship and participation in the agritech space and inform strategies to address these challenges.
  - ii) **Startup selection.** The startup selection approach is that of a shark tank competition following the procurement norms; the challenge tracks/themes will include startups providing services on agricultural productivity, storage, market links, as well as CSA practices. The startup selection criteria will include those with climate outcomes, such as innovations or CSA practices that reduce climate risk in the project intervention areas. The Agritech Innovation Challenge will include information sessions, workshops, and other capacity-building programs targeting women, with special attention to the inclusion of young and female entrepreneurs and agritech solutions focused on providing CSA practices. The program will partner with 'women-in-tech' groups, community centers, and other organizations to maximize recruitment of female entrepreneurs.
  - iii) **Acceleration program.** The project will establish an acceleration program in collaboration with MINEPIA, MINADER, and local universities to provide physical space; funding; mentorship; access to networks; and technical, legal, and financial services to agritech entrepreneurs. The program will incorporate gender-sensitive design features to maximize women's participation and successful outcomes, including hiring female trainers, offering women-only training cohorts, ensuring training locations are easily and safely accessible by women, and ensuring that training times are convenient for female trainees. The acceleration program will allow the selected startups to scale up their solutions and adapt them to the needs of the beneficiary farmers. Climate risk screening and climate resilience will be included as evaluation and selection criteria for agritech entrepreneurs. Further, the acceleration programs will support the entrepreneurs to deepen the climate resilience aspects of their agritech solutions.



- (c) **Results-based contracts for agritech entrepreneurs and matching grants for farmer groups.** This activity has two aspects: (i) results-based contracts for selected agritech startups and entrepreneurs to provide customized services in the beneficiaries' geography and (ii) matching grants for the farmer groups. The project will support a series of agritech expos to match agritech startups with farmer groups in target areas. The results-based contracts will support the cost of technology customization and geographical expansion for agritech entrepreneurs, whereas the matching grants will finance two-thirds of the adoption cost of the agritech services for beneficiary farmers and farmer groups. The matching grant beneficiaries will be selected based on a set of qualification criteria defined in the Project Matching Grant Manual. The eligibility criteria will include the climate vulnerability of potential matching grant beneficiaries. The matching grant selection committee will consider business proposals for commercialization and their contribution to climate resilience. The results-based contracts and matching grants will prioritize indicators and aspects that build on climate resilience. Financing climate-informed scalable pilots through these arrangements will increase climate resilience, create business opportunities, and attract private investment in sustainable land and water use in agriculture. The adoption and dissemination of CSA solutions will reduce waste-related emissions and GHG emissions from agricultural practices.

#### **Component 4: Project Management and Citizen Engagement (US\$7 million)**

46. **This component will finance project management and coordination capacity, including procurement, financial management (FM), monitoring and evaluation (M&E), as well as environmental and social (E&S) safeguards management.** This includes the setup and staffing of a Project Implementation Unit (PIU) that comprises a coordinator, a fiduciary team, a GEMS<sup>62</sup>/M&E specialist, an E&S safeguards specialist, and technical experts recruited on an ad hoc basis. This component will also include funding for project communication, audit, and logistics. Section III discusses implementation arrangements in more detail.

47. **In addition, this component will foster citizen engagement through the inclusion of digitally-enabled feedback loops—including GEMS—to allow for real-time input on project activities.** During the project's preparation, consultations were held with direct stakeholders to gather feedback and inform the proposed design and the prioritization of activities. In close collaboration with local authorities, the project's implementation will support the development of a location-based feedback system that enables project beneficiaries and targeted communities to register their feedback, grievances, and concerns. The program will work closely with women's centers, community organizations, and religious leaders to encourage women's participation in feedback loops. For real-time data collection and analysis, the project will implement the GEMS method to enhance the transparency and accuracy of project planning as well as M&E and third-party monitoring throughout the project's cycle. The opportunity to also resort to iterative beneficiary monitoring (IBM) will be explored during project preparation, especially given the fragile (and, in some regions, conflictual) status of the country. Moreover, the project will hold virtual and small face-to-face consultations with members of vulnerable groups during implementation, including indigenous people (IP), women, teenagers, people affected by the project's construction works, and other stakeholders. Community radio and talks, mobile telephone surveys, and SMS alerts and feedback would also be employed to inform the population about the

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<sup>62</sup> Geo-Enabling Initiative for Monitoring and Supervision. The GEMS method was developed by the Fragility, Conflict and Violence Group and enables project teams to use open source tools for in-field collection of structured digital data that automatically feeds into a centralized M&E system and management information system. The integrated data can include any kind of indicators based on tailor-made forms, photos, audio, videos, time and date stamps, and global positioning system (GPS) coordinates that allow for automated geo-mapping of the information. GEMS allows for the establishment of a digital platform for remote supervision, the monitoring of real-time safeguards, and portfolio mapping for coordination across project components as well as with other operations in the region.



benefits of broadband and digital services. In addition, the project will develop an engagement strategy with the targeted population and institutions to gauge the level of demand and need for training and digital skills development. The concerns of the consulted parties would be integrated into the respective designs of the project’s intervention instruments and updated throughout implementation.

48. **Three indicators will track citizen engagement progress:** (a) the number of public stakeholder consultations held, with actions subsequently taken to respond to concerns; (b) the percentage of beneficiaries of digital skills training reporting satisfaction with the trainings; and (c) project-related feedback received that is addressed and responded to within a timeline that has been specified and publicly communicated by the project. Women will be specifically targeted in citizen engagement activities through separate consultations in small groups facilitated by a woman to ensure that the activities of the project are fully accessible to them and that they do not create negative impacts for them. Those consultations will also be used to identify any risks to women while taking part in project activities and ways on how to best mitigate them, as well as assess whether the GRM developed by the project is accessible and safe for women and responds to the needs for anyone affected by GBV or sexual exploitation and abuse/sexual harassment (SEA/SH).

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

49. **In the context of a rapidly developing COVID-19 emergency, a Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC) is added to the project structure to allow for quick disbursement of uncommitted balances as a crisis response measure for this COVID-19 situation or any future ones.** This will have an initial zero value but may be financed during the implementation of the project to allow for an agile response to emerging eligible events, with funds redirected from other components. Including CERC at the preparation stage—albeit with zero funding—provides for flexibility to respond to an imminent or actual emergency (such as COVID-19). The crisis response expenditures could cover, for instance, the facilitation of emergency humanitarian payments to vulnerable population groups using mobile money, such as women, rural communities, and people with disabilities (including pregnant and breastfeeding women, single mothers, and women from ethnic or religious minorities); measures to ensure the business continuity of core government functions when civil servants are required to continue home-based work; and support for digital startups and SMEs to address their immediate liquidity challenges, reduce layoffs, and avoid bankruptcies. The specific modalities of CERC eligibility and implementation roles will be defined in the PIM.

Legal Operational Policies

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

Summary of Assessment of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

The project includes purchase of electronic equipment for which e-waste handling and energy efficiency need to be assessed carefully. OHS issues especially regarding optical fiber safety (such as exposure to laser light, microscopic glass fiber, risk of fire) and EMF might pose risk. The project may generate social impacts related to labor influx, and inclusive participation of key stakeholders. Otherwise, the construction, maintenance, and operation of digital infrastructure (optic cable installation) in rural areas could involve the acquisition of land that will lead to physical



and/or economic displacement.

### E. Implementation

50. **The project will be implemented by MINPOSTEL**, in close collaboration with MINEPIA, MINADER, the Ministry of Economy, Planning and Land Planning (*Ministère de l'Economie, de la Planification et de l'Aménagement du Territoire*, MINEPAT), and the Ministry of Social Affairs (*Ministère des Affaires Sociales*, MINAS), as well as with sectoral agencies such as ART and ANTIC. Most of the activities under Components 1 and 2 will be under the direct supervision of MINPOSTEL, in collaboration with ART and ANTIC, while the activities that fall under Component 3 will be implemented by MINEPIA and MINADER in collaboration with MINPOSTEL, as outlined in Table 3. MINAS is expected to play a role in ensuring that the social commitments of the project are respected and implemented according to national guidelines. A PIU will be set up at MINPOSTEL as outlined below and a PIM is being prepared through the Project Preparation Advance (PPA).<sup>63</sup>

**Table 3. Implementation Roles and Responsibilities**

Component	Subcomponent	Implementing Ministry
<b>Component 1:</b> Enabling Strategy, Policy, and Regulation for Digital Inclusion and Transformation	1.1: Enabling environment for the development of a vibrant broadband market	MINPOSTEL
	1.2: Enabling environment for the safe and resilient development of digital services	MINPOSTEL
	1.3: Strengthening the digital sector’s institutional structure and capacity	MINPOSTEL
<b>Component 2:</b> Digital Connectivity and Inclusion	2.1: Extension of digital networks under an MFD approach	MINPOSTEL
	2.2: Last-mile connection to key public entities	MINPOSTEL
	2.3: Demand-side interventions	MINPOSTEL
<b>Component 3:</b> Facilitating the implementation of data-driven solutions in the agricultural sector	3.1: Development of public goods and foundations for data-driven agriculture	MINADER/MINEPIA (with MINPOSTEL)
	3.2: Facilitation of smallholder engagement in productivity-enhancing, data-driven digital agriculture	MINADER/MINEPIA (with MINPOSTEL)
	3.3: Strengthening digital innovation and entrepreneurial capacity	MINADER/MINEPIA (with MINPOSTEL)

51. **As several institutions are involved with the proposed activities, the project will require an effective cross-agency coordination and implementation mechanism:**

- (a) A Project Steering Committee (PSC) will be established to oversee the project’s implementation and provide strategic guidance to the PIU. It will be chaired by MINPOSTEL and include high-level

<sup>63</sup> The PPA, of US\$3 million, was signed in September 2018 to fund crucial studies, equipment purchase, and capacity building for the PIU. The closing date has been extended to February 28, 2022.



representatives of all other ministries involved (including MINADER, MINEPIA, MINEPAT, the Ministry of Finance (MINFI), and the Ministry of Women's Empowerment and the Family (MINPROFF)). The project will need the buy-in of high-level decision-makers, especially for sensitive policy changes such as the reorganization of Cameroon's digital sector. For this reason, this committee will include a representative from the Prime Ministry.

- (b) A PIU anchored at MINPOSTEL will be tasked with the overall implementation of the project and will retain fiduciary responsibility toward the World Bank for the supported activities. The PIU will also act as a technical secretariat for the PSC, pulling resources from MINSPOTEL, MINADER, MINEPIA, ART, and ANTIC, as needed. An interim PIU is already in place, with an interim coordinator, a procurement specialist, an FM specialist, and an accountant with experience in World Bank procedures. This PIU is currently in charge of the PPA and will be further strengthened with specialized staff (for example, E&S safeguards, M&E, communications, farmer organizations specialist, and e-voucher advisor) as the project enters the implementation phase. A full-time project coordinator has been recruited on a full-time basis to replace the current interim coordinator from MINPOSTEL upon the project's effectiveness.
- (c) Two main technical committees will be established to lead the technical implementation of activities and to provide guidance on technical and sector-related matters to the PIU. The ICT technical committee will be chaired by MINPOSTEL, while the agriculture committee will be co-chaired by MINADER/MINEPIA. To ensure proper coordination between the three ministries, MINPOSTEL will be represented on the agriculture technical committee. Both technical committees will include technical experts from the ministries involved as well as representatives from national and regional entities such as telecom operators and internet service providers, local agritech entrepreneurs, farmer groups, academia, and local governments.
- (d) Ad hoc departmental committees will be created to convey messages and information to target beneficiaries, mobilize target communities for special events, relay information and communication campaigns, and gather population feedback and grievances. These committees will be coordinated by the PIU.

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