



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

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 02-Nov-2020 | Report No: PIDISDSA28302

**BASIC INFORMATION****A. Basic Project Data**

Country Congo, Republic of	Project ID P171854	Project Name Congo Rep. Additional Financing for Skills Development for Employability Project	Parent Project ID (if any) P128628
Parent Project Name CONGO - Rep. Skills Development for Employability Project	Region AFRICA WEST	Estimated Appraisal Date 13-Oct-2020	Estimated Board Date 17-Dec-2020
Practice Area (Lead) Education	Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Government of Republic of Congo	Implementing Agency Ministry of Technical and Professional Education

Proposed Development Objective(s) Parent

The objective of the Project is to improve job and entrepreneurship skills for vulnerable urban youth in order to improve their labor market insertion and earnings.

Components

Component 1: Skills training, job insertion and entrepreneurship support for vulnerable youth and micro-entrepreneurs

Component 2: Strengthen the technical, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation capacity of METPFQE

Component 3: Contingent Emergency Response (CERC)

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

Total Project Cost	15.00
Total Financing	15.00
of which IBRD/IDA	15.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS**World Bank Group Financing**



International Development Association (IDA)	15.00
IDA Credit	15.00

Environmental Assessment Category

C-Not Required

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. **The Republic of Congo (ROC) which joined the ranks of lower middle-income countries (LMIC)¹ on the back of strong oil revenues for more than a decade is now resource-constrained at a time when it needs to respond to service demands from a growing population.** Spatial disparities in access to services - with rural areas receiving fewer public services than the two largest cities, Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire - are amplified by the lagging development of local governments and slow progress in the decentralization process. Social cleavages along the urban-rural divides have escalated into a resurgence of fragility. The challenge for the ROC is to bolster institutions while improving the scope and quality of service delivery to build the country’s human capital and basic infrastructure. The country’s population is very young, with nearly two out of five people under the age of 15 and 38.1 percent of the population being between the ages of 15 and 35.²

2. **The Republic of Congo (ROC)’s performance on human capital is weak.** With a Human Capital Index (HCI) value of 0,42³ (just above the Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) average of 0,40, and well below the average for lower middle income countries (LMIC) of 0,48), a child born in the ROC today can be expected to be 42 percent as productive as he/she could be if he/she enjoyed complete education and full health in early years. Health indicators for women are poor, with very high maternal mortality rates compared with many other SSA countries, and higher HIV infection rates for women (4.0 percent) than for men (2.0 percent) in the 15-49 age bracket. Over the last 15 years, the contribution of human capital to total growth has been only 2.0 percent. This weak impact reflects the low skills level of most of the workforce, driven by the low quality of education and poor learning outcomes, which are further impeded by inadequate nutrition and health care beginning in the early years. Human capital accumulation remains low, limiting individuals’ earning capacities and reinforcing the intergenerational transmission of poverty. In 2019, the

¹ Gross national income (GNI) per capita increased from \$600 in 2000 to \$2,500 in 2014 but declined to US\$1,640 in 2018.

² The World Bank Group, *Mai 2017, République du Congo – Rapport sur l’Analyse de la Pauvreté, Éducation, Emplois et Protection Sociale pour une Réduction Durable de la Pauvreté.*

³ The World Bank Group launched the Human Capital Project and its associated Human Capital Index (HCI) in October 2018.



ROC became an early adopter country to the Human Capital Project (HCP), and the Government committed to improving education and skills as key pillars to improving the HCI.

3. **While unemployment is high amongst youth, females are disproportionately affected – facing significant difficulties in entering the labor market and obtaining jobs and, on average, women earn much less than men.** This gender gap is largely explained by the lower education and skills levels among women and their higher concentration in the informal sector (CPF, 2019)⁴ being less likely to find employment in the higher-earning formal sector. Limited education opportunities for women and large household sizes weigh heavily on their ability to join the formal labor market and contribute to the exclusion of women in the economy. Social norms are one factor limiting girls' access to schooling and, in turn, also women's ability to access productive resources, such as land and credit. A recent survey conducted by the Ministry for the Promotion of Women and Integration of Women in Development finds that women are underrepresented in important decision-making positions: only 25.6 percent of women are holding important decision-making positions in the public and private sectors.⁵

COVID-19 Impact and Response

4. **The onset of the COVID-19 pandemic has had - and is expected to continue to have - a serious impact on access to education, learning outcomes and economic business activity in both the formal and informal sectors.** The COVID-19 pandemic is causing significant adverse impacts in the country, both in terms of its direct negative impact on health and education outcomes (in part, through limited access to quality services) and indirect socio-economic impacts resulting from social distancing policies, lockdowns, the effects of supply chain disruptions and the global economic downturn on remittances and prices. These measures are also negatively impacting business activity in both the formal and informal sectors and generating income losses for many households. These adverse effects are more pronounced for poor and vulnerable populations since: (i) in urban and peri urban areas with high population density, mitigation measures are reducing economic activities with close human interaction; and (ii) most of the poor and vulnerable acquire their daily income from informal activities, and have limited if any safety net. Moreover, inflationary pressures on food resulting from trade disruptions and restricted markets could impose an additional burden on many poor households, due to the relatively higher share of their resources spent on food. In the absence of public measures to provide support to poorer and more vulnerable households, the proportion of people living below the international poverty line (US\$1.9 a day in 2011 purchasing power parity (PPP)) is expected to increase from 40 percent to 43 percent from 2020 until 2022.⁶

5. **Vulnerable youth is likely to be particularly affected by the socio-economic impacts of the COVID-19 pandemic with longer-term implications for human capital accumulation and fragility.** Pandemic mitigation measures, such as mobility restrictions, further reduce slim earning opportunities and may agitate an already disenfranchised youth. School closures, loss of learning and resulting extensive absences from school may compound the risk of dropout and, together with general disruptions to social

⁴ World Bank (2019) Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for the ROC for the period of FY20-FY24, Report N 126962-CG.

⁵ Existing studies include: *"Lutte et réponse aux violences sexuelles en République du Congo: Analyse de situation* (UNICEF) and *Politique Nationale Genre 2017-2021 de la République du Congo*.

⁶ World Bank, Macroeconomic and Poverty Outlook (MPO), April 2020.



service delivery, could have negative medium- to longer-term effects on learning outcomes, skills development and human capital accumulation.

6. **A national coordination committee for the country's COVID-19 response was established and important measures undertaken to halt the spread of the disease**, including the declaration of a state of health emergency, border closures, and shelter-in-place orders. First, the Government put in place three structures: (i) the National Coordination for the Management of the Pandemic of COVID-19; (ii) the Task Force on the Economic and Social Impact of COVID-19; (iii) the COVID-19 National Pandemic Response Committee; and the college of experts. In addition, the Government prepared a national health contingency plan in collaboration with the World Health Organization (WHO) and other development partners (DPs) with an estimated budget of US\$38.0 million. To support its implementation, on April 20, 2020, the World Bank (WB) approved the IDA-funded ROC COVID-19 Emergency Response Project (P173851) in the amount of US\$11.3 million. The Government mobilized an additional US\$1.0 million from the Global Alliance for Vaccines and Immunization (GAVI) to the implementation of this Plan. The Centre for Quarantine and Care in Brazzaville was recently established, and the Center of Epidemiological Control has intensified communication on COVID-19 prevention. As of October 26, 2020, there were 5,253 confirmed cases of COVID-19 and 92 deaths reported.⁷ The national public health laboratory stepped up testing services with the support of various DPs, but further improvements are needed to increase testing capacity.

7. **The Government is taking decisive measures to mitigate the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic on poor and vulnerable populations.** After the initial health-focused response, the Government has decided to provide 200,000 households with emergency cash transfers as well as to expand, through the Lisungi Emergency COVID-19 Response Project (LECRP) (P174178), the existing social safety net interventions to supports households in restoring their livelihoods as the pandemic recedes. The Government has also enacted measures to mitigate the effect of the pandemic on the private sector, such as easing taxes and duty payments for private sector actors. However, these latter measures will have a limited effect on poor and vulnerable households since most of these individuals are working in the informal sector.

8. **In response to the COVID-19 pandemic and its impact on the education sector, the Government through the National Emergency Fund has put some measures in place to ensure pedagogical continuity.** Through this Fund, the Ministry of Technical and Professional Education, Qualifying Training and Employment (*Ministère de l'Enseignement Technique, Professionnel, de la Formation Qualifiante et de l'Emploi*, METPFQE) and the Ministry of Primary, Secondary Education and Literacy (*Ministère de l'Enseignement Primaire, Secondaire et de l'Alphabétisation*, MEPSA) were able to ensure the pedagogical continuity of students in taking examination classes and were able to carry out the academic year 2020 examinations. The Government's efforts are also supported by several development partners (DPs) including, among others, United Nations Children's Fund (UNICEF), United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO), the French Development Agency (*Agence Française de Développement*, AFD) and the WB. To ensure learning continuity during the COVID-19 pandemic and closure of schools, learning materials to students enrolled in examination classes in technical and

⁷ World Health Organization, WHO Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) Dashboard.
https://covid19.who.int/?gclid=Cj0KCQjw59n8BRD2ARIsAAmgPmLca4ZH96Ovp3s3pnJogzr9XU03lqyVgNZk5X-2rGet-C6IIWcRZ50aAh4DEALw_wcB



professional education were provided in the Technical and Vocational Education and training (TVET) sub-sector. Students enrolled in qualifying training, however, did not receive any specific support during that period, which may lead them to drop-out.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

The Skills Development System

9. **The technical and vocational education and training (TVET) is mostly offered in urban areas and by private providers.** The supply of TVET, particularly that of technical high schools, like in the entire ROC education system, is driven by a booming private sector, concentrated in Brazzaville and Pointe-Noire. TVET is offered through the following education and training structures: (i) qualifying training centers (trade centers, workshops and Education Training and Learning Center (*Centre d'éducation, de formation et d'apprentissage*, CEFAs); (ii) technical education colleges; (iii) technical and vocational high schools and institutes; and (iv) vocational schools. Regarding training centers, only 33 out of 558 are in the public sector. And for vocational schools, 11 out of the current 28 schools are public.⁸

10. **The quality of education remains poor, learning outcomes are low and most youth leave school with incomplete secondary schooling.** Early on, the ROC had a relatively well developed education system, which explains the relatively high level of educational attainment of the population now in their 40s, as confirmed by the 2011 Demographic and Health Survey (DHS) (the median number of years of education is 8.2 for 25-29 year-olds compared with 8.5 years for 45-49 year-olds). Primary education learning outcomes are low, with just 24.0 percent of 6th graders reaching sufficient competency in math and reading assessments.⁹ This means that most students leaving primary school¹⁰ do not have sufficient foundational skills in literacy and numeracy. There are no standardized assessments in place, and school-management is weak, with little flow of information regarding service delivery and satisfaction. The education Services Delivery Indicators survey (SDI) planned to be conducted in December 2020 as part of the Education Sector Support Project (152910) may eventually provide data on the quality of services. There is an insufficient number of trained teachers in mathematics and science subjects, particularly in secondary schools. This is linked to very low numbers of students in math/science disciplines in secondary and tertiary education institutions, and a skewed focus on a few, high performers.

11. **The TVET in the ROC suffers from low quality and weak relevance.** Most public TVET institutions are poorly equipped, provide an overly theoretical education (given the lack of equipment and materials), and do not work closely with the private sector on program offerings and design. The training offered is primarily a technical secondary education, with the first diploma attained four years after completing primary school (*Brevet d'Étude Technique*, BET). Additional diplomas build upon the BET and, therefore, require even more years of schooling. Many students, therefore, leave the system without obtaining a diploma – having no way of signaling their skills to employers. Most of the training is provided by private institutions – however, there are a variety of private TVET institutions, including several run by the Catholic Church, some of which are perceived to provide good quality training and placement of their trainees in internships in private enterprises. However, given their need to charge tuition to cover

⁸ METPFQE Statistical Yearbook, 2017-18.

⁹ Programme d'Analyse des Systèmes Educatifs de la CONFEMEN, PASEC, 2014.

¹⁰ Primary schooling is 6 years and secondary schooling 7 years in the ROC.



operating costs, they often operate with fairly low student enrollment. The TVET system has been moderately successful in training workers for the formal sector, given that a large portion of trainees work in the formal sector - 30 percent of those with a technical secondary education work in the public sector and 16.5 percent work in the formal private sector. Still, more than half are working in the informal sector (53.4 percent), according to the 2009 Employment and Informal Sector Study.¹¹ This likely reflects a combination of both the small size of the formal sector and the low quality and relevance of the TVET provided.

12. The ROC's skills development system is weak and ineffective to respond to the skills requirements of employers and to the transition of youth into suitable jobs. The supply of technical and vocational education in the ROC is very limited, accommodating only 8.8 percent of the total secondary school enrollment in 2017/2018. The supply of qualifying training is embryonic with 6,376 learners, of which just over 1,096 are in the public qualifying training centers.¹² With the limited quality and relevant program offerings, the sub-sector struggles to meet the skills needed for the economy. The teaching and learning conditions are sub-optimal, and qualifications of teachers are limited - especially in technical fields where there are very few specialized teachers. Training provided is highly theoretical with limited opportunity for hands on learning and there is very little partnership between the vocational training system and business and industry. With the exception of the Education, Training and Learning Centers (*Centres d'éducation, de formation, et d'apprentissage*, CEFA), the training system in place does not provide an opportunity for work-study training or functional learning. Those trained in the formal sector (TVET) have difficulties carrying out internships in private sector firms, as they have only minimum practice which has resulted in poor mastery of technical and professional foundations.

13. The TVET system does not offer training in the types of skills needed to increase the productivity and earnings of informal sector workers. Skills needed in the informal sector are first and foremost good basic skills (functional literacy and numeracy) which many Congolese youth have not sufficiently acquired due to the low quality of primary education. Further, informal sector workers need non-cognitive skills—in particular communication or inter-personal skills—which can be learned through a job or an internship. After these foundational skills are acquired, informal sector workers need technical or vocational skills. Most youth entering the labor market today cannot find formal sector employment and become either engaged in the informal sector by default or, in the case of many girls, economically inactive. Presently, the majority of youth working in the informal sector have an incomplete secondary education, weak basic skills, no work experience and little or no vocational skills. Dominant activities in the informal sectors in Brazzaville and Pointe Noire are wholesale or retail trade (66 percent) followed by manufacturing (11.5 percent) and construction (11.4 percent)¹³.

14. The formal education system currently has little to offer these youth in terms of training to enable them to increase their productivity. With little savings and a need to earn their living on a daily basis, their opportunity costs are often high, and therefore training programs would need to be short and targeted to their needs. A few Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) offer vocational training for some of the most vulnerable. The now closed World Bank-financed Support to Basic Education Project (PRAEBASE) (P131120) funded a 12-month apprenticeship training for about 2,000 out-of-school youth

¹¹ ROC Centre National de la Statistique et des Etudes Economiques : *Étude sur l'emploi et le secteur informel* (EESIC), 2009.

¹² METPFQE statistical yearbook, 2017-18.

¹³ World Bank (2012): "Raising Productivity and Reducing the Risks of Household Enterprises in Congo" based on EESIC 2009.



ages 14-19. Building on lessons under this project, the SDEP supported the implementation of a short-term skills program and trained around 5000 out-of-school youth in its first and second cohorts.

Labor Market and Youth Insertion

15. **Most of today's youth work in the informal sector.** Currently, almost 77 percent of the labor force works in the informal sector with participation in the formal sector employment limited outside of the oil sector and government. The 2011 *World Bank Employment and Growth Study* showed that there were approximately 125,000 jobs in the formal sector nearly three-quarters (72 percent) of which are in the public sector and state-owned enterprises¹⁴. Further, the rate of increase in the number of formal sector jobs is slow compared with the growth of the labor force. For that reason, despite being the preferred choice of most, most youth are not able to find formal sector employment and many will instead be engaged in informal sector activities, which typically command lower earnings, particularly for the low-skilled such as those with incomplete secondary education.¹⁵

16. **About 60 percent of young Congolese enter the labor market with incomplete secondary education as their highest level of schooling.** Up to the age of 21, more than half of urban youth are still attending school, although many are overage for their grade. At the age of 22, the share of urban youth in school falls below 50 percent, and from age 23, there are more urban youth working than in school, but also there are many who are neither in school or working (one in three). Few are both attending school and work (2 percent).

17. **Youth face significant difficulties in entering the job market in the ROC.** According to the results of the Survey on Transition to Working Life (ETVA) in 2015, the unemployment rate for youth aged 15 to 29 was 30.5 percent with the rates being higher among women than among men (31.6 percent versus 29.5 percent).¹⁶ Unemployment, particularly youth unemployment, continues to be a serious problem. Youth unemployment is driven by a number of factors among others: the lack of competitiveness vis-à-vis foreign industries, the lack of business diversification (mostly limited to production), the quality of education and mismatch between school and university training, and the needs of the labor market.¹⁷

18. **Girls and women are also at a disadvantage, both in terms of accessing to education and employment.** The ROC has not registered any improvement since 2000 in the Gender Inequality Index (UN, 2000).¹⁸ Although there is no longer a gender gap in primary school enrollments, girls make up only 45.0 percent and 39.0 percent of enrollments in secondary and higher education, respectively.¹⁹ In secondary education, 24 percent of young men ages 20-24 complete the level compared to 14.0 percent of females in the same age group. A high rate of adolescent pregnancies could explain some of the gender

¹⁴ World Bank (2011). *Employment and Growth Study: From jobless to inclusive growth*

¹⁵ Kuepié and Nordman 2011 documented a sharply higher compensation for informal sector workers with completed high school education.

¹⁶ Elder, S., & Koné, K. S. (2014). *Transition vers le marché du travail des jeunes femmes et hommes en Afrique Sub-Saharienne*. ILO.

¹⁷ Filmer and Fox (2014). *Youth employment in Sub-Saharan Africa*.

¹⁸ This index combines indicators of educational attainment, labor force participation, parliamentary representation, adolescent fertility and maternal mortality.

¹⁹ MEPSA's statistical data for the 2017-18 school year and Ministry of Higher Education (*Ministère de l'Enseignement Supérieur – MES*)'s data for the academic year produced with the support of the Education Sector Support Project (P152910).



disparities in educational attainment: ROC's adolescent fertility rate (111 births per 1,000 women ages 15-19) is higher than several resource-rich comparator countries such as Mauritania (77), South Sudan (72), and Sudan (80). This is of great concern as adolescent pregnancy is associated with increased dropout rates among girls and lower levels of educational attainment among them.²⁰ Women's access to formal sector jobs is even more limited than that of men, and as a result, women hold more than half of informal sector jobs (54.0 percent), where they are mostly involved in trade. Women are under-represented in decision making, as they hold only 6.0 percent of seats in the current parliament.²¹

19. **The Government is fully aware of the need to improve skills development and help youth with the school-to-work transition as a means to achieve better labor market outcomes, reduce poverty and improve human development outcomes, as well as support peace and stability.** The National Development Plan (*Plan National de Développement*, PND, 2018-22) in its axis 2 "Development of human capital" emphasizes the important role of vocational technical training and skills development. However, available resources are insufficient to achieve these objectives. In the promotion of training and employment, the METPFQE carried out the reform of the National Office for Employment and Labor (*Office National de l'Emploi et de la Main d'Oeuvre*, ONEMO) in 2019, resulted in its dissolution and the creation of two structures: the Congolese Agency for Employment (*Agence Congolaise pour l'Emploi*, ACPE) and the Fund for Employability and Learning (*Fonds National d'Appui à l'Employabilité et à l'Apprentissage*, FONEA). The ACPE is the structure responsible for providing intermediation in the labor market, with the main mission of ensuring, among other things, reception, information and registration job seekers and support for employers in identifying their recruitment needs. The role of FONEA is to supervise and then finance self-employment for young people with business creation projects. The FONEA's main areas of support are increasing the employability and learning of job seekers, through qualifying training and self-entrepreneurship. The FONEA is responsible, among other things, for: (i) redistributing the apprenticeship tax proportionally to project leaders within the framework of employability, to continuing training leading to qualifications and by apprenticeship and to training centers, including the education training and learning centers (*Centres d'éducation, de formation et d'apprentissage*, CEFAs); and (ii) promoting employability by reinforcing the skills of job seekers, in particular through skills training, vocational adaptation programs, training, integration and reintegration of job seekers. However, given the economic difficulties and the issue related to the collection and use of the apprenticeship tax, these structures cannot fully play their role, including the financing of apprenticeship and training, thus limiting development of skills of young job seekers and those who have dropped out of school in search of qualifying training.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Original PDO

20. The objective of the Project is to improve job and entrepreneurship skills for vulnerable urban youth in order to improve their labor market insertion and earnings.

Current PDO

²⁰ The Human Capital Project. The Government of ROC formally requested in February 2019 to join the Human Capital Project.

²¹ PRSP 2012-2016.



21. The PDO of the proposed Additional Financing remains the same as the parent Project's.

Key Results

Key Results are the following:

- Youth who complete the training supported by the project (percentage) and percentage female;
- Training providers reaching performance benchmarks (percentage)
- Increase in trained youth who are employed or self-employed one year after completing training (percentage); and
- Increase in average earnings of youth after completing training (percentage).

D. Project Description

22. The original Skills Development for Employability Project (SDEP) is structured into two components as follows: Component 1: Skills training, job insertion and entrepreneurship support for vulnerable youth and micro-entrepreneurs; and Component 2: Strengthen the technical, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation capacity of METPFQE.

23. The proposed Additional Financing (AF) operation will continue to support the implementation of SDEP to increase girl's participation in job and entrepreneurship skills for vulnerable urban youth in order to improve their labor market insertion and earnings. Specifically, the proposed AF will finance the scaling-up of activities that will improve the knowledge and skills of girls while strengthening training on pregnancy prevention, one of the main causes affecting learning and leading to school dropout.

24. The proposed changes in the AF will consist of: (i) strengthening existing life skills courses with specific modules on contraception as a means to prevent and reduce early pregnancy, and on GBV including the SEA/SH aspects; (ii) including a new subcomponent (1.4) to fund business plans (Competitive Fund) for trained youth and micro-entrepreneurs, with a focus on supporting female self-employment; (iii) adjusting the results framework (RF) to include five intermediate results indicators (IRI) (two of which will include sub-indicators) to better reflect the project's interventions under the Competitive Fund), to address GBV, and to meet the Bank's new requirement including one indicator on citizens' engagement; and (iv) include a component (Component 3) for contingency emergency response (CERC) in accordance with paragraph 12 of the WB Policy on Investment Project Financing (Projects in Situations of Urgent Need of Assistance or Capacity Constraints) to help the Government improve response times in the event of future situations where urgent assistance is needed, such as a response to the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic. Finally, as the closing date of the proposed AF will be June 30, 2023, the parent project will also be restructured to extend the current closing date to align with the AF. The AF will be structured as follows:

Component 1. Skills training, job insertion and entrepreneurship support for vulnerable youth and micro-entrepreneurs (o Financing: US\$11.8 million; Revised Total Financing: US\$24.3 million)

Subcomponent 1.1. Skills training, job insertion and entrepreneurship support for vulnerable youth (Current Financing: US\$7.1 million; Revised Total Financing: US\$12.1 million)



25. This subcomponent will continue to provide a program for short-term skills training, internships, support for job search and for entrepreneurship for at least 3,500 (with 1,659 under the AF) urban youth and young adults with insufficient connection to the labor market in peri-urban and urban areas of Pointe-Noire and Brazzaville. In addition, the AF will seek: (i) to foster the participation of girls in non-traditional trades' training programs, with pilot interventions such as role model or mentoring programs, and (ii) to strengthen the training and monitoring of girls and boys on life skills courses, with specific modules on socio-emotional skills, as well as on pregnancy prevention and birth control, and SEA/SH with the aim to reduce school dropouts and enable young girls to complete their training and provide them with greater opportunities for jobs or self-employment.

Subcomponent 1.2. Skills training for micro-entrepreneurs (Current Financing: US\$1.6 million; Revised Total Financing; US\$3.2 million)

26. This subcomponent will continue to support the pilot program for skills training for at least 1,500 young micro-entrepreneurs in Pointe-Noire and Brazzaville (around 1,000 under the proposed AF). The term micro-entrepreneurs to an owner/partner of household or micro-enterprises. Participants in this pilot training program must be between 18 and 39 of age to maintain a focus on youth while also taking into account that the average age of household enterprise owners is 38. Participants in the pilot program for micro-entrepreneurs will not receive a stipend.

Subcomponent 1.3. Apprenticeship and functional literacy training for out-of-school adolescent youth (Current Financing: US\$3.1 million; Total Revised Financing: US\$6.5 million)

27. This subcomponent will continue to support a program for apprenticeship, functional literacy and numeracy and life skills training for at least 5,000 out-of-school and other vulnerable youth in Pointe-Noire and Brazzaville (2,175 youth for this AF). The subcomponent scales up a pilot apprenticeship training program for out-of-school adolescent youth implemented under the WB- Basic Education Support Project (BESP) (*Projet d'Appui à l'Education de Base*, PRAEBASE). The AF will support activities to strengthen capacities of master craftsmen, and pedagogical and technical specialists (PSTP), and the training and monitoring of youth in life skills courses (including specific modules on pregnancy prevention and birth control, and SEA/SH) to reduce school dropout, help girls complete their apprenticeship, and provide them with better employment opportunities.

Subcomponent 1.4. Competitive Fund (new) (Total Financing: US\$2.5 million)

28. A Competitive Funding mechanism will be introduced as subcomponent 1.4. The Competitive Fund is intended for youth formed into groups or individuals and will provide funding for the acquisition of materials and small equipment for the installation and start-up of their self-employed activities. All business plans backed by training courses organized under the project are eligible, with the exception of the agriculture sector. The subcomponent 1.4 is expected to finance 100 business plans, of which 50 business plans developed by female beneficiaries. The amount of the grant per subproject will vary between US\$1,800 and US\$9,000 (depending on the activities proposed to be implemented in the business plan: from a small hairdressing craft to a more structured micro-enterprise). The grants are made on a non-reimbursable basis.



29. Trainees will be provided coaching in formulating their vision and strategy into a simplified business plans taking into account market needs and technical and financial requirements. Business plans will be selected competitively based on their potential to promote the creation of self-employment and co-operatives on different trades, based on labor market needs such as: hairdressing, carpentry, auto-mechanics, electricity, welding and turning, sewing, and digital services for young people trained. Eligibility and prioritization criteria will be applied and defined in a specific operational manual for the Competitive Fund to maximize the transparency of the selection process and the sustainability of the investments made.

Component 2. Strengthen the technical, planning, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation capacity of METPFQE (Current Financing: US\$3.2 million; Revised Total Financing: US\$5.7 million)

- a) *The establishment of a statistical database and a database on the TVET training offer in the ROC (production of statistical directories, survey on the training offer in the TEVT).*
- b) *Supporting a technical and policy dialogue around the future demand for skills and implications for skills development in the ROC..*
- c) *Establishing a country wide skills strategy aimed at matching training and employment, which will be informed by the two above-mentioned activities (a) and (b), as well as by the implementation of the training programs in Component 1.*
- d) *Strengthening the capacity building of the METPFQE by establishing a national certification system for qualifying pathways initiated under the parent project.*
- e) *Strengthening of the ACPE and FONEA in establishing a database on employment in terms of supply and demand.*
- f) *Under this component, the proposed AF will also continue to support activities related to the impact evaluation (IE) that begun under the parent project.*

30. The following activities will also be supported by the AF: (i) strengthening capacity of METPFQE and (ii) strengthening methods used for certification of skills training, and establishing new diplomas for shorter skills training that do not exist currently (such as those provided in Component 1); (ii) developing, in partnership with industry/private sector, an agreed method for the certification of skills (*validation des acquis de l'expérience*, VAE) for those trained through informal channels; (iii) activities related to the impact evaluation (IE) that begun under the parent project to assess the impact of the training programs offered; and (iv) strengthening of the project coordination capacity of the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) at METPFQE, which will be responsible for the day-to-day coordination and management of the project.

Component 3. Contingent Emergency Response (CERC) (Total Financing: US\$0.00 million)



31. A CERC will be included under the project in accordance with paragraph 12 of the WB Policy on Investment Project Financing (Projects in Situations of Urgent Need of Assistance or Capacity Constraints) to help the Government improve response times in the event of future situations where urgent assistance is needed. A CERC allows for rapid reallocation of project proceeds in the event of a future natural or man-made disaster or crisis that has caused or is imminently likely to cause a major adverse economic and/or social impact. This component will have no funding allocation initially. In the event of a future emergency, it could be used to draw resources from the unallocated expenditure category and/or allow the Government to request the World Bank (WB) to recategorize and reallocate financing from other project components to cover emergency response and recovery costs, if approved by the WB.

E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

32. For the proposed AF, the current implementation arrangements will be maintained. The METPFQE is responsible for the implementation of the AF with the support of a Project Coordination Unit (SDEP PCU) to ensure coordination of project activities and fiduciary support for all components (including the new component 3). The SDEP PCU is headed by the Director General of Qualifying Education and training of the METPFQE and includes four civil servants who are responsible for the technical implementation of the project. Six experts/consultants were recruited for the positions of procurement officer, finance officer, accountant, communication officer, and monitoring and evaluation office; this staff will continue to work under the AF. The existing SDEP PCU has acquired extensive experience under the parent project and its technical capacity to implement the project has substantially improved notably during the second phase of training. Under the AF, the SDEP PCU will be strengthened with the recruitment of: (a) an expert and a technical assistant dedicated to the management of subcomponent 1.4. of the Competitive Fund, (b) an environmental and social development specialist to ensure the monitoring and evaluation of social safeguards, including GBV/SEA/SH aspects for the overall project, (c) an M&E assistant to support the existing M&E staff, and (d) an administrative and financial assistant.

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

Project activities will take place in existing training institutions in Brazzaville and Pointe Noire and in enterprises in the two cities, which will host trainees in internships and apprenticeships. No civil works will be financed.

G. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Richard Everett, Social Specialist
Albert Francis Atangana Ze, Environmental Specialist
Jean-Pierre Lungenyi Ntombolo, Social Specialist
Raymond Sinsi Lumbuenamo, Environmental Specialist



SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	No	
Performance Standards for Private Sector Activities OP/BP 4.03	No	
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	No	
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	
Pest Management OP 4.09	No	
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	No	
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	No	
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	No	
Safety of Dams OP/BP 4.37	No	
Projects on International Waterways OP/BP 7.50	No	
Projects in Disputed Areas OP/BP 7.60	No	

KEY SAFEGUARD POLICY ISSUES AND THEIR MANAGEMENT

A. Summary of Key Safeguard Issues

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

None

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

None

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

NA

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

The Borrower is aware of issues around safeguards, but none are expected from this project.

However, the existing GRM should be revised to include SEA / SH complaint sensitive mechanisms, approved, disclosed, and implemented in the project area, in order to enable anyone with knowledge of abuse or who suffered



prejudice during the implementation of project activities, to file a verbal or written complaint to seek redress. Complaints from unidentified persons or anonymous complaints are also admissible.

Also, arrangements should be made for: (i) an environmental and social screening of the activities to be funded. A selection sheet, as well as risk and potential impact mitigation measures, will be an integral part of the documents required for the funding request; (ii) firms that will be recruited to train young people and support them in developing their business plans must have an Environmental and Social Expert; (iii) for better monitoring of safeguard aspects, the project team will be reinforced by an environmental and social specialist.

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

Project interventions are designed to respond to the needs of youth and the realities of the labor market and have been designed in consultation with training providers, professional associations, business development associations, enterprises, non-governmental organizations, and the authorities. Particular attention has been paid to the specific constraints facing young women in accessing training. Based on the experiences of programs in other countries, every effort will be made to ensure the safety of young girls and women, as they participate in the training programs. In particular, for the selection of training providers, a checklist of SEA/SH minimum standards will be developed with minimum standards that will include a requirement to have an internal code of conduct (CoC) for employees that clearly prohibits SEA/SH and outlines the disciplinary consequences of the prohibited behavior; if training providers do not have CoC, they will be given support to develop one. In addition, training providers on SEA/SH will be trained on minimum standards on the accountability and response protocols including the development of a CoC.

The project is expected to have a positive impact on all beneficiaries.

Public consultations must be held to inform the population about the changes made and to gather their opinions. The holding of public meetings during the COVID-19 period must consider appropriate health measures.

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

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



CONTACT POINT

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APPROVAL

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Approved By

Safeguards Advisor:	Nathalie S. Munzberg	01-Nov-2020
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Practice Manager/Manager:	Halil Dundar	02-Nov-2020
Country Director:	Abdoulaye Seck	03-Nov-2020
