



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

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 04-Mar-2021 | Report No: PIDISDSA30943



BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country Benin	Project ID P175085	Project Name Cross-Border Tourism and Competitiveness COVID-19 AF	Parent Project ID (if any) P149117
Parent Project Name Benin Cross Border Tourism and Competitiveness Project	Region AFRICA WEST	Estimated Appraisal Date 24-Mar-2021	Estimated Board Date 29-Apr-2021
Practice Area (Lead) Finance, Competitiveness and Innovation	Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Republic of Benin	Implementing Agency Agence Nationale de Promotion des Patrimoines et de Développement du Tourisme (ANPT), Agence de Développement de la Cité Internationale de l'Innovation et du Savoir(Seme City), Seme City

Proposed Development Objective(s) Parent

The Project Development Objective is to contribute to increased cross-border tourism and private sector investment in selected tourism destinations and value chains, in Recipient’s territory.

Proposed Development Objective(s) Additional Financing

The Project Development Objective to support the continued operation of micro and small firms impacted by the COVID-19 crisis and improve selected aspects of the enabling environment for Benin’s tourism.

Components

- Improving Benin’s Tourism Development Framework
- Tourism Destination and Product Development
- Support to MSME liquidity, upgrading, linkages and expansion
- Project Management
- Unallocated

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US\$, Millions)



SUMMARY

Total Project Cost	25.00
Total Financing	25.00
of which IBRD/IDA	25.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS

World Bank Group Financing

International Development Association (IDA)	25.00
IDA Credit	25.00

Environmental Assessment Category

B-Partial Assessment

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. Despite Benin being one of the fastest growing economies in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA) with growth averaging 6.3 percent in 2017-2019, the poverty rate remains high at 45.4 percent in 2019 (US\$1.9 a day threshold, 2011 PPP). Growth in recent years has been mainly driven by booming cotton production, and strong construction and port activity following a series of reforms that improved port management and facilitated trade. An important feature of Benin’s economy are the economic and trade linkages with Nigeria (e.g. more than half of exports in 2018). This relationship has aided Benin when Nigerian growth has been robust, but it has also increased risks and limited the structural transformation of the economy. As a result, aside from agriculture, the economy is dominated by informal commerce and trade: the low-productivity informal economy represents 65 percent of Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and engages 90 percent of the labor force¹. Nonetheless, poverty and poor human capital results remains a defining characteristic of

¹ Systematic Country Diagnostic 2017, Report 114822-BJ.



Benin. It ranks 163 out of 189 countries on the United Nations (UN) Human Development Index (HDI 2018) and 133 out of 157 countries on the Human Capital Index (HCI).

2. Facing two external shocks, Nigeria's border closure since August 2019 and the effects of the COVID-19 pandemic, Benin's high growth will be challenged in the upcoming years. Economic activity remained robust in 2019 as growth reached 6.4 percent in 2019 (3.5 percent per capita), just about the estimated potential of 6.3 percent. Still, the Nigeria border closure shaved off an estimated 0.3 percentage points (pp) of the growth rate, as it has negatively affected the informal trade between the countries, significantly reducing imports of products traditionally re-exported through the land border (rice, poultry, vehicles). The fiscal impact has been much larger: it is estimated that the country lost 0.6 pp of GDP in customs revenue in the last quarter of 2019 alone. Benin has one of the lowest levels of tax-revenue to GDP in SSA, amounting to 10.6 percent in 2019, rapidly limiting its response capacity to external shocks.

3. Against this backdrop, it is expected that Benin will be hard hit by COVID-19 spillovers, mainly through external channels, through lower commodity prices (record low cotton prices) and a contraction of external demand - in particular from oil-dependent Nigeria². Lower Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and tighter global financing conditions will also negatively affect Benin's external position. Capital flight will reduce financing sources and increase borrowing costs. With the flight to safety related to the COVID-19 pandemic and other macroeconomic uncertainties, Benin's Eurobond spreads have soared by more than 600 bps since the beginning of the year, signaling a loss of investors' confidence. On the domestic side, the impact will depend on the severity of social distancing measures and the pace of contagion, which will translate into lower consumption and a contraction of domestic investments. While domestic contagion of COVID-19 remains limited with 54 positive tested cases as of April 20, levels close to those experienced in China, Europe and the U.S. would severely magnify these trends. While Benin has some fiscal buffer to respond to the shock, it will rapidly erode as trade declines affecting customs revenue (40 percent of total tax revenue).

World Bank Group Support for Responding to the Crisis

The World Bank has responded swiftly to the crisis through a set of emergency operations and the repurposing of existing operations.

4. A total of USD102.4m was disbursed by the Bank for emergency needs. The WB activated financial support to the health emergency response through the *REDISSE III Project (P161163)* for USD32m and triggered the Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC) of the *Benin Early Years Nutrition and Child Development Project (P166211)* for USD10m to cover any emergency funding gap. On April 27, 2020, the Board approved the *Benin COVID-19 Preparedness and Response Project (P173839)* of USD10.4m under the Fast-Track COVID-19 Facility. Supplemental Financing (P174008) of USD50m was approved on June 26, 2020, adding to the first DPO in the *Fiscal Reform and Structural Transformation DPO Series (P168668)* approved by the Board in December 2019. This has substantially contributed to Government's effort to implement a phased health response, including development of robust national testing capacity, setup of 89 functional screening and case management centers nationwide, and roll-out of a national risk communication and community engagement strategy.

Total current engagement is USD1.27b combining IPF, DPF and TA instruments, with USD771m undisbursed. Portfolio has been adjusted, including USD35m in cancellations, to support socio-economic response activities, particularly formal and informal SMEs impacted by the crisis using the ongoing Cross-border Tourism and Competitiveness Support Project (P140117).

² Nigeria's growth is expected to contract by at least 3 percent in 2020 (from an expected +2.5 percent before the pandemic), as oil prices tumble well below 40US\$/bbl, according to latest World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) projections.



5. **In this context, the proposed Additional Financing is fully aligned with the WBG global COVID-19 crisis response approach.** The WBG COVID-19 Crisis Response Approach Paper³, discussed by the Board on June 23, 2020, sets out the framework for the WBG support to client countries in addressing the COVID-19 crisis and transitioning to recovery. This Additional Financing supports its Pillar 3 on Ensuring Sustainable Business Growth and Job Creation (through support to MSMEs now suffering temporary liquidity and solvency challenges associated with the pandemic) and Pillar 4 on Strengthening Policies, Institutions and Investments for Rebuilding Better (through capacity building and continuous technical assistance to the Government MSME support apparatus). To save lives and livelihoods, many projects, both regionally and globally, are being similarly restructured to provide rapid economic relief; particularly to assist employment and productivity for informal businesses and micro-enterprises. This additional financing will build on the platforms & partnerships established under the parent project and scale-up activities to support firms, adapt or repurpose their systems, processes, products, markets and inputs required to continue to operate during the pandemic.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

The Development Objective is to support the continued operation of firms impacted by the COVID-19 crisis and improve the enabling environment for Benin's tourism rapid recovery from COVID 19.

Original PDO

The Project Development Objective is to contribute to increased cross-border tourism and private sector investment in selected tourism destinations and value chains, in Recipient's territory.

Current PDO

The new Project Development Objective is to support the continued operation of firms impacted by the COVID-19 crisis and improve the enabling environment for Benin's tourism rapid recovery from COVID 19.

Key Results

D. Project Description

6. **Given that the crisis affected firms across the board, the proposed additional financing will be geared towards supporting micro and small firms in all sectors.** While the support envisioned to be provided through the new component, currently open to all micro and small sized firms operating both in the formal and informal sectors, as defined during consultations with GoB counterparts, which have approved the proposed approach. The specific details of targeted vulnerable viable firms in all sector will be outlined in the project operations manual, which is on track to being finalized prior to board approval.

A. Components

³ WBG, 2020. Saving Lives, Scaling-up Impact and Getting Back on Track – WBG COVID-19 Crisis Response Paper. Available at: <http://documents1.worldbank.org/curated/en/136631594937150795/pdf/World-Bank-Group-COVID-19-Crisis-Response-Approach-Paper-Saving-Lives-Scaling-up-Impact-and-Getting-Back-on-Track.pdf>.



7. The components will be restructured in the following manner to reallocate funds for the COVID-19 economic rescue component.

Unallocated : This category will be dropped, and its allocation reallocated as follows: i) US\$1 million will be reallocated to Component 2 to cover revised cost estimates for the rehabilitation of the Portuguese Fort; and ii) US\$3million will be reallocated to the COVID-19 liquidity support subcomponent of the Component 3.3 *Rapid emergency grants to affected Micro and Small firms*.

Component 1: Improving Benin’s Tourism Development Framework (US\$8 million at approval, US\$6 million after restructuring): US\$2 million will be removed from this component and reallocated to the new subcomponent 3.3: *Rapid emergency grants to affected Micro and Small firms*. This pertains to activities of Component 1.1, particularly to Public-Private Dialogue for reforms, which have already been identified and selected, and to institutional strengthening of the Agency in Charge of the *Route des Pêches project* (ADTRP), which was eliminated in a GoB restructuring of its Tourism Development Plan.

Component 2: Tourism Destination and Product Development (US\$23.5 million at approval, US\$24.5 million after restructuring): US\$1 million from the unallocated category will be added to this component to cover revised cost estimated for the Portuguese Fort, but its activities will remain unchanged.

Component 3: Support to MSME upgrading, linkages and expansion (From US\$10 million to US\$ 40 million):

Subcomponent 3.1: *Supporting improved MSME product quality and linkages* will be dropped and its resources (US\$5 millions) reallocated to the new AF subcomponent 3.3 aiming to provide liquidity support to *affected Micro and Small firms*.

Sub-component 3.2: *Fostering MSME expansion through a joint IDA-IFC Risk-Sharing Facility* will remain unchanged.

A new subcomponent will be added to support COVID-related economic rescue efforts, entitled *Rapid emergency grants*. This internal reallocation (US\$10 million), along with the additional financing (US\$25 million) will bring this component total to US\$40 million (including the initial allocation of US\$5 million for the RSF).

Subcomponent 3.3: *Rapid emergency grants to affected Micro and Small firms* (US\$35 million).

8. **This subcomponent will provide rapid financial relief in the form of grants for eligible micro and small firms (formal and informal) affected by COVID-19.** The grants will aim to cover a percentage of the eligible firms’ fixed costs and a percentage of their employees’ salaries. **These grants are to be disbursed for a period of four months.** Firms eligible for support under the program will be supported through a grant, as opposed to a loan, based on the acknowledgement that offering micro and small firms, especially informal, more credit during the crisis could eventually lead them to insolvency, especially in light of the uncertainty associated with the crisis. Grants under the program will help viable but temporarily distressed firms plug any short-term liquidity gaps in the payment of wages, utilities, rental payments, among other operational costs. In terms of eligibility, grants are only applicable to micro and small enterprises, both in the formal and informal sectors, that employ at least 3 and not more than 50 workers⁴.

⁴ This size cut-off aims at identifying firms that are large enough to have productive assets in need of protection, but small enough that will not have the means of retaining their ‘going concern’ status without liquidity support. It is consistent with the official definition of Micro and Small Enterprises in Benin. For firms with less than 3 employees or individual entrepreneurs, the support should be provided through government social protection component of the GoB’s economic rescue program.



E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

9. **No changes will be made to the Project implementation arrangements:** ANPT will remain responsible for the overall supervision of the Project, the Chairman of the Board of ANPT chairs the Strategic Committee of the Project Steering Committee and its General Manager still chair the Technical Committee which will include the Ministry of Tourism as one of the members. Management and implementation of the Challenge Fund remains with Seme City (*L'Agence de Développement de la Cité Internationale de l'Innovation et du Savoir*). Fiduciary or safeguards arrangements of the project as a result of the additional financing or restructuring will not change either.

10. Technical responsibility of the implementation of the new component (sub-component 3.3) will be under the responsibility of the DGAE. The new sub-component will build on the existing procedures and systems established by GoB to provide emergency support to firms, while strengthening the process with additional support and audit assistance.

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

The technical assistance activities (components 1.1, 1.3, 2.3, 3.1 and 3.2) will be nation-wide and do not raise any specific safeguard concerns. In contrary, the catalytic investments under component 2 will occur in an area structured by a coastal lagoon (Ouidah and "Route des Pêches") with associated mangrove vegetation (*Racemosa* sp.; *Avicennia* sp.) and planted palm oil trees; because of this ecosystem contribution to fisheries, tourism development and biological conservation (Habitat of stopover of Afrotropical and Palearctic migratory birds, habitat of Sitatunga and African manatee) the country had designated it a Ramsar site (Ramsar no. 1017). Named "Lower valley of the Couffo, Aho channel, coastal lagoon and Lake Aheme", Ramsar site no. 1017 is a 47,000 hectares "continental O" category of wetland consisting in a complex of coastal lagoon, lake and ria located in the southern region of Benin nearby the Atlantic ocean in the eastern part of the gulf of guinea. The area is among the country's most densely populated region (Cotonou, the country's biggest economic metropolis is located in and other medium and small cities are in the same watershed) suggesting why primary rainforests have been replaced with manmade landscapes and megafauna' species have almost disappeared. The high population growth rate in the region will induce increasing pressure on natural resources even in a "no project" situation. Tons of fish, crab, shrimp and oyster are produced by these ecosystems that support tens of thousands of community jobs. Therefore the safeguard analysis had to inform on what threats the mangrove ecosystems and the watercourses would sustain due to the project investments and further activities though the development objective suggest clearly a wise use of biodiversity resources for ecotourism development.

G. Environmental and Social Safeguards Specialists on the Team

Abdoul Wahabi Seini, Social Specialist

Christiane Aichatou Mamosso, Social Specialist



Alphonse Emadak, Environmental Specialist
Moussibaou Tassou, Environmental Specialist

SAFEGUARD POLICIES THAT MIGHT APPLY

Safeguard Policies	Triggered?	Explanation (Optional)
Environmental Assessment OP/BP 4.01	Yes	
Performance Standards for Private Sector Activities OP/BP 4.03	No	
Natural Habitats OP/BP 4.04	Yes	
Forests OP/BP 4.36	No	
Pest Management OP 4.09	Yes	
Physical Cultural Resources OP/BP 4.11	Yes	
Indigenous Peoples OP/BP 4.10	No	
Involuntary Resettlement OP/BP 4.12	Yes	
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:

Current status of Safeguards implementation

The safeguards performance of the original project has been rated ‘Moderately Satisfactory’ (MS) according to the most recent ISR dated 2 October 2020. There have not been any non-compliance issues reported. The project has a fully staffed PIU and the strategies, structures and tools in place to implement the ESMF that was approved for the Parent Project. The specialists in the PIU including the Project Coordinator are responsible for ensuring that all subproject activities are screened using a checklist in the Project’s Operations Manual (approved by the Bank) to determine compliance with ESMF and to mitigate any adverse environmental and social risks and impacts. The PIU developed and disseminated a brochure outlining the ESMF. The AF will use the PCTT’s existing Bank safeguard policies triggered documents from the parent project : Environmental Assessment (OP 4.01); Natural Habitats (OP 4.04); Pest management (OP 4.09); Physical Cultural Resources (OP 4.11); Involuntary Resettlement (OP



4.12) approved for the Parent Project as due diligence and does not need to be updated or otherwise adapted to the AF as there are no new activities or geographical areas. The environmental and social risks for the activities to be financed by the AF are expected to be low. The project is currently rated 'Moderately Satisfactory' based on the activities of the parent project. The project's risk profile should be considered as moderate. The AF project is classified category B due to the moderate potential indirect and negative overall impacts and there is no any land related issues as the activities did not involve construction and/or additional Civil works. No loss of income or livelihoods is anticipated to result from COVID-19 response Risks mitigation measure. As the impact of COVID-19 is spreading deeply into many sectors from tourism to manufacturing, the proposed AF will aim to support micro, small and medium enterprises. Conversely, the positive impacts are expected to materialize in the short term in the following forms: (i) valorizing ecotourism resources thereby enhancing protection and conservation of associated biological wealth and natural habitats; (ii) better valorization and conservation of cultural assets as part of sightseeing activities; (iii) increase of market value of land and social services within the project's zone; (iv) creation of fulltime employment opportunities and improvement of livelihoods to the benefit of local communities; (v) creation of temporary job along with improvement of employees' income.

No direct potential large scale, irreversible and/or significant adverse impacts are expected to occur due to the project investments.

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

The coastal area of Benin, which will host the catalytic investments for tourism development, is part of the Ramsar site no. 1017 because of its mangrove vegetation and the lagoon that hosts indigenous birds and receives seasonally Afrotropical and Palearctic migratory waterfowl. If the project succeed in fostering tourism blooming in the area, the ongoing population growth will be supplemented by high influx of tourists, which even seasonal will induce increased pressure on the natural environment. Depletion of biodiversity, threat to natural habitat and unknown critical natural habitat, pollution of water bodies due to deficient waste management, social changes and health and safety risks (insecurity, sexual communicable diseases, etc.) are likely to occur if appropriate sustainable management tools, land use rules and pollution prevention efforts were not permanently implemented and follow through.

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

Not applicable.

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.

Regarding the borrower's capacity in managing the expected environmental challenges, risks and impacts, the institutional and regulatory frameworks was assessed as strong enough and operational to sustain. The national environmental assessment Agency ("Agence Béninoise pour l'Environnement" -ABE) has had a good track record in implementing and/or overseeing environmental and social management plans/measures of Bank-funded operations. On the other hand and following parent project approval, the government has established the ANPT (Tourism and Heritage Promotion Agency) as the entity in charge of tourism development, whose mandate is to support innovation and entrepreneurship. ANPT which is the Project Implementing Unit (PIU) will maintain the existing two specialists: (i) an environmental safeguard specialist and (ii) social safeguard specialist to continue the close monitoring of the environmental and social risks and impacts of the AF. Until now the performance of those specialists are appreciable although they have to be diligent and on time in submitting periodical reports.

Further, even though the parent project was prepared under the OPs, the project team will continue to benefit on additional ESF new tolls (GRM, GBV, LMP etc.) capacity building support. All these activities aiming at strengthening the sustainability of the tourism development in the country by ensuring compliance on safeguards and ESF tolls



which may arise.

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

In General, the formal processes of consultation and public hearing mechanisms as set through the national regulations will apply, and the implementing entity will pursue the communication efforts to: (i) ensure a good flow of information and facilitate a dialogue with the COVID-19 potential affected micro, small and medium enterprises, the key stakeholders and the general public for strong behavior change; (ii) offer avenues for these enterprise to raise their COVID-19 related impact’s concerns to be appropriately expressed and discussed; (iii) support the implementation of the project's activities; and (iv) promote a good visibility of the project’s results and impacts.

To ensure that there is widespread and accessible knowledge about the program and all eligible firms can enroll, the Borrower has set up and will implement a communications outreach strategy including accessible digital tools. The Government of Benin prepared Labor Management Procedures (LMP) which have some specific work measures related to COVID-19 that can be updated and extended during the AF implementation. To avoid or reduce the exposure to COVID-19, either within the community or in the workplace, the Borrower has prepared a COVID-19 emergency plan and will work closely with the COVID-19 emergency response unit based at the Ministry of Health. It is not expected that any interventions financed by the AF will introduce additional risks of exposure to COVID-19 or other diseases. The project team will incorporate key COVID-19 risk mitigation measures in the Communication outreach strategy and will closely monitor it regularly report on these measures monthly to the Bank on monthly basis.

The team will work closely with World Bank environmental and social specialists to ensure that all relevant COVID-19 specific risk considerations are addressed. The PIU is committed to implementing robust occupational, health and safety procedures for workers and ensuring that all project partners and clients are following COVID-19 social distancing guidelines. This will help to promote an open discussion and dialogue around the project’s rationale, activities and benefits, as well as economical and social risks and complexity, so as to gain stakeholders’ positive engagement and ownership on this AF project.

Grievance Redress Mechanism. The Borrower is maintaining and reinforce a the existing GRM and will prepare and GRM and GBV actions plans in line with the COVID-19 challenges.

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

Environmental Assessment/Audit/Management Plan/Other

Date of receipt by the Bank	Date of submission for disclosure	For category A projects, date of distributing the Executive Summary of the EA to the Executive Directors
10-Nov-2015	25-Nov-2015	04-Mar-2016

"In country" Disclosure



Benin
18-Nov-2015

Comments

Resettlement Action Plan/Framework/Policy Process

Date of receipt by the Bank
18-Dec-2015

Date of submission for disclosure
04-Feb-2016

"In country" Disclosure

Benin
20-Jan-2016

Comments

Pest Management Plan

Was the document disclosed prior to appraisal?
Yes

Date of receipt by the Bank
10-Nov-2015

Date of submission for disclosure
25-Nov-2015

"In country" Disclosure

Benin
18-Nov-2015

Comments

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

OP/BP/GP 4.01 - Environment Assessment

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

Yes

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

Yes

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

Yes



OP/BP 4.04 - Natural Habitats

Would the project result in any significant conversion or degradation of critical natural habitats?

Yes

If the project would result in significant conversion or degradation of other (non-critical) natural habitats, does the project include mitigation measures acceptable to the Bank?

Yes

OP 4.09 - Pest Management

Does the EA adequately address the pest management issues?

Yes

Is a separate PMP required?

Yes

If yes, has the PMP been reviewed and approved by a safeguards specialist or SM? Are PMP requirements included in project design? If yes, does the project team include a Pest Management Specialist?

Yes

OP/BP 4.11 - Physical Cultural Resources

Does the EA include adequate measures related to cultural property?

Yes

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

Yes

OP/BP 4.12 - Involuntary Resettlement

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

Yes

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

Yes

Is physical displacement/relocation expected?

No

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

No

The World Bank Policy on Disclosure of Information

Have relevant safeguard policies documents been sent to the World Bank's Infoshop?

Yes

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



Yes

All Safeguard Policies

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

Yes

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

Yes

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

Yes

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

Yes

CONTACT POINT

World Bank

Magueye Dia
Senior Private Sector Specialist

Borrower/Client/Recipient

Republic of Benin
Lionel Zinsou
Prime Minister, Minister in charge of Development
contact@development.bj

Implementing Agencies

Agence Nationale de Promotion des Patrimoines et de Développement du Tourisme (ANPT)
Jose Pliya
Directeur General
jpliya@presidence.bj

Agence de Développement de la Cité Internationale de l'Innovation et du Savoir(Seme City)
Jose Pliya Pliya
Directeur General
j_pliya@yahoo.com

Seme City
Jose Pliya



Directeur General
j_pliya@yahoo.com

FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT

The World Bank
1818 H Street, NW
Washington, D.C. 20433
Telephone: (202) 473-1000
Web: <http://www.worldbank.org/projects>

APPROVAL

Task Team Leader(s):	Magueye Dia
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Approved By

Safeguards Advisor:	Nathalie S. Munzberg	22-Mar-2021
Practice Manager/Manager:	Consolate K. Rusagara	22-Mar-2021
Country Director:	Coralie Gevers	29-Mar-2021