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Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 06-Feb-2023 | Report No: PIDA33446

BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Country	Project ID	Project Name	Parent Project ID (if any)
Cote d'Ivoire	P178362	Cote d'Ivoire Inclusive Connectivity and Rural Infrastructure Project	
Region	**Estimated Appraisal Date**	**Estimated Board Date**	**Practice Area (Lead)**
WESTERN AND CENTRAL AFRICA	10-Jan-2023	21-Mar-2023	Transport
Financing Instrument	**Borrower(s)**	**Implementing Agency**	
Investment Project Financing	THE REPUBLIC OF COTE D'IVOIRE	Cellule de Coordination du PRICI (Coordination Unit of the CI Infrastructure Recovery Project)	

Proposed Development Objective(s)

The project development objective (PDO) is to provide inclusive and climate resilient rural road connectivity in selected underserved regions of Cote d'Ivoire

Components

Component 1: Inclusive and Resilient Rural Connectivity Infrastructure
Component 2: Rural socio-economic infrastructure
Component 3: Support to Institutional framework and sector strategy, capacity building
Component 4: Support to Project Management
Component 5: Contingent Emergency Response Component (CERC)

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US$, Millions)

SUMMARY

Total Project Cost	571.20
Total Financing	571.20
of which IBRD/IDA	300.00
Financing Gap	0.00

DETAILS

World Bank Group Financing	
International Development Association (IDA)	300.00
IDA Credit	300.00
Non-World Bank Group Financing	
Counterpart Funding	71.20
Borrower/Recipient	71.20
Other Sources	200.00
Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank	200.00

Environmental and Social Risk Classification

Substantial

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

Country Context

1. Côte d'Ivoire's economy is on a recovery path. Côte d'Ivoire has enjoyed vibrant, robust, and stable economic growth since 2012, but experienced a slowdown in 2020 owing to the COVID-19 crisis. The average economic growth rate during 2017-2019 was about 6.9 percent and fell to 2 percent in 2020 (with a real capita decline of 0.6 percent). However, the economy of Côte d'Ivoire has been relatively resilient throughout the pandemic and among the best performing economies in Sub-Saharan Africa. Agriculture, particularly cocoa products, held up well during the crisis. Both manufacturing and services supported the recovery during the second half of 2020. Assuming global conditions continue to normalize, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) projects that the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth will reach 6.4 percent in 2023 (5.7 percent in 2022). In the short term, the economic recovery will be supported by Government investment as well as a strong recovery of private sector investment and consumption. The fiscal deficit is high, mainly because of government COVID-19 response measures, but expected to remain stable at 7.1 percent of GDP in 2022. Continuing structural reforms are needed to achieve the government's more ambitious targets set out in the Government's National Development Plan 2021-2025. (NDP 2021-2021).

2. The NDP 2021-2025 presents Côte d'Ivoire's ambition to double GDP per capita by 2030 from US$1,736 in 2020. The NDP sets up the government's development objectives including accelerating economic transformation, reducing poverty and inequality, and improving governance. To achieve them, Côte d'Ivoire will have to improve domestic resource mobilization, its business environment, as

well as the efficiency and allocation of public spending in education, healthcare, and rural development to make growth more inclusive and equitable.

3. While the poverty level of Côte d'Ivoire declined by 6.9 percent, from 46.3 percent in 2015 to 39.4 percent in 2020, this reduction was confined to urban areas. Meanwhile, rural poverty levels increased by 2.4 percent over the same period. Côte d'Ivoire is one of the most urbanized countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. 56 percent of Côte d'Ivoire's population lives in urban centers, with urbanization increasing by 5 percent yearly, with high spatial disparity between the Greater Abidjan Agglomeration (GAA) and other cities. While the GAA continues to experience rapid urbanization and significant economic development, secondary cities lag, particularly those in the North of the country.

4. The northern regions[1] of Côte d'Ivoire have a higher incidence of poverty and lag behind in terms of human capital development. Constituting almost half of the country, the northern regions (in total about 165,000 km^2) have low population densities, but poverty levels are among the highest in the country. Accounting for about 20 percent of the country's population, approximately 4.08 million people lived in the northern regions of Côte d'Ivoire in 2020, with 68 percent inhabiting rural areas. There are only two cities in the northern regions with about 100,000 residents. 10 out of the 11 northern regions have a poverty rate higher than the national average (39 percent). The average poverty rate in the rural areas of the northern regions is 57 percent while the rate in the urban areas is 40 percent. Figure 1 below displays income poverty levels in Côte d'Ivoire.

5. The inadequate education and poor health conditions in northern Côte d'Ivoire are on account of the lack of access to health and education facilities. Maternal health is considered poor in the 11 regions where dropout rates for antenatal consultations are 65 percent higher than the national average and about 16 percent of deliveries occur outside of a health center. This is partially caused by the lack of accessible roads from households to health facilities.[2] In addition, school enrolment in the northern regions is below the national average, with high dropout rates, especially for girls at the secondary school level**.** The gender gap in secondary school enrolment is about 20 points in the regions of Bafing, Bounkani and Worodougou. The northern regions bordering Burkina Faso and Mali (i.e. Folon, Bagoue, Poro, Tchologo and Bounkani) have the lowest primary school enrollment rates for girls in the country.

6. Although the employment rate is high in rural northern regions, overall household income remains low compared to the southern regions. In 2018, the employment to working-age population ratio in rural areas was about 86 percent at the national level and 90 percent in the rural northern regions. The working-age population is predominantly self-employed in the agricultural sector. The poorer northern regions are more involved in traditional food crops whereas cash crops are produced in the richer southern regions, benefiting from higher and more reliable rainfall and better soil. The food crop subsector in the northern regions consists primarily of yams, maize, and rice. It receives little support from both the public and private sectors. The main cash crops are cotton and cashew-nuts, and there are good prospects for mangoes.

[1] In the context of this project, the northern part of Côte d'Ivoire is considered as 11 regions, including Bafing, Worodougou, Béré, Hambol, Gontougo, and the six border regions (Kabadougou, Folon, Bagoue, Poro, Tchologo, and Bounkani). There are a total of 33 regions in the country.
[2] Demographic and Health Survey: https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR272/FR272.pdf

7. The situation is worse in the six border regions (Bagoué, Bounkani, Folon, Kabadougou, Poro and Tchologo) because of deep structural vulnerabilities and the spillover of violence from the Sahel, ; they have a higher concentration of violent incidents compared to the rest of the country. The number of attacks from Jihadist affiliated groups have dramatically increased along the northern border with Mali and Burkina Faso, while clashes between farmers and herders from the Sahel have exacerbated insecurity in the North. Sikasso in Mali, as well as Boucle du Mouhoun, Hauts-Bassins and Cascades in Burkina Faso are experiencing active conflict, which heightens the risk of contagion to the most part of northern Côte d'Ivoire. The destabilization of Burkina Faso is leading to a regrouping of the jihadist movements in northern Côte d'Ivoire, particularly in the North-East, in the Comoé forest between Bouna and Ferkessédougou. Other vulnerable areas include Tengréla near the border with Mali, Ouangolodougou close to the border with Burkina Faso, as well as Boundiali and Korhogo. This insecurity exacerbates migration and displacement to Côte d'Ivoire, further contributing to a worsening of intra-community relations. Besides security concerns, community, socio-economic and criminality risks need to be mitigated.

8. Sexual, gender-based, and intimate partner violence remains a critical issue in Côte d'Ivoire. In 2014, the government of Côte d'Ivoire adopted a national strategy to combat and prevent gender-based violence. In addition to strengthening existing mechanisms, this strategy set up the national collection of gender-disaggregated data. Nevertheless, the lives of women and girls are still marked by gender-based violence. In fact, domestic violence is the main form of physical violence suffered by women, and a significant proportion of the population (22 percent) believes that violence may be justified in some cases.[3] Furthermore, there are prevalent issues in terms of women and girls' sexual and reproductive rights. According to the Multiple Indicator Cluster Survey (MICS) in 2016[4], one in four girls aged 20-24 (25.4 percent) had given birth before the age of 18. At the same time, the prevalence of contraceptive use among women in union remained low (15.5 percent) and it is estimated that nearly a third (30.5 percent) of the contraceptive needs of these women could not be met.

9. Compared to men, women in Côte d'Ivoire face disadvantages in multiple domains such as education, productivity, and employment. Women are under-represented in salaried jobs and the majority hold an inferior status; most women work in the informal sector.[5] The United Nations Development Program (UNDP)'s Gender Inequality Index (GII) for Côte d'Ivoire stands at 0.811 in 2020 (vs. 0.57 for SSA), ranking 162 out of 189 countries; this reflects the gaps between men and women in health, education, political representation, and labor participation. Many of the human capital outcomes are the result of women's limited access to services, such as family planning, professional obstetric care, and antenatal, neonatal, and postnatal care. Low transition rates to secondary schooling deprive girls of a complete education, leading to school dropout, early marriage and pregnancy.[6] The

[3] OECD (2022), Institutions sociales et égalité femmes-hommes en Côte d'Ivoire : Rapport pays SIGI, Éditions OCDE, Paris,
https://doi.org/10.1787/c798990a-fr.
[4] Côte d'Ivoire, Enquête de prévalence parasitaire du paludisme et de l'anémie 2016:
https://dhsprogram.com/pubs/pdf/FR330/FR330.pdf
[5] OCDE (2022), *Institutions sociales et égalité femmes-hommes en Côte d'Ivoire : Rapport pays SIGI*, Éditions OCDE, Paris,
https://doi.org/10.1787/c798990a-fr.
[6] Sustaining High, Inclusive, and Resilient Growth port Covid-19. A WB input to the 2030 Development Strategy.

lower secondary education retention rate is lower for girls than for boys. The share of youth without employment, education or training is 44.2 for women compared to 25.4 for men,[7] which reflects the gap in opportunities faced by Ivoirian women.

10. Climate change causes hydrometeorological related disasters like river flooding, extreme heat, wildfire and water scarcity in Côte d'Ivoire.[8] The country's economy relies heavily on the agricultural sector which is sensitive to climatic conditions and vulnerable to climate change. Côte d'Ivoire ranks 142 out of 182 countries in the Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative (ND GAIN) Index, revealing that it is among the countries with high vulnerability to climate change impacts and low readiness to enhance resilience.[9] Côte d'Ivoire is also exposed to many climate-related diseases such as malaria. From 1980 to 2020, Côte d'Ivoire experienced 14 floods and 13 epidemics.[10]

11. The north of the country is exposed to both droughts and flooding which are expected to increase in frequency. Climate projections (SSP5-8.5 scenario) indicate an increase of 1°C in maximum temperatures by mid-century (32.44°C in 2022 and 33.5°C in 2050)).[11] The projected number of hot days (Tmax>35C) in the country is anticipated to increase from 81.27 in 2022 to 116.02 in 2050 with higher increases in the northern provinces. The projected overall country precipitation levels show a decline from 1383mm in 2022 to 1372.19mm in 2050. The districts with higher annual average 5-day cumulative rainfall for the period of 2040-2059 are Savanes, including the Bagoue, Poro and Tchologo regions (51.43mm); Denguele, including the Folon and Kabadougou regions (33.66mm); and Zanzan, including the Bounkani and Gontougo regions (28.10mm).[12]

12. Women's vulnerability to climate change is higher, with a compounded impact on their already disadvantaged access to jobs and services. The latest review of the country's National Determined Contributions (NDCs)[13] indicate that gender roles, labor division, economic gaps, and time spent between domestic tasks and family care make women more vulnerable to the negative consequences of climate change and put them at a disadvantage for benefitting from adaptation opportunities. Moreover, extreme heat negatively affects women's health during pregnancy and menopause.

[7] ILOSTAT Explorer, accessed February 22, 2022
[8] Think Hazard, consulted on February 03, 2022. URL: 66-cote-d-ivoire
[9] The Notre Dame Global Adaptation Index (ND GAIN) summarizes a country's vulnerability to climate change in combination with its readiness to improve resilience. ND-GAIN measures overall readiness by considering three components - economic readiness, governance readiness and social readiness. Further information on definition and methodology can be obtained in URL: https://gain.nd.edu/our-work/country-index/methodology/. Scores for 2019. Notre Dame Global Adaptation Initiative, consulted on 24 June 2022. URL: *https://gain.nd.edu/our-work/country-index/rankings/*
[10] Climate Change Knowledge Portal, Consulted on 29 September 2022.
URL: https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/cote-divoire/vulnerability
[11] Climate Change Knowledge Portal, consulted on 24 June 2022.
URL: https://climateknowledgeportal.worldbank.org/country/cote-divoire/climate-data-projections
[12] Climate Change Knowledge Portal,
[13] Côte d'Ivoire 2nd Nationally Determined Contribution, 9 May 2022. URL: https://unfccc.int/sites/default/files/NDC/2022-06/CDN_CIV_2022.pdf

13. Ensuring inclusive and resilient connectivity and access to economic and social development opportunities will help address multidimensional fragility and bring transformational impact in Northern Côte d'Ivoire. The proposed project will support a holistic approach to improve rural connectivity, responding to social, economic and climate challenges in selected rural areas. It will also contribute to the higher objective of addressing the root causes of fragility in the North, preventing the further spread of violence from the Sahel, mitigating climate change risks and increasing gender equality.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

14. Rural connectivity is a major factor driving persistent disparities between and within regions in Côte d'Ivoire. There are significant disparities in physical connectivity across the 11 northern regions of the country. The Modified Rural Access Index (MRAI)[14] is on average 77 percent for the 11 northern regions with notable differences between regions (Figure 2 and 3 below). This average corresponds to approximately 920,000 people living in a situation of pronounced isolation. The six border regions - the focus of the project - account for approximately 460,000 people, of whom nearly 70 percent are in the Poro and Tchologo regions. Because of limited access to goods, services and equipment, this population is particularly vulnerable to fragility and poverty.

15. Deficient logistics infrastructure severely constrains producers' access to markets. Aside from the limitations of the road network, agriculture faces important challenges from the lack or dysfunction of logistics chains in production areas, including in exchange points. Rural markets and collection points are poorly equipped with cold storage, warehouses, sheds and sanitation facilities, among others. Consequently, post-harvest losses[15] remain high, producer incomes remain low, and incentives to improve quality are undermined. To address these constraints, the new decentralization policy of the Government of Côte d'Ivoire (GoCI) aims at rehabilitating the main road network and modernizing and enhancing the climate resilience of agricultural marketing infrastructure (including rural markets) to help farmers achieve better returns on their investments.

16. The implementation of rural roads works is challenged by insufficient capacity in road construction and maintenance as well as in contract management. According to AGEROUTE (ageroutemarche.ci - platform for road works monitoring) most small works contracts are poorly executed. Moreover, experience from ongoing World Bank financed projects highlights issues in contract management by public entities, particularly with non-performing contractors (enforcement of coercive measures including notices to correct, penalties etc.).

Gender

17. Rural women in Northern Côte d'Ivoire are disproportionally affected by the poor quality of the road network. The low density of health services and the poor quality of roads limit women's access to health services in the North and reinforces local norms against modern medical treatment. For example, in the Tchologo region, women rarely attend modern health services and often miss prenatal appointments. Analysis shows that road connectivity increases the accessibility and quality of health services for women by: (i) increasing the potential supply of medical staff, (ii) facilitating the restocking

[14] Share of the rural population located less than five kilometers from an all-weather passable road.
[15] For perishable products such as fruits and vegetables, post-harvest losses as high as 30 percent of total production are registered.

of medicine and other provisions, and (iii) increasing the availability of medicines and vaccines. To some extent, it also strengthens the willingness for women to get professional medical services.[16]

18. Women's productivity is more influenced by considerations of commuting time, travel cost and safety. In the agriculture sector, which has the most employment opportunities, 31 percent of women are employed compared to 46.6 percent of men.[17] Women's productivity is inhibited on account of insufficient access to farming technology, tools and new crops, and their household and family priorities. This gender gap is further aggravated by the imbalanced distribution of income.[18] 85 percent of women are engaged in precarious jobs compared to 64 percent of men. Analysis from the ASA on rural connectivity[19] indicates that better connectivity can help address the gender gap by improving women's access to agriculture opportunities and reducing travel time from households to more and better jobs. Improving travel time and equity in land use by increasing proximity to services and markets can help address women's time poverty, which constrains their mobility as gender norms lead them to manage household and remunerated activities.[20] Gender norms have an impact on decision making within the household, including the decision on which mode of transport to buy (i.e. a motorcycle); only 22 percent of women are involved in this kind of decision.[21] In the North, women often use bicycles to work and are accompanied by children. The quality and safety of roads matter more to women's agrobusiness competitiveness than men's since women are more impacted by safety, commuting time and travel cost considerations.

19. Prevalent gender stereotypes tend to limit women's employment opportunities to low-wage sectors. Women earn much less than men, reflecting their concentration in economic sectors where income levels are lower, be it agriculture, retail and wholesale.[22] In sectors with higher wages such as transport, construction and industry, women have very few job opportunities. According to data from International Labor Organization (ILO), only four percent of the workforce employed in the transport sector are women.[23] In the case of the construction sector, the employment rate of men is fifty times that of women.[24] In addition, there are strong gender stereotypes about women participating in STEM (Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics). 32 percent of the population view men as having better skills than women on mathematics and physical sciences while only four percent of the population believes the opposite.[25] Similar to other SSA countries, existing gender stereotypes in the infrastructure sector, the absence of gender considerations in recruitment and promotion, potential sexual harassment and safety in the workplace, inadequate facilities, and rigid working conditions make it challenging and less attractive for women to work in the public works sector. Data from current road

[16] TDS-Group - AFD - Étude Sécuritaire - District des Savanes en Côte d'Ivoire - Septembre 2021
[17] ILOSTAT Explorer, accessed February 22, 2022
[18] Gender differences in Agricultural Productivity in Côte d'Ivoire: Changes in Determinants and Distributional Composition over the Past Decade (2008-2016), WB 2020
[19] ASA Rural Connectivity in Northern Cote d'Ivoire (P174829).
[20] Rijak Grover (2019). "Far from the Factory? Investigating how women travel to work in rural Côte d'Ivoire. Journal of International Women's Studies." Vol 20: 4.
[21] OECD. (2022). *Op. cit*. Paris: OECD, p. 25: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/c798990a-fr.pdf
[22] OECD. (2022). *Op. cit*. Paris: OECD, p. 25: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/c798990a-fr.pdf
[23] ILOSTAT Explorer, accessed on June 2022: https://www.ilo.org/shinyapps/bulkexplorer32/?
[24] ILOSTAT Explorer, accessed February 22, 2022
[25] OECD. (2022). *Op. cit*. Paris: OECD, p. 23: https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/c798990a-fr.pdf

construction projects reveal the employment segregation levels of the road sector in Côte d'Ivoire:[26] women represent only eight percent of the total workforce, nine percent of senior executives, ten percent of engineers and eight percent of middle managers.

Road safety

20. Road safety is a major development challenge in Côte d'Ivoire. The economic losses linked to road crashes account for 7.8 percent of the country's GDP while 63 percent of road crash fatalities are in the economically productive age groups (15-64 years). 865 life-years per 100,000 inhabitants are impacted by road crash injuries (Global Road Safety Facility – GRSF Country Profiles - 2020).[27] Most of these crashes take place in urban centers and on paved roads. In rural areas, road users are exposed to safety risks due to poor road conditions, disturbances from construction works and a lack of safety training and awareness. Vulnerable road users include motorcyclists, pedestrians, and cyclists, most of whom are women.

21. There is no clear strategy to guide rural road development towards better resilience and safety. The current strategy guiding rural roads management and maintenance was prepared in 2015 and revised in 2018 as part of the Agricultural Investment Project (*Projet d'Appui au Secteur Agricole*, PSAC, P119308). However, it has not been formally approved and is only partially being implemented. The strategy needs further improvement with a better framework to guide investment programs, including from a road safety perspective.

Climate

22. Climate hazards, particularly heavy rainfall and extreme heat, exacerbate the problems of rural connectivity, causing significant and recurrent road damage and disruptions across the network. Analysis[28] indicates that a significant portion of the road network is in the 20-year flood zone, with the region of Bagoue most exposed, and an otherwise relatively homogeneous exposure across the 11 regions. Yet, the rural roads strategy has not taken climate adaptation into account. The National Plan for Adaptation to Climate Change (2014) foresees a reduction in average annual rainfall for the "sudanian" agro-ecological zone to which the northern regions belong. However, the increasing likelihood of a resurgence of extreme weather will disrupt connectivity, and aggravate poverty, insecurity, and land conflicts. Reducing the climate vulnerability of the rural road sector is critical and requires incorporating climate resilience measures into road works.

23. Improving the overall climate resilience of rural Côte d'Ivoire is linked to building resilience in rural infrastructure and reforestation. In addition to the rural road network, other rural infrastructure such as market facilities and water management facilities need to incorporate climate resilience measures into their design and construction. At present, agricultural markets' facilities are not prepared to cope with extreme heat and flooding events. The provision of sheds and drainage facilities would reduce the vulnerability of marketing activities to the impacts of extreme heat and flooding. The provision of cold storage and warehouses would promote the safety of food products, enabling commerce activities to continue and communities to access food during extreme weather events and

26 Based on a sample of the five biggest works contracts in Côte d'Ivoire, August 2022.
[27] GRSF website. https://www.roadsafetyfacility.org/country/cote-divoire
[28] ASA Rural Connectivity in Northern Côte d'Ivoire (P174829).

potential transport disruptions. Given the extent of deforestation,[29] reforestation along roads is necessary to protect nearby residents and road users from climate risks. This would include planting village groves at specific locations, such as schools and health centers, which often cover large areas. Reforestation operations will also contribute to the National Climate Change Program, which sets the target of reforesting 20 percent of the territory by 2030.

Institutional context

24. High centralization and the low capacity of local governments. The management of public affairs is highly centralized at the central government level. While local institutions (regional councils and municipalities) exist, they have little power and means of action, functioning essentially on transfers from the State. Regional councils carry out some investments in the territories, and therefore have managerial staff, particularly at the level of technical services. However, municipalities are much weaker, especially outside big cities. Unlike many countries in the sub-region, the national territory of Côte d'Ivoire is not entirely "communalized."[30] Of the 11 regions targeted by the project, there are a total of 165 basic administrative districts, of which only 75 are municipalities. There are, therefore, 90 non-municipalized territories (49 in the six border regions) that are administered by sub-prefects (representatives of the central government) and fall under the decentralized local competences of regional councils. Access to basic services in these territories is limited, with municipalities receiving financial transfers from the Government to cover certain needs.

25. Rural connectivity is challenged by a combination of factors such as unclear sector governance arrangements, overdesigned technical standards for construction, lack of maintenance and limited financial resources. There is no clear maintenance strategy, even for the core network. Despite important efforts, a significant part of the rural network (estimated at 53 percent in 2018) has not been subject to effective maintenance in recent years. Significant rehabilitation works have been undertaken without a clear programming strategy. Furthermore, the adopted standards refer to high service levels for rural roads the unit costs of which are not affordable considering the current fiscal situation of the country.[31] While the country has a Road Maintenance Fund (FER) with significant financial resources (about CFAF 100 billion equivalent to USD 200 million in 2020),[32] the FER is mainly used for capital investments in the core network. The source of funding is not clearly defined for the rural road network, which accounts for almost 55 percent of the total network and serves half of the population.

26. The FER is gradually coming out of a financially vulnerable situation. A strategy to settle payment arrears to contractors and various service providers (mainly those who performed the 2018-2020 rural road program) is under execution, for a total of more than USD 120 million.[33] Administrative and financial procedures have been developed, including internal and external audits. The main problem remaining to be solved is the direct channeling of resources from MoF to the FER.

27. Addressing Côte d'Ivoire's rural connectivity challenges requires stronger coordination between the multiple stakeholders involved across sectors and at the central and local levels. There

[29] The country has lost 90 percent of its vegetation cover in the last 60 years.
[30] Without decentralized local administration.
[31] From fuel levy, vehicles vignettes and road tolling.
[32] FER management report, 2020.
[33] FER management report, 2020

are multiple actors involved in the management of rural roads, with some overlap in responsibilities. Since 2018, AGEROUTE (the Road Management Agency) has significantly rehabilitated rural roads using funding from FER and donors. AGEROUTE's programming strategy is based on road surveys resulting in a priority classification of villages. Under the patronage of the of Agriculture and Rural Development (MINADER), the cotton and cashew sectors have also been implementing road rehabilitation and maintenance programs using their own funds along with various donor contributions. Regional councils carry out some road rehabilitation activities using their own resources. In terms of coordination, regional committees have been set up although overlaps in the different road rehabilitation and maintenance programs continue. The lack of integrated planning sometimes leads to competition between various entities including the Ministry of Roads (MEER), MINADER, AGEROUTE, Agriculture producers and regional councils. In some cases, for example, two works contracts have been awarded for the same road section.

28. As part of the project design, Performance-Based Conditions (PBC) will help build consensus on rural road development strategies and incentivize effective institutional collaboration towards the intended outcomes of the project. The PBC modality is used to ensure that works, Technical Assistance (TA) and capacity investments generate optimal and sustainable benefits and lead to intended outcomes by conditioning part of the project financing on the achievement of measurable intermediary results.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Development Objective(s) (From PAD)

29. The project development objective (PDO) is to provide inclusive and climate resilient rural road connectivity in selected regions of Cote d'Ivoire

Key Results

30. The proposed PDO indicators are the following:

- "Inclusive connectivity": Modified Road Access Index (share of people with access to an all-weather passable road within five kilometers).
- "Climate resilient connectivity": People with access to an all-season road (number), of which female (percentage).
- Population reporting satisfaction with the quality of roads in their area (percentage).

D. Project Description

31. Overall project concept. The project aims to provide climate resilient transport connectivity in selected underserved regions of Côte d'Ivoire, support rural socio-economic infrastructure, including the agricultural logistics chain, with measures to reduce impact from climate hazards, and build the institutional foundation in critical areas to ensure the sustainability of the road sector, including in road safety, road asset management, maintenance, planning and execution. The project is expected to benefit approximately 3.67 million people across the 11 regions (out of a total of 4.08 million),[34] including 1.91 million in the six border regions. At the same time, the project will help address identified challenges in a more sustainable manner through infrastructure investment and technical assistance. Technical

[34] Based on the population figures of the 2014 general census. The overall MRAI in the 11 regions will therefore be 90 percent.

assistance activities will support an improved road maintenance environment by strengthening public institutions' capacity in planning, programming, and management, as well as local Small and Medium Size Enterprises (SMEs) and local engineering firms.

32. The project includes five components: Component 1. Inclusive and Resilient Rural Connectivity Infrastructure; Component 2. Rural socio-economic infrastructure; Component 3. Support to institutional framework and sector strategies, and Capacity Building; Component 4. Support to Project Management; and Component 5. Contingent Emergency Response.

Component 1: Inclusive and Resilient Rural Connectivity Infrastructure (US$449.1 million, of which $196.2 million from IDA, 181.7 million from AIIB and 71.2 million from GoCI)

33. Component 1 will finance the improvement of strategic[35] and non-strategic road networks to strengthen their resilience to climate risks and increase the rural populations' all-weather access to development opportunities. Currently, many roads are not passable due to damage from past climate hazards and the lack of climate resilient measures in construction and maintenance. For example, strategic roads - including the Dianra-Bouandougou road (113 km) - lack durable pavement to sustain service levels during extreme weather events. Non-strategic roads have river crossings which make them impassable and affect traffic flows on the overall road network. Installing climate-resilient measures and removing all traffic disruption points will help improve last mile commuting, which is usually done on foot or by Intermediate Means of Transport (IMTs – mainly 2-3 wheelers). This will improve inclusivity along the entire road network, benefiting as many people as possible. The project will apply climate resilience measures to improve the passability and service levels of roads in all seasons.

34. The project will support inclusive rural connectivity by increasing the MRAI to 90 percent in each of the regions. Resources will be concentrated on primary and secondary roads which are considered strategic from a social and economic point of view. These roads connect people to schools, health facilities and markets in towns. A strategic network is defined in each region based on the following criteria: (i) maximum contribution to MRAI (thus connecting the most populated agglomerations), and (ii) direct connection to health centers and secondary schools. Maps of the entire network per region were produced (details in Annex 4), making it possible to distinguish four categories of roads in addition to the existing paved network: (i) roads under asphalting with government funding; (ii) roads eligible for development/rehabilitation under the project; (iii) roads to be maintained (developed/rehabilitated under previous programs); and (iv) other dirt roads (non-strategic).

Subcomponent 1.1: Rehabilitation and Upgrading of Strategic Roads to Climate-Resilient Standards (US$294.8 million, of which US$153.1 million from IDA and US$141.7 million from AIIB)

35. Sub-component 1.1a will finance rehabilitating 7,450km of the unpaved roads of the strategic network in the 11 regions, within their existing right of way. The subcomponent aims to complete ongoing works in the strategic network, improve climate resilience and restore all-season conditions through the rehabilitation and upgrading of hydraulic structures (mainly culverts and submersible slabs), the creation of drainage, the waterproofing of roadways, the rehabilitation of wearing courses and the installation of traffic signs.

[35] Described in the paragraph below.

36. Sub-component 1.1.b will finance the upgrading of the Dianra-Bouandougou road (113 km) and the rehabilitation of the Bouandougou-Bouake-road (125 km) to address their vulnerability to climate change impacts. This is a highly strategic road not only for providing access to the Bere region, which is the main agricultural production basin of the 11 regions, but also for connecting the North to the town of Bouake, which is the main consumption/agricultural processing center in the country after Abidjan. This road becomes impassable during the rainy season and is heavily impacted by flooding and rainfall erosion. To complete the digital network currently being financed by the Government, the works will also include the laying of a fiber optic cable along the road to be utilized by internet service providers enabling improved and affordable broadband access for users.

Subcomponent 1.2: Periodic and Routine Climate-Resilient Maintenance of the strategic network (US$127.5 million, of which US$29.3 million from IDA, US$27.0 million from AIIB and US$71.2 million from GoCI)

37. This subcomponent will improve the climate resilience of all strategic roads (15,250 km) in the 11 regions by carrying out periodic and routine maintenance throughout the project. It aims to maintain the accessibility level of all unpaved roads in the strategic network, including the 7,450 km to be rehabilitated under subcomponent 1.1. The works mainly consist of facilitating the drainage of rainwater and repairing structures and carriageways to increase the lifespan of those roads. The Bank's financing will cover the first triennial maintenance program (2024-2026, 7,800 km each year). To meet a final target of 15,250 in 2029, FER will finance maintenance works for the 2027-2029 program and the roads rehabilitated under the project starting 2025. Performance-based disbursement conditions will be required for all these activities.

38. Activities of this subcomponent will be conducted through multi-year contracts, including a pilot on Output and Performance-based Road Contracts (OPBRC) to improve efficiency and reduce transaction costs. Multi-year contracts will allow for the gradual strengthening of the local public works sector by letting contractors, supervision engineering firms and their various partners (banks, insurance companies, etc.) have better visibility into their business. Further, 4 to 5-year long OPBRCs will be implemented on a pilot basis, covering approximately 1,000 km Experience from this pilot phase will be reflected when expanding OPBRCs to the rest of the network.

Subcomponent 1.3: Climate-resilient Spot improvements of the Non-Strategic Network (US$26.8 million, of which US$13.9 million from IDA and US$12.9 million from AIIB)

39. This sub-component focuses on the "non-strategic" network (about 23,000 km including sections within the 5km MRAI) for which the targeted level of service is the absence of traffic disruption points for trucks. Interventions will be mainly on roads classified as "impassable" and will be limited to the construction or rehabilitation of hydraulic structures (bridges and culverts). The plan is to build or rehabilitate about 600 structures in the 11 regions. Sections for intervention will be determined based on an analysis of the climatic vulnerability (level/duration of flooding) of the long list of roads identified by Regional Councils in cooperation with agricultural professional associations and AGEROUTE.

Component 2: Rural socio-economic infrastructure (USD$76.0 million, of which 63.5 million from IDA and 12.5 from AIIB)

40. This component aims to improve resilience and address fragility by amplifying the local spillover effects of improved connectivity through: (i) improving the agricultural logistics chain, (ii) enhancing

social cohesion, (iii) increasing resilience to climate change; and (iv) supporting rural mobility. These investments are expected to complement investments made under Component 1 to maximize impact.

Subcomponent 2.1: Consolidation of the Agricultural Logistics Chain (USD$26.2 million of which 13.7 million from IDA and 12.5 from AIIB)

41. This subcomponent aims to develop the most important rural markets and complementary agricultural production collection points in the 11 regions. It will finance the installation of preventive and protective measures in rural market facilities to address climate change impacts on agricultural logistics. The intervention sites will be defined from a long list identified by the Regional Council of each region, with a preliminary assessment of priorities according to the following criteria: (i) exposure to climate risks such as flooding and extreme heat; (ii) proximity to an area of high agricultural production to ensure an optimal level of income and maximize its impacts at the producer level; (iii) accessibility via a road that is or will be passable all year round at the end of the project; (iv) relative proximity to main urban centers; (v) volume of food products on the market; (vi) existence of well-marked agricultural and marketing channels; and (vii) existence of Professional Agricultural Organizations (PAOs) that are already established and active.

42. This subcomponent will also support the development of small agricultural logistics centers (agricultural product grouping centers) to facilitate the collection, purchase and transfer of vegetables and other food crops to markets. The activities will therefore focus on the development and/or rehabilitation of grouping centers for food products and provide equipment for aggregation and packaging. Solar energy will also be considered as a source to cover electricity needs. Storage sheds, conservation and sanitation facilities, and water supply will be included to guarantee the sanitary quality of horticultural products. Finally, the project will set up an agricultural trade information system in each selected market to provide average daily prices for the main products to enable farmers to better discuss their selling prices. This will be done with the support of OCPV (Office de Commercialisation des Produits Vivriers) which is currently developing a price information system.

Subcomponent 2.2: Pastoral Connectivity – Rehabilitation of Transhumance Corridors and Tracks (USD$6.0 million)

43. The project aims to restore the conditions for orderly, peaceful and sustainable management of transhumance routes, incorporating climate resilient measures, both within and outside protected areas. Transhumance is a type of pastoralism characterized by the seasonal movement of people and their livestock. For several decades, northern Côte d'Ivoire has been marked by conflicts between farmers and herders which have become more frequent in recent years (more than 800 herder-farmer conflicts recorded between 2000 and 2021). These incidents are mainly related to crop damage caused by transhumance practices, both cross-border and internal. The subcomponent will facilitate access for herders and agro-pastoralists to agro-pastoral resources in (natural pastures, cultivated fodder, crop residues, water points) in protected areas with improved and peaceful contexts. The approach envisaged will be different inside and outside of classified forests as stakes are different, particularly with reference to inter-group relations.

44. The activities planned under this component include (i) rehabilitation of 900 km of transhumance corridors, generally from the entry points to the cattle borders, in continuity with the work in progress or carried out under projects financed by other donors; (ii) development of 65 transhumance trails within 36

classified forests spread over seven Forest Management Units (FMUs) for a total length of about 1,436 km (574.4 ha of planted area).

45. Within classified forests, the scope will be to implement the management plan through the rehabilitation of transhumance trails. It would entail developing or rehabilitating transhumance trails[36] with fodder trees and small water points to channel the movement of animals and enhance resilience during extreme heat events. The works will include: (i) livestock channeling hedges, (ii) fodder plots, (iii) temporary night parks, (iv) temporary shelters for shepherds, as well as (v) water points. The works will integrate considerations to enhance resilience to climate change impacts such as the occurrence of extreme heat and flooding events.

46. Outside classified forests, this subcomponent aims to restore corridors or create alternative routes in case the rights-of-way are no longer available. Works would include the development of passage corridors marked with signs specific to the local context (painting on trees, planting, markers, plaques, etc.), 100 meters wide (but which could be reduced to 50 meters in areas of high agricultural pressure) and including staging areas (every 25-40 km) as well as various elements: water points, grazing areas, etc. The identification of routes will take into consideration flooding and extreme heat risks. These routes will lead to pastures, water points, or pastoral infrastructure (e.g., livestock markets, vaccination parks, holding pens, etc.) which are key to enhancing resilience to climate change impacts like extreme heat. In view of their complexity and their social dimensions, the studies will be entrusted to specialized non-governmental organizations (NGOs) active in this sector. To ensure that their points of view are taken into account, women will participate in delimitation committees as they are heavily involved in agricultural activities.

Subcomponent 2.3: Tree Planting (USD$5.2 million)

47. This subcomponent aims to modestly contribute to the Climate Change National Program intended to reforest 20 percent of the territory by 2030. The proposed activity is part of the climate change mitigation and adaptation policy. Finally, the program will support the environmental education of the population in general and youth in particular. **Project activities will consist of afforestation along roads, schools, health centers, villages, water bodies, etc.** Works will include the following improvements, which will be limited to sites along the roads developed, rehabilitated or maintained under the project: (i) at least 1,000,000 trees (about 2,500 ha) planted in the 11 target regions; and (ii) at least 500 km of roads are forested with the planting of about 125,000 trees in an area equivalent to about 313 ha.

48. The intervention will be comprehensive, including both technical and social aspects. The project will include the hiring of women in tree-planting jobs. The project will hire women for tree planting and will work in close collaboration with women-led grassroot movements to better implement adaptation measures, such as green jobs for women, job retention strategies. These women will also actively participate in the environmental education of the population.

Subcomponent 2.4: Strengthening Social Cohesion through Support to Social Services (USD$37.5 million)

49. This subcomponent is intended to improve conditions in selected schools and health centers, as well as living conditions in towns located in non-communalized territories (i.e., without decentralized

[36] Already provided for in the management plans of classified forests.

local administration). The project will contribute to strengthening social cohesion which is an essential factor of resilience given the various conflicts that threaten certain territories in the six border regions. Activities will prioritize non-communalized territories in the six border regions which include 49 sub-prefectures in total. The same activities will be carried out in at least 30 of the sub-prefectures of the five other regions, based on their population size.

50. Project activities will aim at improving facilities in all schools and health centers (e.g. toilets, water and handwashing points, electricity access, including solar panels when appropriate) of the 49 non-communalized territories of the six border regions. In all 49 small urban centers hosting sub-prefectures of the non-communalized territories of the six border regions, the project will provide public facilities including roads, drainage, and the development of leisure areas for young people. Priorities will be defined by beneficiaries, particularly through School and Hospital Management Committees (COGES - Comité de Gestion). The identification of interventions on roads and public spaces will be done in consultation with local public and private actors and local civil society (traditional leaders, religious leaders, etc.), with particular attention to the needs of women and youth. Implementation will strongly involve women, as they will be the main beneficiaries of the anticipated improvements in health centers and schools. The same activities will be carried out in schools, health centers and small urban centers in the non-communalized territories of five other regions, based on their population seize.

Subcomponent 2.5: Support to Rural Mobility (USD$1.1 million)

51. This subcomponent will support the development of Intermediate Means of Transport (IMTs[37]). This will be done through (i) the development of a mobility strategy for rural areas in Northern Côte d'Ivoire, followed by (ii) a pilot operation in favor of women's groups linked to the anticipated rural markets and/or agricultural production collection points to be developed. The strategy will be essential for a better understanding of the current supply and demand in the transport of agricultural products. It will start with a gender informed assessment of mobility patterns and barriers - including an analysis of the availability, affordability and acceptability of transport modes and gender norms that impede their use by women - to define modalities for implementing a pilot operation targeting the specific needs of women farmers' organizations. The subcomponent will also include a technical assistance which will assess the ongoing use of drones to deliver medical essentials to health centres under emergency situations, and provide recommendations for improvement.

Component 3: Capacity building and support to the institutional framework and sector strategies (US$11.8 million of which US$6.1 from IDA and US$5.7 from AIIB)

52. This component will enhance the institutional and strategic capacity of the sector. It will include support for technical services, works, goods, and human resource development. The impact of such support for institutional road sector capacity strengthening will need to be significant and long term to ensure the sustainability of the PDO.

Subcomponent 3.1: Capacity building (US$4.1 million of which US$2.1 from IDA and US$2.0 from AIIB)

[37] Essentially tricycles, which are commonly used for transportation in this part of the country.

53. This is a key program to support the reform of road maintenance management, which is mainly the business of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). The detailed program will be developed after assessing the capacities of all actors (including public authorities, private enterprises and supervision engineers). This subcomponent will entail efforts to close the technical skill gaps through the training of technical staff (from both public and private sectors) in specific areas: climate change adaptation and resilience measures (including bio-engineering and nature-based solutions) and tools, OPBRC approach, management of construction companies, contracts management by public and private actors, bids preparation (including price calculations as well as works organization and execution of specific tasks for contractors,), practice of works supervision for the supervision engineers and AGEROUTE (including geotechnical, hydrology/hydraulics etc.). This sub-component will work with companies to address barriers of entry, recruitment, retention, and promotion of women, with a focus on technical and decision-making roles. The project will organize and finance a paid internship program for female students in Science, Technology, Engineering and Mathematics (STEM) tertiary education programs who will receive training in medium and high-skilled jobs. Moreover, this paid internship will facilitate the school-to-job transition, foster women's entry in the sector and generate a cohort of 120 female role models for the new generation of Ivorian women. Technical assistance, including hands-on support during project implementation, will be essential to support the various actors. This TA will be provided by international consultants placed within the PIU to assist all implementing agencies, including the Regional Councils.

Subcomponent 3.2: Support to Road Sector Management (US$4.6 million of which US$2.4 from IDA and US$2.2 from AIIB)

54. The sub-component aims to improve the overall management of the road sector to sustain and increase efficiency and improve the ability to respond to evolving connectivity needs and challenges. It includes a set of activities to be carried out within the project, including: (i) road network planning and investment, including the improvement of the existing Road Asset Management System (RAMS) at the national level (with climate change tools/indicators); (ii) formulation of a practical strategy to consolidate and manage rural roads; (iii) development of a road maintenance strategy; and (iv) preparation of a road sector climate change action plan. A provision is also made to finance preparation studies for future projects.

Subcomponent 3.3: Support to Road Safety in Rural Areas (US$1.4 million of which US$0.7 from IDA and US$0.7 from AIIB)

55. Activities will mainly focus on awareness-raising actions aimed at two main targets: (i) strengthening the knowledge, skills, and practices of communities and pupils through inclusion of road safety in the school curriculum, and (ii) training road safety inspectors in the practice of audits, including on unpaved roads. Attention will be paid to road safety on worksites, which can be analysed and dealt with within a global framework of occupational health and safety measures, including the establishment of accident monitoring tools.

Subcomponent 3.4: Support for the Climate agenda (US$1.7 million of which US$0.9 from IDA and US$0.8 from AIIB)

56. This follows Government's commitments to combat desertification at COP15 held in Abidjan from May 9 -20, 2022. It will include the rehabilitation and construction of additional meteorological facilities in the 11 regions, in addition to those already financed by the French Development Agency (AFD).

Component 4: Support to Project Management (US$34.2 million, from IDA)

Subcomponent 4.1: Technical Assistance to project coordination (US$14.3 million)

57. This subcomponent will finance TA to the Project Coordination Unit (PCU) for project preparation, implementation, and completion including: (i) preparation of several documents (environmental and social safeguards frameworks, etc.); (ii) citizen engagement, management of a Grievances Redress Mechanism, including communication activities and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) specialized in the prevention and management of SEA/SH risks.

Subcomponent 4.2: Monitoring & Evaluation, Technical audits *(US$4.1 million)*

58. This subcomponent will finance (i) monitoring and evaluation (M&E) surveys and studies (baseline, mid-term review, completion report, and impact evaluation); (ii) external technical, environmental and social audits; (iii) a Third-Party Monitoring (TPM) NGO which will perform the global monitoring of project activities and provide independent information on social and security risks associated to the project. Technical audits will be systematically conducted throughout works, and recommendations implemented progressively. There will be at least one annual audit for maintenance works and two for development/rehabilitation works. These audits will also cover occupational health and safety aspects.

Subcomponent 4.3: Contribution to Project Management (US$15.8 million)

59. This subcomponent will finance project management related costs not covered by counterpart funding, including: (i) salaries and travel expenses of the staff of the PCU and associated implementing agencies; (ii) public information; and (iii) operating costs and equipment of the PCU, including the Decentralized Unit.

Component 5: Contingent Emergency Response (US$0.00 million)

60. This component will allow for the rapid reallocation of project proceeds in the event of a natural or man-made disaster or crisis that has caused or is likely to imminently cause a major adverse economic and/or social impact. To trigger this component, the GoCI would need to provide a statement of fact justifying the request for activation of the use of emergency funding. To allocate funds to this component, the GoCI will request the World Bank to re-allocate project funds to support its response. If the World Bank agrees with the determination of the disaster and associated response needs, this component would draw resources from the unallocated expenditures of the other project components to cover emergency response and recovery costs. This component could also be used to channel additional funds should they become available as a result of an emergency. Disbursements would be made against a positive list of critical goods or the procurement of works, and consultant services required to support the immediate response and recovery needs. An Operations Manual will apply to this component, which will be part of the project operations manual, detailing financial management, procurement, safeguards, and other necessary implementation arrangements following World Bank guidelines and regulations.

Legal Operational Policies

	Triggered?
Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	Yes

Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60	No

Summary of Assessment of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

61. Environmental (Substantial). The proposed project will have an overall positive environmental impact when completed given that it will significantly contribute to the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions and traffic hazards for the users and nearby communities in the villages, as well as to reforestation and water resources management activities. Nonetheless, substantial risks from this project are expected from road alignment changes during the construction of the road to be paved and the numerous construction activities. The potential negative environmental impacts include limited vegetation clearing, soil degradation, air and water pollution, road accidents, temporary nuisances to people living near civil works sites (dust, noise, etc.), increased access to or through potentially sensitive habitats, and damage to physical cultural resources. All the environmental impacts are expected to be fully mitigated by the adoption of Good International Industry Practice (GIIP). Regarding road safety, this project will apply the Road Safety Screening and Appraisal Tool (RSSAT) and comply with the requirements from the Road Safety Good Practice Note. Mitigation measures will be applied in accordance with the required instruments recommended under the ESF.

62. Social (Substantial). The project will have an overall positive social impact, especially by improving transport connectivity in rural areas and thereby providing local communities with reduced time and cost of travel, better access to basic services, more marketing opportunities for agricultural products, and access to non-agricultural jobs in cities. Nevertheless, the social risk of this project is rated as substantial, reflecting potential significant issues related to: (i) land acquisition and resettlement of Project Affected Persons (PAPs) resulting from works that may require acquisition of strips of land to improve road alignments during the construction of the Dianra-Bouandougou road; (ii) temporary restriction of access to livelihood and income generating activities for people living in and around the project area during civil works associated with the project. Mitigation measures will be applied in accordance with the required instruments recommended under the ESF and the SEA/SH Good Practice Note.

63. Sexual Exploitation and Abuse and Sexual Harassment (Moderate). An initial SEA/SH risk assessment classified the project activities as moderate; it will need to be redone during the preparation stage. National factors contributing to these risks include the lack of laws on domestic violence and marital rape. At the project level, factors that explain potential SEA/SH risks include, firstly, that the project will be located near pedestrian routes used by women in their daily activities. There is also the fact that the project will take place mainly in the north of the country, which is more plagued by poverty and insecurity. In addition, the borrower's monitoring capacity in some of the 11 project regions may be limited by the geographical scope. These activities can lead to scenarios where women are exposed to sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment. Nevertheless, it should be noted that the project foresees medium-sized rural constructions, which will not involve a massive influx of labor. These risks will be mitigated through measures outlined in the SEA/SH response and mitigation action plan, which includes an accountability and response framework, codes of conduct prohibiting and sanctioning SEA/SH behavior, training and awareness raising activities for workers and community members, consultations with women and vulnerable groups in safe and supportive locations, and procedures for dealing with

SEA/SH complaints in an ethical and confidential manner following a survivor-centered approach, including referral pathways to assist survivors of GBV.

64. Special security arrangements, including the deployment of the Permanent Security Unit (*Détachement de Sécurité des Travaux* - DST), could be envisaged in some areas if the level of threats warrants it. While such deployment would mitigate security risks, it could carry risks of improper behaviors or poor treatment of civilians, which would be particularly damaging for the project and the Government. Mitigation measures will include:

(i) Establishment of high standard rules for the selection of military personnel for the Permanent Security Unit (*Détachement de Sécurité des Travaux* - DST) and training of DST personnel in international humanitarian law and human rights as well as gender-based violence issues and awareness. The Ministry of Defence (MoDef) will certify that background and security checks are performed to ensure that DST personnel have not been found guilty of improper behaviors and abuse and are complying with the Military Code of Justice and Code of Conduct. Any member of the DST that is accused of any violation or abuse will be immediately removed from the Project area.

(ii) The Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) will be in place, and complaints involving members of the military will be redirected to the military justice system. The key principles used to guide the GRM are transparency, accessibility, and effectiveness. The GRM will also ensure that issues are proactively being identified in the case of sensitive complaints that are not likely to be raised.

(iii) Third-Party Monitoring will be deployed to assess social and security risks, and report directly to the Project Coordinator.

E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

65. The institutional arrangements for the project include: (i) oversight and orientation by an Inter-Ministerial Steering Committee (ISC); (ii) overall coordination of project activities and partners by the Ministry of Infrastructure and Road Maintenance (MEER) through a Project Coordination Unit (PCU); (iii) advice on planning and monitoring of project implementation activities by Regional Consultative Committees (RCC); and (iv) technical execution of project activities vested with strategic public entities, Specialized Implementation Agencies (SIAs). The Project Implementation Manual (PIM), to be prepared by MEER and finalized by project effectiveness, will detail all coordination, management, implementation, M&E, and reporting functions.

66. The implementation of the proposed project would be led by the existing Project Coordination Unit in charge of World Bank-funded transport projects (known as PRICI-PCU), which reports to MEER. The PRICI-PCU is currently satisfactorily managing the PACOGA (P159697), Urban Water Supply Project (P156739), and PIDUCAS (P151324). PIDUCAS will close in July 2023. The PCU, with the support of dedicated personnel and SIAs, will oversee planning and budgeting of project activities and execute the approved Annual Work Plan and Budget (AWPB). It will also oversee special arrangements with SIAs, technical supervision and quality control, gender inclusion, environmental and social safeguards (particularly resettlement), and M&E. The project will maintain close coordination with the Regional Councils of the targeted project areas to ensure local ownership and support of project activities.

67. For the new project, the PCU will be strengthened with additional dedicated staff, including a deputy-coordinator specialized in rural development, a civil engineer to supervise other infrastructure works other than roads, safeguards specialists and a social development specialist to address gender issues and citizen engagement, including the management of the Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) with gender-based violence considerations. A security specialist will be hired to monitor the security situation, liaising with partners (such as UNDSS) to access recent security data and provide advice for project implementation. The security specialist will also provide cross support to other projects under implementation in the six border regions. Considering the geographic distance from Abidjan, a decentralized entity of the PCU headed by the deputy-coordinator will be based in the Northern regions to facilitate day-to-day operations and close follow-up of the numerous project activities.

68. Regional Consultative Committees (RCC). RCCs will be established in the target regions, presided over by the Regional divisional officer (Préfet) and the president of the Regional Council as vice-president. They will include representatives of the ministries represented at the Project Steering Committee (PSC) level, local civil society (key traditional rulers, local opinion leaders) and the local private sector (cashew and cotton operators, transport operators etc.). RCCs will be responsible of monitoring of implementation of project activities.

69. Regional councils. Regional councils will be in charge of activities within their mandate under the decentralization laws (i.e., non-strategic roads, rural markets and agricultural produce collection points, and investments in schools, health centers and small cities). This will help reduce the number of direct stakeholders (ministries). The division of responsibility between Regional Councils and the central government will be defined by performance contracts. Within each regional council, a Regional Technical Unit (RTU) will be created to oversee the overall coordination of project activities on behalf of the Regional Council. It will prepare the technical documentation for investments under the Regional Council's mandate and monitor the proper implementation of the Regional Council's activities for which it is responsible, including reporting. The RTU will consist of dedicated staff, drawn from the Regional Council staff.

70. Specialized Implementation Agencies (SIAs). Regional Councils and government agencies or ministries will implement project activities that fall within their respective institutional mandate. Road works will be implemented by the Road Agency (AGEROUTE). Other implementing agencies include *Société de Developpement des Forêts* (SODEFOR) for activities in classified forests, *Agence Nationale du Service Universel des Télécommunications/TIC* (ANSUT) for optical fiber extension, and *Société d'Exploitation de Développement Aéroportuaire Aéronautique et Météorologique* (SODEXAM) for activities related to meteorology. The PCU will sign delegated management contracts with all identified SIAs. The contracts will define the roles and responsibilities for the agencies involved in project implementation.

71. Beneficiary communities. As part of citizen engagement, beneficiary communities will be associated with the project at different stages. At the identification and preparation stages, they will be consulted for neighbourhood activities (i.e., rural markets and agricultural produce collection points, schools and health centers, pastoral connectivity and community forests). At the implementation level, follow-up committees will be established for each facility. For road works, a community monitoring

mechanism will be established to provide feedback to the RCC. Mechanisms for community participation and citizen engagement will be developed.

72. Special security arrangements. As a result of the situation in neighbouring countries, the security situation in Northern Côte d'Ivoire is a serious concern and could pose a key challenge for project implementation in some regions. Even though no new attack has been reported since 2021, the security situation in Côte d'Ivoire remains fragile. While Defense and Security Forces (Forces de Défense et de Sécurité, FDS) are the main targets of these attacks, civilian casualties have also been reported as collateral damage. Under these circumstances, special security measures are envisaged to ensure entities can confidently deploy staff in the field for construction, supervision or monitoring of different activities to be carried out, including construction of infrastructure. The government has responded to the insecurity and terrorist threats by adopting security measures and reinforcing the presence of military personnel. In July 2019, the government launched "Operation Frontiere Etanche" along its northern borders, as part of its fight against jihadist activities. As indicated in the security risk assessment[38], the upsurge in terrorist actions is due to the active conflict in Mali and Burkina Faso that is rapidly spreading and is exacerbated by political instability. Several risks have been identified in the security risk assessment, including: (i) kidnapping, killings, and targeted attacks against contractors, workers, PCU personnel, and project beneficiaries; (ii) theft of construction material, food and fuel brought by contractors and workers; (iii) attacks against infrastructure built by the project; (iv) enhanced risks of gender-based violence against project beneficiaries and populations living in neighbouring villages; (v) social unrest; and (vi) car accidents as a result of project activities that could lead to popular mobilization.

73. Appropriate measures have been identified and adopted to mitigate the impact of security risks for the implementation of the project. This includes: (i) a strong citizen engagement plan to be prepared and implemented to ensure the involvement of local stakeholders, including project-affected communities and local NGOs; and (ii) preventive measures to be included in the works contracts to protect physical infrastructure and mitigate risk exposure for workers, including the reinforcement of technical installations and the provision of a minimum of the security measures. The security assessment will be updated periodically. In addition, it was agreed with the Government that in areas where security risks are assessed as moderate or high, special arrangements could be considered to protect works sites. In such cases, a permanent Special Security Detachment (Détachement de Sécurité des Travaux - DST) [39] consisting of military personnel would be deployed in the concerned project area. An agreement will be signed between the Ministry of Roads and the Ministry of Defense (MoDef) to define the responsibilities of each party. The deployment of this DST will be fully funded by the GoCI's budget. Security management measures will remain adaptative and flexible to respond to the changing and volatile security environment. If security issues escalate or recede, the security management plan will be revisited by the Bank and the client. All military personnel involved in related activities will undergo training in international humanitarian law and human rights, civilian-military engagement as well as gender-based violence issues and awareness, managed and financed through the project.

[38] *Conducted as part of project preparation.*

[39] The measures are based on lessons learned from the CEMAC TTF Project (P079736), in which such arrangements were made to enable works in the Far-North Region, threatened by Boko Haram.

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