



**The World Bank**

Liberia Women Empowerment Project (P173677)

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# Project Information Document (PID)

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Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 28-Mar-2022 | Report No: PIDA33727



## BASIC INFORMATION

### A. Basic Project Data

Country Liberia	Project ID P173677	Project Name Liberia Women Empowerment Project	Parent Project ID (if any)
Region AFRICA WEST	Estimated Appraisal Date 26-Apr-2022	Estimated Board Date 21-Jul-2022	Practice Area (Lead) Social Sustainability and Inclusion
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Republic of Liberia	Implementing Agency Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP)	

#### Proposed Development Objective(s)

The project development objective is to improve social and livelihood services for women and girls in targeted communities, foster positive social norms and strengthen the government's capacity to advance women and girls' empowerment.

#### Components

Fostering positive social norms and community mobilization g positive social norms and community mobilization  
Enhancing basic services in health and education  
Promoting resilient livelihoods through community-led approaches  
Strengthening public institutions to advance gender equality  
Project management, monitoring and evaluation, and policy dialogue  
Contingent Emergency Response Component

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

### SUMMARY

Total Project Cost	40.00
Total Financing	40.00
of which IBRD/IDA	40.00
Financing Gap	0.00

### DETAILS

**World Bank Group Financing**

International Development Association (IDA)	40.00
IDA Credit	20.00
IDA Grant	20.00

Environmental and Social Risk Classification

Moderate

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

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Other Decision (as needed)

**C. Proposed Development Objective(s)**

Development Objective(s) (From PAD)

The project development objective is to improve social and livelihood services for women and girls in targeted communities, enable positive social norms and strengthen the government's capacity to advance women and girls' empowerment.

Key Results

**D. Project Description**

Legal Operational Policies

Triggered?

Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50

No



Projects in Disputed Areas OP 7.60

No

## Summary of Assessment of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

**Note to Task Teams:** This summary section is downloaded from the PAD data sheet and is editable. It should match the text provided by E&S specialist. If it is revised after the initial download the task team must manually update the summary in this section. ***Please delete this note when finalizing the document.***

The project activities will finance interventions that support women's economic opportunities with a potential focus on investments to enhance agricultural productivity, value chains and access to markets as well as farms and non-farm livelihood supports to beneficiaries. The activities may result in excessive land clearing and use of pesticides, fertilizers or other agrochemicals that in turn may result in both direct and indirect environmental risks and include; community health and safety, pollution and release of chemicals and effluent into waterways, land and soil degradation and contamination, management of waste, genetically modified crops, labor related issues, and loss of biodiversity. The irresponsible use of these agrochemicals can lead to potential adverse impacts related to contamination and pollution of water resources and soil, and health impacts for residents of surrounding communities. The use of agrochemicals would also require procurement, transport, storage, and application equipment. Additionally, Greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions from production or processing facilities and other equipment could contribute to climate change impacts within the region. However, these risks are expected to be site specific, local, reversible, mainly temporary, and capable of management through appropriate risk mitigation measures as provided in the draft ESMF developed by the borrower. The agricultural activities supported by the project will require site-specific environmental and social screening , in line with the ESMF.

In terms of social risks, this standard is also relevant considering the potential risks highlighted in Section A above in relation to Components 1, 2 and 3. Although Liberia's cited high levels of inequality, including gender inequality, interhousehold and cultural dynamics as it relates to this project will require further assessment and management following project effectiveness as stated in the PAD and in the ESCP, the initial assessment done through the drafts ESMF and SEP highlights the following project risks; exclusion and elite capture of project benefits especially of vulnerable people including persons with disabilities, increased domestic and economic violence against women, backlash against women from activities geared to changing long-standing norms and beliefs about gender and power relations, etc. While the project will seek to directly address inequality through its focus on women's economic and social empowerment, these risks remain evident and will require careful attention to the beneficiary identification and selection process, with meaningful participation in the design of the selection process from stakeholders including communities. The stakeholder engagement process has begun as shown in the draft SEP prepared by the MGCSP but will need to be further deepened following project effectiveness and on-boarding of project social specialist to lead the process. The beneficiary selection criteria should be clearly stated in the Project Implementation Manual that will be developed following Board approval.

Given Liberia's high rates of GBV incidents, particularly among young and vulnerable women and children, including high rates of exploitative transactional sexual relationships, both the ESMF and ESCP have provided that a detailed GBV Action Plan be developed six months following project effectiveness to further assess and manage risks related to sexual exploitation and abuse (SEA) and sexual harassment (SH) beyond the current context in the draft ESMF. SEA and SH may arise in light of interactions between project staff, workers, consultants and agents of the MGCSP or their



contractors and community members. This level of interactions may be significant, given that the project envisions modification of community-based social norm and economic strengthening activities directly with beneficiaries. These interactions may give rise to power imbalances that increase SEA/SI risks. Further, because the project will be directly addressing women's economic and social empowerment with a focus on the social and gender norms that drive inequality and violence, there are risks and implications for women if men (particularly spouses or partners) perceive their traditional roles are threatened. These issues are central not just to the management of risks and impacts but the design of the project itself, and accordingly the proposed gender related and GBV analytical work is expected to inform design for specific project components and subcomponent interventions and taking into account economic, cultural and power dynamics contextual issues.

In line with ESF requirements, MGCSP has developed (i) an ESMF (which includes LMP, RPF & IPMP), (ii) an Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP); (iii) a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (see discussion of ESS10 below). Given the low risk of involuntary land acquisition envisioned, a commitment to managing livelihood and resettlement issues is included in the ESCP and the ESMF, instead of a standalone Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF). Likewise, giving the low risk of labor-influx, the Labor Management Procedure (LMP) is included in the ESMF which will be used to manage labor-related issues rather than a stand-alone LMP. The ESMF includes a description of principles and objectives governing resettlement preparation and implementation with screening tool that includes sections to help identify potential land and economic displacements. The ESMF also provided the overarching environmental and social management guidelines that includes the social screening tools and protocol to be applied to any sub-projects and subsequent preparation of the relevant Environmental and Social Assessments (ESAs) such as (Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) and/or Resettlement Action Plans/Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plans). Upon the Project becoming effective and the recruitment of Environmental and Social Specialists completed, the MGSP shall conduct a Gender Analysis and develop a SEA/SI Action Plan proportionate to the risks identified.

**Note:** To view the Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts, please refer to the Appraisal Stage ESRS Document.

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## E. Implementation

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### CONTACT POINT

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#### Borrower/Client/Recipient

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**Implementing Agencies**

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**FOR MORE INFORMATION CONTACT**

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**APPROVAL**

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