



# Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 08-Jul-2022 | Report No: PIDA34222

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

Country Bolivia	Project ID P175672	Project Name Bolivia Innovation for Resilient Food Systems	Parent Project ID (if any)
Region LATIN AMERICA AND CARIBBEAN	Estimated Appraisal Date 29-Jun-2022	Estimated Board Date 01-Aug-2022	Practice Area (Lead) Agriculture and Food
Financing Instrument Investment Project Financing	Borrower(s) Plurinational State of Bolivia	Implementing Agency Ministry of Rural Development and Land	

## Proposed Development Objective(s)

Contribute to increased food security, market access and the adoption of climate-smart approaches by targeted project beneficiaries.

## Components

1. Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening
2. Support to Community and Productive Alliances
3. Project Management

The processing of this project is applying the policy requirements exceptions for situations of urgent need of assistance or capacity constraints that are outlined in OP 10.00, paragraph 12.

Yes

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

Total Project Cost	351.20
Total Financing	351.20
of which IBRD/IDA	300.00
Financing Gap	0.00

**DETAILS****World Bank Group Financing**



International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD)	300.00
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**Non-World Bank Group Financing**

Counterpart Funding	51.20
Local Govts. (Prov., District, City) of Borrowing Country	21.80
Local Farmer Organizations	29.40

Environmental and Social Risk Classification

Substantial

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate





## B. Introduction and Context

### Country Context

- 1. Bolivia has made significant progress in reducing poverty and inequality in the past two decades, propelled by large public expenditures during the commodity boom that contributed to increasing labor earnings. Economic growth and social gains have nonetheless slowed down.** From 2002–2014, some 96,000 people exited poverty annually and gross domestic product (GDP) growth averaged 4.6 percent. Progress was driven by household earnings because the private sector generates 73 percent of jobs in Bolivia and labor earnings drive both reduced poverty and greater equality. From 2014 to 2018, GDP growth decelerated, the average annual number of people exiting poverty fell significantly to 35,000, and the public sector's ability to boost progress declined in parallel.
- 2. The COVID-19 crisis hit Bolivia hard at a time when there is limited fiscal space to respond.** Bolivia's output is estimated to have contracted by 7.8 percent in 2020, its first recession since 1986, and poverty is expected to have increased along with a decline in labor earnings for many households. In May 2020, just after the onset of the COVID-19 crisis, 70 percent of workers interviewed in a World Bank phone survey reported that they had not worked or had lost their jobs during the quarantine period. In addition, the combination of the COVID-19 health and economic emergency and the sharp decline in commodity prices has put macroeconomic stability under further strain, as Bolivia entered the crisis with increasing fiscal deficits and declining international reserves.
- 3. Although overall poverty has decreased after the pandemic-induced peak, certain segments of the population have not recovered.** Despite almost-universal emergency transfers provided during the national lockdown, an economic contraction increased poverty from 20 percent in 2019 to 21.6 percent in 2020. By mid-2021, 60 percent of households reported lower incomes than before the pandemic, and 22.7 percent of households were food insecure at some time during the month surveyed, 5 percentage points above pre-pandemic levels. Food insecurity disproportionately affected the poorest and rural households, and the least-educated heads of household. However, the ongoing recovery in economic activity and employment – particularly among women – is estimated to have contributed to reducing poverty to 20.2 percent in 2021, a decline seemingly driven by rural areas.
- 4. Public sector efforts in Bolivia to strengthen economic recovery, create more and higher-quality jobs, and achieve economic diversification for a more resilient economy need to be complemented by a thriving private sector.** In a more unfavorable external and domestic economic environment, promoting a strong and resilient private sector can accompany public efforts and contribute to boosting economic growth, cushioning the potential effects of a significantly tighter macro-fiscal situation, and providing more quality jobs to resume the path toward reducing poverty and inequality. To unleash this potential, though, the constraints that the private sector faces need to be addressed. Some 87 percent of private sector jobs are in the informal sector and at seven percent of GDP, private sector investment in Bolivia is the lowest among its comparator countries.
- 5. The Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) Update (2021) confirmed the continued relevance of three development challenges identified under the 2015 SCD, namely:** (a) Cementing macroeconomic and financial stability as foundations of shared prosperity; (b) Enabling the private sector to become an engine of shared prosperity; and (c) Closing disparities in access to services and opportunities for shared prosperity.

**6. The National Development Plan of Bolivia (PDES), 2021–25, reflects the Bolivian government’s five-year development priorities.** The PDES (framed in the context of the ten-year Patriot Agenda 2015–2025 and including Annual Operational Plans) seeks to restore the economy through a Social Community Productive Economic model, which focuses on growth through internal demand facilitated by public investment. The PDES outlines policy objectives and indicators under ten strategic pillars ( ).



**Figure 1: Strategic Pillars of Bolivia’s Economic and Social Development Plan, 2021–2025**

**7. The Bolivian government’s vision for the agricultural sector promotes food security and food sovereignty.** The Bolivian constitution endorses food security as the foundation of human welfare.<sup>1</sup> Social and economic public policy therefore align to achieve food sovereignty through a sustained (and sustainable) increase in the productivity of agriculture, livestock, manufacturing, agro-industry, and tourism. The PDES includes food security and food sovereignty (Pillar 3) , which requires: (a) increasing investments in research, development, and innovation for productivity growth; (b) improving connectivity, logistics, and value chain coordination for competitiveness; (c) building climate resilience through risk management and a reduction of the environmental footprint; and (d) strengthening capacity for evidence-based policy making and investment planning through monitoring, policy analysis, and program evaluation. Both the public and the private sectors have important roles to play in these areas and thus also in materializing the gains from the sector.

**8. The conflict in Ukraine triggered two major risks to global food and nutrition security.** The first is from a pronounced spike in the international prices of key food staples, and the second from skyrocketing prices of fuel and fertilizer. The latter will likely have broad impacts across commodities and regions over several years. Ukraine and the Russian Federation are normally major exporters of food (26 percent of global wheat exports, 23 percent of barley, and 15 percent of corn), and the Russian Federation and Belarus are also among the largest exporters of fertilizer (38 percent of potassic, 17 percent of compound, and 15 percent of nitrogenous fertilizers). At least 35 million metric tons of Ukrainian food exports are likely lost in 2022 because of disruptions in farming and damage to infrastructure. Exports from the Russian Federation and Belarus are currently limited by logistical and financial restrictions. The sudden halt in exports of these critical commodities adds to the immediate pressures on food and nutrition security, particularly for poorer, import-dependent countries. The price disruptions from production and export shortfalls of grain and fertilizer from the Black Sea region are likely to persist. Looking ahead a few months and years, food production will be hit by reduced access to fertilizer for some time.

<sup>1</sup> Food security, as defined by the United Nations’ Committee on World Food Security, means that all people, at all times, have physical, social, and economic access to sufficient, safe, and nutritious food that meets their food preferences and dietary needs for an active and healthy life.



**9. Significant food insecurity persists in Bolivia and has increased due to the COVID-19 pandemic and the conflict in Ukraine.** Currently, food intake is insufficient for more than 20 percent of the population. The World Hunger Map (World Food Program) places Bolivia at "moderately high" risk due to its climatic vulnerability. Some 2.4 million of Bolivia's 11.4 million inhabitants are undernourished; the country is one of the 15 risk hotspots of deterioration in food security worldwide. Currently, the southern part of the country, comprising Potosí, Chuquisaca, Tarija, Oruro and Santa Cruz Departments, is at moderately high risk (UN, 2020). The poorest urban households spend between 60 and 80 percent of their income on food. In 2019, more than 2.1 million Bolivians were extremely poor and could not access the minimum requirements of staple foods to satisfy daily protein and caloric needs. In July 2020, one-fifth of households reported that an adult skipped a meal due to a lack of resources.

**10. The conflict in Ukraine and the COVID-19 pandemic have further deepened poverty and food insecurity.** Spiking food prices can destabilize governments by breaking the "social contract" to ensure access to affordable food, putting them under immense pressure to stabilize the affordability of food to consumers and fertilizer to farmers. Without clear alternatives, costly and ineffective agriculture and food policies could make the vulnerable worse off as learned from previous food price crises. In addition to farmers and consumers, increased prices and reductions in food trade can put increased pressure on private agribusinesses and traders. And just as financing needs grow, banks are curtailing lending, widening the gap in markets.

**11. The WBG, while supporting the needs arising from the conflict in Ukraine, will continue to promote a sustained focus on longer-term development priorities that are integral to the achievement of the WBG twin goals of eliminating extreme poverty and promoting shared prosperity in a sustainable manner.** Food prices in real terms are going up rapidly in the context of current and anticipated supply constraints. It is critical to avoid making the situation worse by imposing export restrictions and price controls. Enabling greater agricultural productivity and market access and protecting the vulnerable populations against food insecurity and unavailability are central to the WBG response.

#### Sectoral and Institutional Context

**12. Agriculture and agribusiness remain key sectors of the economy, accounting for 13 percent of GDP (in 2021), and employing nearly a third of all workers, with a significant impact on poverty reduction.** Agriculture is an important source of exports in Bolivia (15 percent of goods exports in 2019) and employment (24 percent in total and 75 percent of rural employment). Santa Cruz, Cochabamba, and La Paz Departments generate 72 percent of total agricultural value added nationwide. Average farm size in the Highlands, Amazon, and Sub-Andean Regions is less than 3 hectares (Ha). Land fragmentation is most acute in the Highlands, where 60 percent of farms are now smaller than 1 Ha. Some 45 percent of total harvested area is industrial commodity production (e.g., soybean), increasing to 80 percent when cereals are included.

**13. Bolivia's agricultural sector is a proven engine of economic growth and has ample room to increase its productivity.** The country has used its diverse natural endowments to grow agriculture and increase people's incomes. The agricultural sector has experienced high and sustained growth, contributing to a reduced national dependency on the mining and gas sectors. The compound annual growth of agriculture, forestry, and fishing remained above 5 percent between 2013 and 2018, and it has also proven to be pro-poor,



employing one-third of the labor force. The sector nonetheless has substantive room to increase productivity and strengthen backward and forward linkages to other economic activities.

**14. More productive and climate-smart agriculture reduces negative environmental impacts while increasing the income opportunities of the rural population and promoting food security.** Given current global concerns around food security and climate risks, maximizing the high potential of this sector will require an integrated approach, carefully managing land and water resources while increasing outputs. A 2019 Bolivia-specific Stochastic Frontier Analysis recommended the following investments that could effectively increase agricultural technical efficiency and aid less-efficient farmers to reach their technical potential: (a) greater collective action, especially in regions with high land fragmentation; (b) expanded and more inclusive credit programs; (c) leveraging mobile phones for technical and business intelligence; and (d) increased irrigation adoption to increase agricultural intensity, productivity and water use efficiency, promote on-farm diversification and tap into non-traditional markets.

**15. Agriculture dominates rural Bolivia and is characterized by majority use of family labor, which is why participation is not conditioned by age or individual benefits.** Both agriculture and services have the largest shares of employment in Bolivia; 87 percent of the employed female population is in the agricultural sector, commerce and public administration, and social and community services. The participation of women in the agricultural sector has been mainly as a family worker, apprentice or unpaid person; however, from 2011 to 2020 there has been an increase in participation as self-employed workers. The role of women in agriculture is as important as that of men, and although there are differences in the levels of participation among the different age groups, the productive roles of women are almost equivalent to those of men, considering the different types of family farming. The female participation of the working-age population in agricultural activities is 37 percent, compared to 44 percent for male participation. However, it should be noted that in agricultural activities involving the purchase of inputs, contracting, processing and marketing, there is a significantly less female participation, due to the marked role of men in market activities. There are also notable differences in all types of family farming and activities in terms of women's participation in decision-making, with an average of 21 percent compared to 31 percent for men overall, 16 percent compared to 20 percent for livestock farming and 17 percent compared to 26 percent for market engagement.<sup>2</sup>

**16. Persistent, low market access of rural producers in Bolivia is driven by: (a) low productivity and competitiveness; (b) highly vulnerable agricultural production systems; (c) poor and low-quality productive infrastructure; and (d) poor coordination across support programs to increase agricultural production and productivity.** There are 872,000 agricultural production units in Bolivia, the vast majority

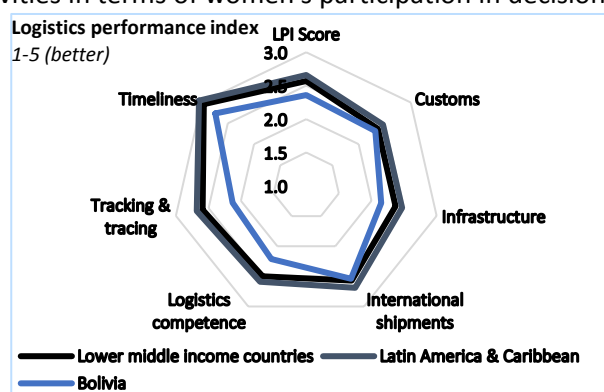


Figure 2

Source: World Bank 2021. SCD Update.

<sup>2</sup> ITO-VELARDE, Carola. *Un estudio exploratorio del rol de las mujeres en la agricultura familiar en Bolivia*. La Paz, n. especial, p. 79-120, dic. 2021. Disponible en [http://www.scielo.org.bo/scielo.php?script=sci\\_arttext&pid=S2074-47062021000300079&lng=es&nrm=iso](http://www.scielo.org.bo/scielo.php?script=sci_arttext&pid=S2074-47062021000300079&lng=es&nrm=iso). accedido en 21 jun. 2022. Epub 01-Dic-2021.





of which are classified as family farms, characterized by almost exclusive household labor participation and management, and further serving as the principal source of household income. Some 80 percent of Bolivian farms have fewer than three employees, a low degree of specialization, and small land holdings (World Bank and IFC 2021). Land productivity in Bolivia is one-fourth of Colombia's, one-third of Ecuador's, and a one-half that of Peru, with large gaps in productivity between regions. The Government's fixed exchange rate system further limits the tools available for addressing macroeconomic imbalances, while the high real exchange rate overvaluation—estimated between 26 and 33 percent—hinders the competitiveness of exports from non-extractive sectors and local products competing with imports.<sup>3</sup>

**17. Agricultural growth has relied on land expansion, with significant environmental consequences.** Most productive land is in the highlands and is fragmented into small farm plots; furthermore, expanding agro-industry and livestock in the lowlands have been a driver of deforestation. From 1985 to 2019, land under soy production and livestock increased by 229 percent, from 2.1 million to 6.9 million Ha.<sup>4</sup> The deforestation of highly diverse rainforests degrades natural capital and threatens the sustainability of agricultural production. In effect, coupled with climate change, deforestation exacerbates land degradation, water scarcity, and wildfire risk, negatively affecting Bolivia's long-term productive capacity.

**18. Future agricultural growth in Bolivia** will be driven by: (a) food demand from urban population growth (projected to average 1.9 percent annually through 2030); (b) changing diets and consumer preferences for differentiated and quality products (thereby expanding local production and potentially substituting imports); (c) public policies that create domestic demand in non-food sectors, e.g., biofuels (reaching 380 million liters by 2025); and (d) exploiting current non-traditional export value chains, e.g., cocoa, beans, coffee, quinoa, Brazil nuts, and beef.

**19.** The conflict in Ukraine and associated events triggered a pronounced spike in the international prices of key food staples and skyrocketing prices of fuel and fertilizer. This broad impact reduces the resilience of many lower income countries, where food staples account for a greater share of food spending. Specific to Bolivia, for example:

- (a) Farm-level fertilizer prices have more than doubled in the last several months, resulting in supply chain disruptions and expected yield reductions, in the face of already historically low agricultural productivity.
- (b) Severe drought, particularly in the Santa Cruz region, has led to corn harvest losses of up to 95 percent across 40,000 ha and associated corn producer price spikes of up to 45 percent. Consequently, consumer prices for poultry and pork (both dependent on corn as livestock feed) have risen by 25 percent.
- (c) Bolivia imports 70 percent of its wheat demand; the global price of wheat has risen 50 percent since January 2022. The Government's reference price for wheat has also increased from US\$ 335/MT (2021) to US\$ 390/MT for the 2022 harvest, an increase of 16 percent, to encourage short-term domestic wheat production.

<sup>3</sup> World Bank, 2021. Country Private Sector Diagnostic.

<sup>4</sup> World Bank, 2021. Systematic Country Diagnostic Update.



### C. Proposed Development Objective

Contribute to increased food security, market access and the adoption of climate-smart approaches by targeted project beneficiaries.

#### Key Results

Achievement of the PDO will be measured through the following indicators:

- (a) RCOs and RPOs with satisfactory Food Consumption Score (Percentage);
- (b) Farmers adopting improved agricultural technology, disaggregated by gender (CRI, number);
- (c) Land area under sustainable landscape management practices (CRI, number in Ha); and
- (d) Increase in the value of gross sales of approved business plans for participating RPOs (Percentage).

### D. Project Description

20. The design features of the proposed Project include:

- (a) Collective action: The small farmer, acting alone, is unlikely to effectively compete in a market dominated by intermediaries with asymmetric bargaining power and information. Through their participation in value chains, organized rural producer and community organizations can benefit from: (a) collective bargaining power in negotiating with other actors in the chain; (b) greater technology uptake; and (c) reduced individual risks through risk spreading. The proposed Project would promote small farmer participation in:

- Rural Community Organizations (RCOs): are any of the *Pueblos Indígenas*, *Comunidades Campesinas*, *Comunidades Indígenas*, *Comunidades Afrobolivianas*, *Comunidades Interculturales* or *Juntas Vecinales* (also known as *naciones y pueblos indígena originarios campesinos* under of the Borrower's Constitution), which are registered and operating under the Borrower's law, and with legal standing (*personería jurídica*) pursuant to Article 3o of the Borrower's *Decreto Supremo* No. 24447 of December 20, 1996, and member of a Community Alliance under the eligibility criteria set forth in the Project Operational Manual; and
- Rural Producer Organizations (RPOs): legally established organizations which are members a Productive Alliance and meet the eligibility criteria set forth in the Project Operational Manual; and

seek to incorporate them into community and productive alliances, respectively.

- (b) Agricultural transformation: Increased land and labor productivity through fixed investment and improved farm management practices.
- (c) Resilience: Strengthen the capacity of rural producers and community organizations to withstand climate volatility through investments to adapt and mitigate climate change impacts.
- (d) Commercial viability: Productive alliances must verify a minimum level of financial return on their associated business plans to qualify for financing.



- (e) Participatory innovation: Greater collaboration between rural producers and agricultural research to effectively translate scientific advances into improved farm practices, particularly for small-scale producers targeted under the proposed Project.

**21. Component 1 – Capacity Building and Institutional Strengthening (Total Cost: US\$16.5 million; IBRD: US\$16.5 million)** would finance: (a) a communication and dissemination strategy to maximize stakeholder participation, e.g., RCOs and RPOs, department- and municipal-level governments, vulnerable groups (indigenous peoples, women, youth); (b) formation of new and strengthening of existing RCOs and RPOs; (c) capacity-building and upskilling for EMPODERAR,<sup>5</sup> technical service providers, RCOs and RPOs, department and municipal governments and other stakeholders to prepare for participation in subprojects; (d) technical assistance toward the preparation, evaluation and implementation of subprojects to be financed under the Project; and (e) support MDRyT and other Ministries in policy dialogue toward generating options to expand and deepen food security in Bolivia.

**22. Component 2 - Support to Community and Productive Alliances (Total Cost: US\$309.2 million; IBRD: US\$257.4 million)** would provide matching grants to partially finance the implementation of:

- (a) *Community Alliance Subprojects (US\$ 94.4 million)* that comprise small-scale investments in basic infrastructure and services, food security and nutrition enhancement activities, and vulnerability-reduction actions to be implemented by one or more RCOs. The Community Alliance Subprojects, implemented under financing agreements between RCOs and EMPODERAR, would channel necessary technical assistance, on-farm technology and management upskilling to participating RCOs to primarily reduce their vulnerability to both acute and chronic food insecurity.
- (b) *Productive Alliance Subprojects (US\$ 101.8 million)*, implemented under financing agreements between RPOs and EMPODERAR, would comprise of *inter alia*: (i) fixed capital (e.g., plant and equipment, minor small-scale irrigation infrastructure); (ii) working capital and (iii) technical assistance expenditures, to increase domestic agricultural production and productivity, and food availability in local markets, thereby contributing to overall increased food security nationwide. A productive alliance is the mechanism through which RPOs with market potential, commercial partners and technical assistance providers can participate in value chains to improve their productivity by giving them better and more equitable access to markets, technologies, and organizational skills. A business plan is the instrument upon which a productive alliance would be evaluated and supported.
- (c) *Complementary productive infrastructure subprojects (US\$113.0 million)* that consist of municipal-level infrastructure to improve logistics and market access for RCOs and RCOs. These investments would be implemented under financing agreements between EMPODERAR and Autonomous Municipal Governments and/or Autonomous Departmental Governments and would finance municipal public infrastructure needed to achieve the objectives of the Community Alliance Subprojects and Productive Alliance Subprojects. The complementary productive infrastructure would increase logistic efficiency for these community and productive alliances, further contributing to the Government's strategic goal of increased food security.

**23. Component 3 Project Management (Total Cost: US\$25.4 million; IBRD: US\$ 25.4 million)** would finance Goods, Consultant Services, Non-Consultant Services, Project Audits and incremental operating costs to: (a)

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<sup>5</sup> EMPODERAR is the operationally independent unit within MDRyT responsible for the Project implementation and created pursuant to Article 2(b) of the Borrower's Supreme Decree No.29315, dated October 17, 2007.



manage and supervise project implementation; (b) monitor project progress and evaluate achievement of PDO and IO indicators; and (c) support the staffing and necessary installations for the National Coordinating Unit (NCU) and the respective Department-level Operating Units (DOUs).

#### 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

**24. Environmental and Social Risk is Substantial.** The main potential environmental substantial risks associated with the proposed Project are: (a) inappropriate use of pesticides due to the large supply of highly toxic agrochemical products in Bolivia and consequent contamination of soil and water bodies; and (b) inadequate waste management mainly due to the plastic inputs in the adoption of technologies and the lack of waste treatment in rural areas. The main potential environmental moderate risks are: (a) possible displacement of native varieties of agrobiodiversity due to the interest on foreign and GMO crops of some communities; and (b) degradation and fragmentation of natural habitats due to the possibility of implementing subprojects in protected areas. The Social Risk assessed as Substantial is the potential for reproducing child labor practices in the family-based farming activities, particularly given their prevalence in rural areas and indigenous communities. The social risks assessed as low are: (a) potential impacts associated with the labor influx caused by the complementary infrastructure works anticipated as part of the Project; (b) potential for some physical and economic displacement, temporary and/or permanent, as a result of the minor civil works expected in the municipal subprojects (walls, fences, small portions of land, crops, fruit trees, livestock pasture, easements, etc.); and (c) potential loss of indigenous agricultural, gathering and fishing traditional knowledge associated with the Project's promotion of agricultural approaches, some of which may be culturally incompatible with the ones of indigenous groups. These risks may be intensified by a context with limited participation of minoritarian indigenous groups and women, in the decision-making processes affecting production processes. Over the years, the PIU has developed procedures to manage some of these risks. Such procedures will be assessed on an ongoing basis, as part of the Bank's due diligence, and enhanced based on an adaptive management approach to adopt social risk management measures consistent with the ESF.

### E. Implementation

#### Institutional and Implementation Arrangements:

**25.** The proposed Project would be managed and executed by the Ministry of Rural Development and Land (MDRyT), through EMPODERAR. The EMPODERAR NCU would be the Project Implementation Unit and would coordinate, operate, and manage the proposed Project at the central and departmental levels. The NCU would consist of a Project Coordinator supported by a technical team including professional, fiduciary, administrative and technical personnel (including procurement, financial, environment and social specialists), with qualifications and terms of employment satisfactory to the Bank, as set forth in the Project Operational Manual. Nine decentralized departmental operating units (DOUs), which would report to the NCU, would



support local-level project implementation. The DOUs would have a departmental operator, business and infrastructure officers, fiduciary analysts, procurement analysts, environmental and social analysts, organizational development analysts, and support staff. The DOUs would be responsible of facilitating the coordination with local and departmental governments to involve them in the activities oriented to the project implementation in each territory.

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**APPROVAL**

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