

Public

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name:	ELECTRICITY ACCESS RWANDA
Project Number:	2020-0030
Country:	Rwanda
Project Description:	The project is an investment programme of electricity distribution schemes in Rwanda to be implemented in the period 2021-2024. It consists of investments in new low and medium voltage networks to increase electricity access (approx. 190,000 new connections) and investments for the rehabilitation and upgrade of distribution networks to increase capacity, improve grid reliability and enhance operational efficiency.
EIA required:	yes
Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise ¹ :	yes
(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")	

Environmental and Social Assessment

The project is an investment programme of electricity distribution schemes in Rwanda to be implemented in the period 2021-2024; it is split in two components:

- Component 1: Investments in new low voltage (LV) and medium voltage (MV) networks to increase electricity access in the Eastern and South Provinces.
- Component 2: Investments for the rehabilitation and upgrade of distribution networks across the country to increase capacity, improve grid reliability and enhance operational efficiency.

The Programme will contribute to 180,000 new household connections and approx. 9,300 connections for commercial activities. Overall, the investments will lead to approx. 8,000 km of new distribution network (approx. 2,000 km of MV network, 6,000 km of LV network, 1,200 new MV/LV pole-mounted substations and refurbishment of approx. 60 MV/LV enclosed type substations).

¹ Only projects that meet the scope of the Carbon Footprint Exercise, as defined in the EIB draft Carbon Footprint Methodologies, are included, provided estimated emissions exceed the methodology thresholds: 20,000 tonnes CO₂e/year absolute (gross) or 20,000 tonnes CO₂e/year relative (net) – both increases and savings.

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The Programme will be co-financed by the AfDB and the EIB on a parallel basis. Although coordination will be ensured among co-financiers, AfDB and EIB will retain the responsibility to monitor the environmental and social impacts of their respective investments under the Programme.

Environmental Assessment

If located in the EU, the MV and LV electricity distribution facilities under the Programme would fall under Annex II of the EIA Directive but in most of the EU member states would fall below the national EIA exclusion thresholds set out according to art. 4(3) of the EIA Directive. These types of facilities could be however subject to environmental analyses, as appropriate, in the process for the authorization to build and operate.

According to Rwanda legislation, the construction of MV lines is subject to mandatory Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA). As the exact location and route of the Programme's schemes are not yet known, no ESIA's have been prepared so far for any scheme.

The Government of Rwanda (GoR) through the Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA) has prepared an Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) that covers the scope of the proposed Programme and of other power sector investments funded by IDA and AfDB². The ESMF provides an overarching assessment of the E&S baseline, the potential E&S risks and the associated mitigating measures of the Programme. The main potential environmental risks include disturbance to ecosystems, avian and bat collision/electrocution, soil erosion, vegetation clearance, soil/water pollution and generation of solid wastes. These impacts can be avoided/mitigated through planning/design that takes into account environmental criteria as well as sound implementation techniques and monitoring. To this purpose, the ESMF includes guidance for the selection, preparation and implementation of the various schemes in order to avoid or minimize environmental and social risks.

The Rwanda Environment Management Authority (REMA) and the Rwanda Development Board (RDB) are the key reference institutions overseeing the environmental and social aspects of the Programme. They will decide on the scoping of the ESIA's for the Programme's schemes once their exact locations will be known, conduct public hearing when deemed necessary, undertake technical review of the ESIA, issue the ESIA Certificate of Authorization and ensure compliance with the approval conditions during project implementation and operation.

EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise

The source of CO₂ equivalent (CO₂e) emissions for the Programme is the ohmic losses in the network extensions implemented. At completion, the corresponding absolute emissions are estimated at 14.9 kt CO₂e. In terms of relative emissions, the Programme results in a saving of 23.4 kt CO₂e. This is because the network extensions implemented under the Programme result in an overall network loss coefficient remarkably lower than the loss coefficient without the Programme and the resulting decrease of losses overcompensate the increase of losses due to the new demand enabled by the Programme.

Social Assessment

The Programme is expected to affect positively the beneficiary communities by enabling access to and improving quality of the electricity service. This will improve the living conditions for the beneficiaries in various ways such as increased income-generating activities, less indoor air pollution, lower risk of fires, reduced violence against women and

² In particular, Component 2 in the ESMF includes electricity transmission schemes and the rehabilitation of hydropower plants that are not part of the scope of the proposed Programme.

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greater security from street lighting, and better educational performance by children who can read and study for longer periods of time. Based on the ESMF, the Programme has however also the potential for some adverse social impacts.

Resettlement

The construction works may involve temporary loss of access to land or property, as well as loss/damage of livelihoods such as crop, trees and structures. Programme activities are not expected to cause physical resettlement. However, until the exact locations of Programme schemes are determined it is not possible to have the likely number of people who may be affected and the exact nature of the impacts thereon.

The Government of Rwanda (GoR) through the Ministry of Infrastructure (MININFRA) has prepared a Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) providing the general principles that will guide the resettlement operations of the Programme and of other power sector investments funded by IDA and AfDB. The RPF guiding principles include avoiding/minimizing resettlement impacts to the extent possible, ensuring that affected people are meaningfully consulted and that they receive timely compensation so that their standards of living and overall means of livelihood are improved beyond pre-project levels, paying particular attention to gender aspects and the needs of vulnerable segments of communities. Resettlement Action Plans (RAP) conforming to those principles will be prepared at Province level when the exact locations of the Programme schemes are determined.

Occupational and Community Health and Safety

The main potential health and safety risks of the Programme during construction and operation identified in the ESMF include increased prevalence of sexually transmitted infections and gender based violence (GBV) related to the labour influx, air pollution, noise nuisance, traffic disruption, accidents/hazards for both workers and community and exposure to EMF. To prevent and address these potential risks contractors will be contractually bound to conform to codes of conduct on child protection and GBV and to prepare and implement appropriate Health and Safety plans.

As regards EMF, siting/design of the new facilities will be selected so to minimize exposure as far as this is technically feasible and economically viable. The average and peak exposure levels will be in any case within the exposure limits of ICNIRP recommendation.

Labour standards

A Labour Management Procedure (LMP) has been also prepared to facilitate planning and implementation of the project in terms of working conditions. It identifies the main labour requirements and risks associated with the project and help to determine the resources necessary to address project labour issues. This LMP has been prepared following national and international labour standards, Child Labour and employment in general.

The LMP also provides the obligations of employers and employees regarding Occupational Health and Safety according to national legislation.

Conditions related to labour rights, working conditions, including security arrangements, and workers' accommodation in line with EIB's standards will be integrated in bidding documents and in the contracts for the implementation of the projects.

Public Consultation and Stakeholder Engagement

A Stakeholder Engagement Plan has been prepared by the Promoter. It defines technically and culturally appropriate approaches to consultation and disclosure in the various phases of the project.

For the ESMF, stakeholder engagement took place (government and private institutions, academics and researchers, concerned administrative districts officials, potential project

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affected people) using, among others, interviews and focused group discussions. Concerns raised include the compensation of affected assets, the timing of the compensation and the use of land in the right-of way after project completion. Overall, the Programme is well received and the investments for electricity access are considered urgently needed.

The next step is the disclosure of the document, and the organisation of public hearings for communication with the concerned stakeholders. Public hearings will be organised also for the ESIAs (where relevant). For the RPF, as with the ESMF, stakeholder engagement has already started and further consultations are planned during the preparation and implementation of RAPs once the paths the exact location and routes of the MV and LV networks are known.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

Gender

A project Gender Action Plan (GAP) has been developed with support from AfDB and inputs from EIB. The Promoter has committed to have at least 10% women project workers across construction, administration, maintenance, security, and supervision roles but with an ambition of reaching 30% women in the overall workforce. In addition, the GAP commits to ensure that no salary/pay discrimination based on gender takes place, to conduct awareness raising campaigns and fight gender based violence including sexual harassment, exploitation and abuse and to ensure that women and men are equally well equipped in terms of personal protective equipment.

Conclusions and Recommendations

Based on the information available, and with appropriate conditionalities (see below) and monitoring, the Project is expected to be acceptable in environmental and social terms for Bank financing.

The following disbursement conditions will apply:

- Conditions related to labour rights, working conditions, including security arrangements, and workers' accommodation in line with EIB's standards will have to be integrated in the bidding documents and in the contracts for the implementation of the schemes financed by the Bank.
- When relevant, the ESIA and the RAPs satisfactory to the Bank;
- Delivery to the Bank of the authorizations issued by the competent authority, RDB, for the sub-projects requiring an ESIA.