

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: *RESTRUCTURATION DES RESEAUX ELECTRIQUES - BENIN*
Project Number: *2013-0279*
Country: *Benin*
Project Description: *The project consists of electricity distribution network improvements and extensions, and electrification programs to populations that are not served by electricity or have irregular connections. The project targets the areas of Abomey-Calavi municipality and Atlantic department of Benin, which are situated in the outskirts of Cotonou, economic capital of the country.*

EIA required: yes

Annex 2 project. ESIA not required by national legislation or competent authority. ESIA still done on the joint decision of MRI lead financier AFD and the promoter.

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: no

Summary of Environmental and Social Assessment, including key issues and overall conclusion and recommendation

Environmental and social impacts of the project have been examined through an Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) and relevant mitigation measures including responsibilities for implementation have been included in a Project Environmental and Social Management Plan (ESMP). The assessment concluded that the main negative impacts are limited construction disturbances at implementation stage and impacts of power lines to the landscape. The project is not expected to require any involuntary resettlement. These impacts are typical to any electricity distribution project and can be mitigated with appropriate project environmental and social management systems in place. The project is therefore considered to be acceptable for the Bank's financing in environmental and social terms.

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The project is a mutual reliance project with the *Agence Française de Développement* (AFD) in the Lead. The project E&S standards are those of AFD.

The project is situated in a semi-populated area, where according to the ESIA there are no protected species or sensitive ecosystems. The main sub-transmission lines of the project (63 kV) are implemented through underground cables, reducing the permanent impact of these structures. The impacts of 15 kV distribution lines (40 km) and low voltage lines and cables (650 km) will be mitigated by measures described in the ESMP. The most significant risks and impacts to the environment are disturbances during construction and possible oil leakages from construction machinery and transformers during construction/operation.

The AFD carbon emission assessment defines the project to be neutral towards carbon dioxide emissions, as the emissions from increased electricity consumption/production are

compensated through distribution loss reductions, reduction in fuel use of private gensets and gasoline lamps.

Overall, environmental impacts are, as appropriately mitigated, considered acceptable.

Social Assessment

The project will be partly situated on urban/periurban areas, and in such areas the medium voltage lines will be constructed underground to minimize the social impacts and obstruction to population. In rural areas, overhead lines will be used. Land acquisition for the substations has been completed and did not require any involuntary resettlement nor livelihood compensation. Stakeholder engagement forms part of the ESMP. After the period of the construction nuisance, the social impacts of this electrification project are strongly positive.

Other Environmental and Social Aspects

The ESMP is a living document and as such it is planned to be updated close to the start of the works.