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# IDA RESULTS COMPENDIUM

IDA18: Towards 2030



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IDA18: TOWARDS 2030

Investing in Growth, Resilience and Opportunity

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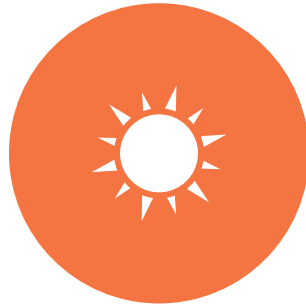
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## CLIMATE



Managing the unavoidable  
Avoiding the unmanageable

## Bangladesh: Brightening Horizons and Cleaner Air for Rural Communities



### Story Highlights

- With 4.2 million solar home systems, Bangladesh has one of the world's largest domestic solar power programs
- The country is scaling up use of clean and renewable energy through solar irrigation pumps, solar mini-grids and improved cookstoves and other renewable energy options
- Since 2003, the World Bank is helping Bangladesh increase access to electricity through renewable energy

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In Bangladesh, rural life used to come to a grinding halt after sunset due to lack of access to electricity. Even for those with access, frequent power cuts led to loss of economic productivity, reduced study time for children, and women often felt unsafe walking through the streets. What did Bangladesh do to change the situation?



To provide electricity to remote and rural areas where grid electricity could not be reached easily, Bangladesh turned to renewable energy. Started in 2003, the Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Development (RERED) project provided access to electricity to 14 percent of the country's population. Through a public-private partnership program with Bangladesh's Infrastructure Development Company Limited (IDCOL), 4.2 million solar home systems have been installed in rural households and remote shoals and islands. Now, the World Bank is helping Bangladesh to expand the use and access of clean and renewable energy through other interventions such as solar irrigation pumps and solar mini-grids, as well as improved cookstoves.

In April 2018, the World Bank committed an additional \$55 million to the Second Rural Electrification and Renewable Energy Development (RERED II) Project to install 1,000 solar irrigation pumps, 30 solar mini-grids, and about 4 million improved cookstoves in rural areas.

The project has already built 10 solar mini-grids in remote areas, including islands and shoals to provide grid quality electricity. The financing will also help increase use of solar irrigation pumps, a low-cost technology that is well suited to the country's flat terrain and abundant sunshine. This switch from diesel pumps will decrease greenhouse gas emissions and save foreign exchange by reducing the government's subsidy on diesel imports.

On top of that, \$20 million from the Green Climate Fund will scale up the use of improved cookstoves, which emit 90 percent less carbon monoxide and use half as much firewood as a traditional cookstove.

The path towards becoming an upper-middle income country will be brighter for Bangladesh. The expansion of renewable energy will help reduce poverty, improve the environment, create jobs, and open new opportunities for rural people.

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/06/05/brightening-horizons-cleaner-air-for-bangladeshs-rural-communities>

June 5, 2018

## Burundi: Restoring Vital Landscapes for Sustainable Growth



In a country where 90 percent of the population relies on natural resources for food, income, and jobs—especially the coffee sector—efforts to restore degraded landscapes are also restoring hope for a better future.

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In Burundi, coffee is a way of life. Over 600,000 families—half of the country’s households—rely on the coffee sector for their livelihoods. It accounts for 90 percent of the country’s foreign exchange. Yet, severe land degradation has led to a decrease in coffee production from 40,000 tons in the mid-1990s to as low as 5,700 tons in 2003. The World Bank estimates that land degradation costs Burundi 4 percent of its GDP annually. This has deeply affected people already made vulnerable by natural disasters, pollution, and sociopolitical tensions.

### **Managing natural assets, together**

Land and lives are being transformed by innovative approaches piloted by the \$4.2 million Sustainable Coffee Landscapes Project. Financed by the Global Environment Facility and

implemented by Burundi's Ministry of Environment, Agriculture and Livestock, the project has benefited from interagency collaboration on coffee certification, parks management, production of shade-grown coffee, sector regulation, research, and training. Together, agencies have empowered communities who are now changing how Burundi's natural assets are managed.

"Communities have been totally involved in the management and preservation of the nature that surrounds them, and now understand that it is for their own benefit," explains Leonidas Nzigiyimpa, Chief Warden of the Burundi Office for the Protection of the Environment and Recipient of the 2018 National Geographic Buffett Awards for Leadership in Conservation. "The future of Burundi rests on the preservation of its nature."

Since 2013, the project has reached more than 18,700 beneficiaries and has placed over 4,400 hectares (ha) under sustainable land management practices. More than 9,600 households, nearly half headed by women, have adopted shade-grown coffee. This form of polyculture brings multiple wins for the environment, improves soil fertility, diversifies farm products, and boosts income and food security.

The project has also piloted a community-based agritourism program on sustainable coffee and a nascent ecotourism initiative. The Bururi Forest Reserve in Southern Burundi has hired members of the indigenous Batwa community living nearby to help protect chimpanzees and guide tourists, as well as legally harvest food and medicinal plants from the forest. With these earnings, the community has been able to save enough to purchase land, marking the first time in Burundi's history that Batwas have been able to do so independently.

"We were enemies of the forest reserve of Bururi, but now, we are its best protectors," says community member Odette Nkurikiye. "We now have jobs and have even bought land. We want to tap into the opportunities offered by our restored landscapes and stay out of poverty."

### **Scaling up resilience with IDA18**

As this project ends in 2018, Burundi and the World Bank aim to build on its successes. Under IDA18, the \$30 million Landscape Restoration and Resilience Project will scale up the restoration of degraded landscapes and support the sustainable management of the Bururi Forest Reserve and the Kibira and Ruvubu National Parks. It is expected to restore 90,000 ha, benefit 80,000 households, and increase land productivity in targeted landscapes by 20 percent.

## Central African Republic: Powering Up the Energy Sector with Solar



With one of the lowest energy access rates in Africa and a weak transmission network, Central African Republic is investing in its energy sector to stimulate growth. Its first utility-scale solar power plant holds the promise of a brighter future.

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In May 2018, the highest authorities in the Central African Republic (CAR), along with development partners and economic operators, attended a ceremony in the town of Danzy about 20 kilometers outside the capital Bangui. There, the first stone was laid for a new 25-megawatt (MW) grid-connected photovoltaic (PV) solar power plant with 25 megawatt hours (MWh) of battery storage.

Central African president, Faustin Archange Touadera, attended the launch ceremony.

“The main concern for Central African economic operators is the lack of electricity, which prevents businesses from being able to store and process their products,” he noted. “One of the solutions recommended to mitigate this lack of electricity is solar energy. I would like to thank the World Bank for agreeing to finance the establishment of a 70-hectare solar farm.”

## **A first for CAR, a first for Africa**

Under IDA18, the World Bank is preparing to finance the first phase of the project, which consists of building a 25 MW solar PV plant with battery storage of a similar capacity, strengthening transmission and distribution networks, and supporting sector reforms.

The project also will prepare the site for the second phase targeting an additional 15 MW and will help improve the financial health of the state-owned company, Énergie Centrafricaine (ENERCA). Technical assistance will promote the development of solar solutions for secondary cities and rural areas, notably by assessing the use of solar panels for homes and public buildings.

“It’s a 40 MW project with an equivalent storage capacity—the first project on the African continent to install battery capacity that matches the capacity of the solar panels. In addition, the project will strengthen the transmission network that originates in Boali and the distribution network in Bangui,” explained Jean-Christophe Carret, World Bank Country Director for CAR.

## **Strengthening the energy sector**

The Danzy solar project is a critical investment in CAR’s stunted energy sector. According to Gontran Djono Ahaba, Minister of Development of Energy and Hydraulic Resources, “The recurrent politico-military crises that have peppered the history of the Central African Republic have substantially derailed all efforts undertaken to promote economic and social development, resulting in 40 years of delayed investment in electricity production and distribution infrastructure.”

Only 8 percent of CAR’s population has access to electricity, mainly in the capital. Access rates are 2 percent in rural areas and 35 percent in Bangui, home to a million people. The current installed generation capacity is just 23 MW, with 19 MW coming from the Boali 1 and 2 hydroelectric plants.

In addition, over a third of all electricity produced is lost along transmission lines, and bill collection stands at 65 percent for the 30,000 subscribed households in Bangui. Clients pay a low rate for electricity, \$0.14 (CFAF 65) per kilowatt hour, which does not allow ENERCA to recover its costs and forces the government to subsidize the company.

With the construction of the Danzy solar plant, CAR hopes to open up the solar energy market and attract private investors for future expansion.

## Côte D'ivoire: eAgriculture Solutions for the Digital Age



As its digital environment continues to boom, Côte d'Ivoire aims to expand services to farmers in rural communities. Wider, more affordable coverage and dedicated communication on agricultural markets and the weather can boost productivity and climate resilience.

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The Côte d'Ivoire is the world's top producer and exporter of cocoa beans and raw cashew nuts. Its agriculture sector accounts for 22 percent of GDP and more than 75 percent of exports, but a multitude of challenges hinder growth—from low agricultural productivity, high cost of inputs, and huge post-harvest losses to inadequate use and lack of modern farming techniques. Accurate and up-to-date agricultural data is also in short supply. The latest available National Agricultural Census dates back to 2001.

To help close these gaps, the Ivorian government has launched a national eAgriculture strategy. It seeks to modernize the country's agricultural sector, reduce food imports, and boost exports of cocoa, coffee, and other produce through the integrated use of information, communication, and technology (ICT) and its burgeoning digital environment.

## **A digital revolution for agriculture**

Côte d'Ivoire has gone from one of the world's weakest ICT countries—placing 130 out of 142 countries in the World Economic Forum's 2012 Global Information Technology Report—to one of Africa's rising stars. In 2016, it ranked 72 out of 139 countries thanks to strengthened legislation and regulations that support the dissemination of information and communication technologies within the economy. The mobile connection penetration (number of total SIM cards divided by total population) reached 126 percent at the end of 2017, compared to 89 percent for the West Africa region and 77 percent for sub-Saharan Africa.

While many Ivorians have two or even three phone numbers, some rural populations are still offline. The eAgriculture strategy aims to build on the country's robust digital growth to extend mobile services and data sharing to rural smallholder farmers. By increasing their connectivity to the real-time market and weather information they need to make critical planting and selling decisions, farmers will be able to improve their productivity, climate resilience, and income.

## **Connecting farmers and services**

The World Bank approved \$70 million in IDA funding in May 2018 for the eAgriculture Project. It seeks to upgrade digital infrastructure and equipment, modernize agricultural information systems, and develop digital applications for agriculture, among other activities. It expects to benefit over six million smallholder farmers—nearly a quarter of Côte d'Ivoire's total population of 24 million people.

According to Pierre Laporte, World Bank Country Director for Cote d'Ivoire, the agriculture sector is an important driver of Côte d'Ivoire's economy, but it has had only a modest impact on income growth and poverty reduction in rural areas due to its sensitivity to fluctuations in international prices.

“This project will ensure farmers have timely information on key aspects of the agriculture value chain, such as the seed market, and public institutions can collect agricultural and rural statistics for more efficient sector policies and strategies,” explains Laporte.

Improved connectivity will also enable farmers to access weather reports and other hydro-meteorological services to adapt their agricultural practices, while public services and communities vulnerable to the impacts of climate change will be able to monitor water supply systems in real time.

## Ghana: Improving Access to Power Through Off-Grid Solar Energy and Mini-Grids



Inhabitants of Agyakorpe watching Television using solar power.

About 100,000 inhabitants in nine regions of Ghana, were introduced to solar energy solutions, including 18,585 remote school students. Energy solutions were also brought into rural health centers, with the impact of reduced use of carbon-based fuels such as kerosene or firewood and paving the way for a less carbon-intensive economy.

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### Challenge

Rural areas of Ghana face a gap of access to service provision due to the geographical remoteness, high cost of grid connection, low ability to pay for services, and limited access to providers of renewable energy solutions.

### Approach

To address these challenges, the Ghana Energy Development and Access Project (GEDAP) considered different technologies that were sustainable and affordable, including the use of



micro hydroelectric and wind, among others. The project identified the use of mini-hydro and wind generation, which were later changed to all solar, to take advantage of the economies of scale and simplicity in its maintenance to make it affordable and resilient. Once identified, the project assisted in creating a new legal and regulatory framework for renewable energy, and initiated efforts to develop the local market of service providers as well as support access to financing with local financiers. The enactment of the Renewable Energy Law supported the activities of other donors who are now actively working on this issue. Also, the use of output subsidies to poor households provided adequate and targeted capital to address the issue of affordability in the program. To accommodate these changes, the World Bank responded flexibly by restructuring the Global Environment Facility (GEF) and the Global Partnership of Output-Based Aid (GPOBA) components multiple times, to reflect the learning experience during implementation and meet the demands/needs of the beneficiaries. GEDAP also included five pilot mini-grids using solar energy to provide electricity to isolated communities in islands created by the Volta Lake and the Volta River, which introduced prepaid metering to address the issue of payments.

## **Results**

Specifically, the five-pilot mini-grids provide 24/7 electricity to about 10,000 beneficiaries for the first time, allowing these fishing communities to use electricity to improve their livelihoods. The project was commissioned on November 2017 by the Ministry of Energy, and the communities are now enjoying of other productive uses of electricity, such as public illumination, creation of small businesses, and lighting for schools.

## **Bank Group Contribution**

Currently IDA has contributed to the program GEDAP \$220 million, and this program was supported by the \$5.5 million grant from GEF to introduce renewable energy in the market and to facilitate impact for the poor, the GPOBA also provides an additional grant of \$4.55 million. The GEDAP program coordinated all implementing activities with all the stakeholders, including rural banks, rural communities, and retailers of renewable energy products with the overall government structure to ensure required legislation.

## **Partners**

The program worked closely with other initiatives explored by donors, in particular with the UN System, to obtain lessons learned from other pilot activities to generate sustainable solutions. In addition, the Project is co-financed by Swiss Economic Cooperation Organization (SECO) and African Development Bank (AfDB).

## **Moving Forward**

The program in Ghana took additional measures to ensure that the legal and regulatory framework was set up to enable the development of this nascent industry of renewable energy. The system that were set up under this Project is now contributing to other donors such as SECO and AfDB who continued working on additional programs on access and renewable energy. It is expected that in the future, the learning generated by retailers, the financial system, and more importantly, the wider population, create the incentives for additional and stronger private sector participation in the sector. IDA is processing a new technical assistance credit to support the enabling framework to make mini grids financially sustainable, with the support in regulation from the Ministry of Energy, Energy Commission and the Public Utility Regulatory Commission.

## **Beneficiaries**

The mini-grid has given Agatha Abotchie, a seamstress in Aglakope, one of the Volta Lake Islands the opportunity to work during evening hours. Prior to the project, she sewed without electricity. Now she can sew at night, and is also able to use an electric iron, which makes her work neat and presentable for her customers. Agatha is intending to buy a motor to turn her manual sewing machine into an electric one, speeding-up the pace of her business.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2018/03/16/improving-access-to-power-through-off-grid-solar-energy-and-mini-grids>

March 16, 2018

## Guinea: Investing in Agricultural Productivity Yields Shared Prosperity



Rice is a staple food in Guinea, but low yields make the country dependent on rice imports it can ill afford. The nation, and farmers, are benefiting from better seeds and innovations in crop management.

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Ousmane Diallo is a 35-year-old university graduate with a degree in sociology. He owns an eight-hectare farm in Mandiana, one of the most remote locations in Guinea (over 700 kilometers east of the capital Conakry) and better known for mining than farming. Over 80 percent of the local population works in the mining industry. But not Diallo.

Facing limited job prospects after university, he decided to invest in agriculture because he “understood the agricultural potential of the region.”

He started in 2014 with rice, maize, and vegetables to meet high demand, but poor seed quality led to poor harvests. He was able to turn to the World Bank-financed West Africa Agricultural

Productivity Program (WAAPP) for support, and today, Diallo can produce two tons of rice per hectare, compared to less than half of that (800 kilograms) four years ago.

### **Improving rice seeds and yields**

Guinea is among 13 West African countries participating in WAAPP, a regional project that aims to generate and disseminate improved agricultural technologies and intensify their adoption in sectors considered a priority. For Guinea, that is rice.

Since 2011, WAAPP has helped Guineans adopt new crop varieties, improve crop management practices, and modernize small-scale food processing technologies. It has also strengthened national seed production and distribution systems to ensure the availability and use of good quality, certified seeds.

Through an initial IDA grant of \$9 million, the program in Guinea has contributed to improving the living conditions of seed producers, who have been able to realize an additional GNF 4 million (\$440) in income per hectare of rice each season. This represents a significant amount given the fact that the minimum monthly wage is GNF 440,000 (\$45). Over 120,000 direct beneficiaries (40 percent women) have seen their incomes rise by 30 percent, and laborers and local artisans beyond Guinea's borders have benefitted from increased employment opportunities.

Rice marketing operations are estimated to have generated about GNF 10 billion (\$1.1 million). The use of improved seeds has created a surplus of more than 85,000 tons of unhusked paddy rice worth \$14 million, equivalent to 10 percent of Guinea's annual rice imports.

### **Cultivating wealth**

With the revenue he has gained from agriculture, Diallo has diversified. He obtained a loan for GNF 26 million (\$2,800) to buy a water packaging machine and, now, supplies drinking water to several mining companies. He employs dozens of people full time and seasonally.

"People thought I was crazy for getting involved in agriculture, but now I am proving them wrong. My objective is to inspire and train other young people," says Diallo, who plans to industrialize his operations and expand into livestock breeding.

Guinea is consolidating its gains in the rice sector and is now turning its attention to other agricultural sectors. The World Bank has provided additional funding of \$23 million from IDA18

to support innovations in cassava, soybeans, and other vegetable crops, as well as goat and poultry breeding and fish farming.

## Haiti: Rapidly Assessing the Impact of Hurricane Matthew



Streets in Haiti after Hurricane Matthew.

The rapid assessment allowed the identification of populations in need of urgent assistance, including over 30,000 children in affected schools.

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### Synopsis

The Haitian population is one of the most exposed in the world to natural disasters, including hurricanes, floods, and earthquakes. The number of disasters per kilometer tops the average for other Caribbean countries. The Germanwatch Global Climate Risk Index ranked Haiti third in the world in 1995–2014 for impacts from climatic events, and the country is among the ten zones in the world considered most vulnerable to climate change. In 2008, tropical storms and hurricanes caused losses estimated at 15 percent of GDP. The earthquake on January 12, 2010, killed 220,000 people, displaced 1.5 million people, and destroyed the equivalent of 120 percent of GDP. These disasters tend to disproportionately affect the poorest and most marginal populations, those settling in the flood zones and coastal areas particularly affected by tropical storms. Almost 50 percent of damage and losses to the productive sectors have been concentrated in the agricultural sector. Based on available historic data, weather-related

disasters are estimated to have caused damage and losses in Haiti amounting to about two percent of GDP on average per year from 1975 to 2012.

### **Challenge**

Hurricane Matthew struck Haiti on October 4, 2016, as a Category 4 hurricane. The combined effects of wind, coastal flooding and rain caused heavy flooding, landslides, and the destruction of a great deal of infrastructure, agricultural crops and natural ecosystems. In all, 546 people were killed, more than 175,500 people sought refuge in shelters, and about 1.4 million people required immediate humanitarian assistance. An assessment of the damage and losses had to be carried out very quickly to unlock financial resources from the World Bank Group (WBG) and the International Monetary Fund to provide the assistance needed by those affected by the disaster.

### **Approach**

The WBG, in partnership with the Inter-American Development Bank, closely supported the client through data gathering from field visits, phone surveys, and satellites and drones, as well as simulations through modelling. A full report assessing the damage and losses was delivered less than two weeks after the request, a task that usually takes at least three months. This rapid assessment covered all affected sectors and was the first multi-sectoral evaluation of the socioeconomic impacts of the hurricane as well as of its macroeconomic effects and impacts on individual and household income.

### **Results**

Matthew was a Category 4 hurricane, an event predicted to occur only once every 56 years. It inflicted damage and losses in Haiti estimated at the equivalent of 22 percent of GDP. Specific impacts of the hurricane included the following:

- The disaster affected over 2 million people, about 20 percent of Haiti's population, primarily in the poorest regions of the country.
- The hurricane resulted in flooding, landslides, and extensive destruction of infrastructure and livelihoods.
- The agriculture and housing/urban sectors were the hardest hit, with up to 90 percent of crops and livestock lost in some areas.
- Thousands of structures were damaged, and key roads and bridges were washed away.
- It's estimated that over 450,000 children were out of school.

- The vaccine cold chain was destroyed.
- A sharp increase in suspected cholera cases was recorded in affected departments.

Assessing in record time the damage and losses, as well as identifying the most affected sectors and the potential human costs, led to rapid reallocation of about \$50 million from the Bank's ongoing portfolio. The enabled responses included:

- Rehabilitation of roads and bridges, including the major bridge to the country's south.
- Schools were repaired, and refurnished, semi-permanent school shelters built, school children fed, and water treatment kits and school kits provided.
- Rapid response to cholera was strengthened.
- Emergency sanitation and chlorination water systems were implemented.
- Irrigations systems were rehabilitated, inputs for the next agricultural season were provided and seeds given to 2,500 farmers.
- Some entrepreneurs received cash transfers to cover damages and losses in the coffee, cocoa, and honey value chains.
- Portable solar lamps and solar household systems were made available, some distribution grids were rehabilitated, hurricane preparedness was strengthened, and energy infrastructure vulnerability was reduced.

These rapid interventions not only helped to minimize losses in the winter harvest and prevent widespread famine, they also helped contain the cholera outbreak and limit migration and violence.

### **Bank Group Contribution**

The World Bank, through the International Development Association (IDA), reallocated \$50 million from ongoing projects to the affected sectors. In addition, \$100 million under the IDA Crisis Response Window were mobilized for four additional financings to relaunch heavily damaged agriculture, restore connectivity through transport infrastructure and provide a robust cholera response.

### **Partners**

Bank support focused on sectors with limited technical capacity, and particularly those sectors with counterparts in the government. The support promoted local ownership of the assessment



by each of the line ministries while ensuring implementation of a standardized methodology. The rapid assessment benefited from joint support from the Inter-American Development Bank teams, FAO, UNICEF, and UNEP. In addition, the IMF mobilized \$41 million under their Rapid Credit Facility to help with urgent balance of payments needs in the aftermath of Matthew.

### **Beneficiaries**

The rapid assessment allowed the identification of populations in need of urgent assistance, including over 30,000 children in affected schools. The assessment also provided information for effective targeting of rehabilitation efforts: about 45 school roofs and school grounds were rehabilitated, 60 semi-permanent shelters were built, and 4,000 pieces of school furniture (benches, desks, blackboards, etc.) were distributed, enabling schools to reopen and to increase their capacity in the short and medium term. In addition, 16,000 student kits (bag, books, notebooks, pens), 900 teacher kits (including dictionaries, compasses, rulers, maps), and 151 school kits (including blackboards and chalk) were distributed. Further efforts included providing 22,000 students in 90 schools in affected regions (Grand'Anse, Sud, and Nippes) with a daily snack and hot meal, as well as water-treatment and sanitation kits, soap, de-worming medication, vitamin A and cholera-prevention hygiene training.

Subsequent interventions targeted 1.5 million beneficiaries in areas with limited health service delivery infrastructure. Isolated populations in the southern peninsula benefited from the provision of health services through mobile clinics, and in Nippes, Grande-Anse and Sud, 300,000 children benefited from the restoration of basic infrastructure for immunization and vaccine cold chains.

Cash transfers and in-kind support will also be provided to 325 micro, small and medium-sized entrepreneurs. The cash transfers and in-kind support will help the beneficiaries recover from losses and continue productive activities in their respective value chain, i.e., coffee (Grand'Anse and Southeast); vetiver (South); and honey (Nippes).

### **Moving Forward**

This rapid damage and losses assessment fed into the more thorough Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA) undertaken under the leadership of the Haitian Ministry of Planning, with support from the World Bank Group, the European Union, the Inter-American Development Bank, UNDP and various UN agencies. The PDNA was finalized in early January 2017 and

launched by the President of the Republic in early February 2017. More importantly, this rapid assessment was instrumental in drawing up the needed framework and quickly moving from emergency response to recovery. Finally, this rapid assessment served as an important input to the preparation of the Bank's first financing to reach the Board post-Hurricane Matthew. An International Development Agency education grant of \$30 million to maintain access to quality education in the areas most affected by Hurricane Matthew, delivered to the Board approximately five weeks after the disaster, was approved in November 2016.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2017/10/20/rapidly-assessing-the-impact-of-hurricane-matthew-in-haiti>

October 20, 2017

## Malawi: Boosting Climate Resilience and Farming Practices with Irrigation



The largest IDA investment ever made in Malawi is helping to transform agricultural productivity through irrigation, lay the foundations for commercialization, and improve the management of natural resources in the Shire Valley.

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Malawi is home to 17.6 million people, 85 percent of whom live in rural areas and mostly engage in low productivity, rain-fed subsistence agriculture. Smallholder farmers produce 75 percent of Malawi's agricultural output—a sector that represents 30 percent of GDP.

Lives and livelihoods are hinged on the short rainy season from November to March. When the rains come late, fall too hard, or stop early, agricultural output and food security suffer nationwide. Even with its rivers and Lake Malawi, the second largest lake in Africa, the availability and reliability of surface water in Malawi varies both between wet and dry seasons and from year to year. Infrastructure for water storage is low even by regional standards.

Overcoming the economic impacts of climate and water shocks is especially important in the disaster-prone districts of the Shire Valley in southern Malawi, where over 80 percent of the population lives below the national poverty line, and frequent floods and droughts pose the threat of famine.

### **Unlocking the Shire Valley's potential**

Yet, the Shire Valley's fertile soils have potential—one that large scale commercial sugar estates are realizing thanks to commercial irrigation. The Government of Malawi seeks to unlock development in the area and take better advantage of the private sector's presence and the area's proximity to Malawi's commercial hubs of Blantyre and Tete, and the Nacala railroad in Mozambique.

The Shire Valley Transformation Program aims to boost Malawi's agricultural productivity through irrigation, lay the foundations for commercialization, and improve the management of natural resources in the Chikwawa and Nsanje districts of the Shire Valley. IDA18 funding of \$160 million plus \$5.6 million from the Global Environment Facility Trust Fund are supporting the first phase of the three-phase, 14-year program, estimated at a total cost of \$560 million.

The overall program will provide irrigation to over 40,000 hectares by gravity-fed water delivery, eliminating the need for electricity for pumping water from the Shire River. It will increase agricultural production, provide drinking water services, and improve the sustainable management of natural resources, including wetlands and protected areas, while enhancing tourism potential.

"We have waited all our lives for this project... the valley can finally be transformed into the most productive agricultural region of the country and provide better livelihoods to the 48,000 benefitting households," says Paramount Chief Lundu of Chikwawa.

### **Beyond subsistence farming**

With more reliable access to water and support, Malawi hopes to take agriculture beyond the food security agenda to commercial agricultural investments that will sustainably pull people out of poverty.

"The beauty of the whole program is that it will engage the smallholder farmers to modernize and commercialize agriculture. We ultimately anticipate a half billion-dollar benefit to the

economy,” says Joseph Mwanamvekha, Malawi’s Minister of Agriculture, Irrigation, and Water Development.

The program’s first phase will deliver modern, sustainable irrigation services and support services in agriculture, aquaculture, and livestock production. It will help farmers secure land and water tenure and assist them in various aspects of developing commercial farming. Crop diversification away from sugarcane is expected to create more opportunities for agro-processing enterprises and traders.

## Nigeria: Lagos Shows Africa the Way Forward in Urban Transport



With a metropolitan population approaching 23 million, Lagos is the economic engine of Nigeria and one of the largest cities on the African continent. Rapid growth, unfortunately, has come with a myriad of urban transport challenges. To get around, most residents rely on the thousands of yellow mini-buses that ply the streets—the infamous “Danfos”—and on a growing supply of three-wheelers. These limited options, combined with endemic congestion, make commuting in Lagos a slow, unreliable, and expensive endeavor.

But this entrepreneurial city cannot afford to be stuck in traffic. Things started moving in 2008, when Lagos introduced Africa’s first Bus Rapid Transit (BRT) corridor with technical support from the World Bank under the Lagos Urban Transport Project. The corridor was referred to as BRT-lite, a local adaptation that did not apply all the “classical” features of a BRT (level loading, fancy stations) but was well integrated with the local environment and became immediately successful. In fact, the operator was able to recoup its capital investment in the bus fleet in 18 months even without banning competitor services. The BRT services demonstrated that improving the erstwhile chaotic system was indeed possible.

Building on this success, Lagos has taken steps to improve and expand the reach of the BRT. The Second Lagos Urban Transport Project (LUTP2) [1], supported jointly by the World Bank and the French Development Agency, provided about \$325 million in 2009 toward building a 13-km extension of the BRT corridor between Mile 12 and the satellite town of Ikorodu. In addition to the BRT infrastructure, the project financed the rehabilitation and widening of the road from four to six lanes, the construction of pedestrian overpasses, a bus depot, terminals, a road bridge, measures to enhance flood resilience, as well as improved interchange and transfer facilities.

A fleet of over 300 buses serve the route. Services are provided by a private operator who takes full operational and commercial risks, on a 10-year contract with the Lagos Metropolitan Area Transport Authority (LAMATA). Three distinct services are operated along the corridor according to a service plan which LAMATA reassesses on a regular basis. To facilitate boarding, the buses have lower floors and are equipped with ramps for persons with limited mobility. Journey times have reduced from 45 to 30 minutes for over 200,000 daily commuters, and the number of people who can access Lagos' largest market area within 45 minutes has grown by 65%. Public transport expenditure by poor households along the route in real terms has fallen by 31%; CO<sub>2</sub> emissions on the corridor have declined by 8.5%, even while overall traffic has increased 43%; and road accidents have reduced significantly.

We had the chance to see first-hand how these relatively modest interventions are helping transform lives in Lagos. Four key successes really caught our attention.

First, on a technical level, the project has met and exceeded its development objectives, showing that there is no substitute for a well-conceived project managed by a competent implementing agency like LAMATA.

Second, the project is beginning to change the face and image of Lagos itself. Two of the project's bus terminals, Ikeja and TBS, have created a distinctive iconography for the city, and project an image of what Lagos might become with well-conceived and well-implemented infrastructure. They use state-of-the-art system management and security monitoring equipment and techniques.

Third, the project has also allowed LAMATA, the implementing agency, to mature. The key test of an institution is whether it can prove its strength, relevance, and longevity beyond the tenure

of a single individual or leadership team. It looks like LAMATA has earned its stripes: the agency, created by law in 2006, has undergone two changes in political leadership (2008 and 2015) and its first large-scale management change in 2016, yet continues to deliver efficiently and professionally.

Lastly, LUTP2 reminds us that urban transport projects can only be successful if they are:

- Comprehensive: projects should address land use-transport integration and promote multi-modal integration
- Continuous: plans, planning data, and tools have to be updated on a regular basis
- Cooperative: all stakeholders need to be involved, which requires a solid communications plan and stakeholder analysis
- Connected: projects should align with long-term transport and urban development plans
- Championed: support and ownership at the highest political level are instrumental
- Incremental: flexibility in the design is important as it allows project teams to scale up interventions incrementally, if and when needed. In the case of Lagos, the success of BRT-lite, implemented within 18 months, created awareness and appreciation of the concept, and made it politically and technically possible to embark on a more ambitious agenda as reflected under LUTP2.

Following the success of LUTP 2, LAMATA has developed a long-term vision for urban transport in Lagos, which will allow people to travel around in a much more dignified, safe, and comfortable way. Moving forward, the focus is on formalizing the informal sector, utilizing Intelligent Transport Systems (ITS) to implement integrated fare collection and public information systems, and creating new bus corridors and terminals. The Bank stands ready to support this laudable agenda.

Blog by Roger Gorham, Benedict L.J. Eijbergen, and Ajay Kumar.

<https://blogs.worldbank.org/transport/print/urban-transport-lagos-shows-africa-way-forward-again>

August 11, 2017



## Nigeria: Solar Mini Grids to Provide Energy for All by 2030



Bisanti villagers in Nigeria appreciating first time access to reliable, affordable and sustainable electricity through the solar mini grid system.

Who would have imagined an internship with an oil company in the Niger Delta could lead to a solar startup? For Ifeanyi Orajaka, Chuka Eze and Ikechukwu Onyekwelu, it turned out to be just that.

In their 20s, they are the co-founders of Green Village Electricity (GVE) Projects Limited —a company that has been providing electricity access to remote and rural parts of Nigeria through solar photo voltaic (PV) solar mini grids since 2012.

The trio began their journey in 2006 while they were interns at Shell Petroleum Company in the Niger Delta. Their work took them to remote villages, where people still lived without electricity access, despite being in an oil-rich region. These communities relied on kerosene lamps and candles for light and had to go to the village market to charge their mobile phones.

Orajaka, Eze and Onyekwelu felt compelled to change this. Today, their company GVE has 40 employees and serves 5,800 households through their various mini-grid projects. They aim to install over 200 mini grids by 2020.

Our team had an opportunity to meet these young entrepreneurs during a visit to the village of Bisanti, which has a solar mini grid installed by GVE. With a population of just 200 households (or about 1600 people), Bisanti's economy largely depends on farming and running small convenience stores. Until a couple of years ago, only a handful of these households had access to electricity - but even that was through petrol-powered generators. A majority were dependent on kerosene lamps, candles and firewood. Lack of electricity was hurting residential and commercial activities, especially the processing of agro-products such as maize and cassava. The villagers had no idea that the sun, which beat down on their roofs every day could actually be used as an energy source that could transform the way they lived and worked. That's when GVE stepped in.

In 2015, GVE installed a 40 kWp solar mini-grid pilot project in collaboration with the Bank of Industry Nigeria (BOI)/United Nations Development Program (UNDP) and the Institute of Electrical Electronics Engineers (IEEE) in Bisanti. Utilizing a pay-as-you-go platform, the project provides electricity to all 200 households in the community. It helps keep streetlights on along the main street of the village, which ensures safety for women and children, while shops and businesses stay open longer. The project also focuses on capacity building by training locals to oversee the daily operation of the site.

"We are proud of the impact our company could have on people's lives," said Orajaka. "Our business model allows us to make profit while providing significant returns to our investors. Over the next few years, we envision GVE serving 3.6 million people, which represents 2% of the Nigerian population and becoming a major player in the West African market."

The success of GVE's mini grid projects in villages like Bisanti is powering Nigeria's progress toward universal energy access by 2030. To support this goal, the country is also taking steps to ensure it provides comprehensive regulations and an enabling environment for mini grid developers.

The Nigerian Rural Electrification Agency (REA) is playing a key role in this transformation. Through a 5-year Nigeria Electrification Project (NEP) that utilizes a \$350 million loan from the

World Bank, REA will support the development of mini-grid projects by the private sector, serving at least 300,000 households and 30,000 local enterprises in close to 10,000 communities.

The emergent mini grid sector in Nigeria is poised to grow rapidly with at least 7 domestic companies other than GVE developing mini grids that represent a pipeline of over 1,000 projects. Local companies with large power requirements, such as those providing telecom and agricultural services, are also expected to be prospective mini grid developers. International mini grid companies like Husk Power and Powerhive and global conglomerates like GE, ABB, Siemens, Schneider Electric are also exploring the the potential for mini grids in Nigeria.

REA has also launched an initiative called “Energizing Economies” that promotes mini-grid development in areas that have the potential to bolster the country’s economy with the right infrastructure and are chosen based on the level of commercial activity and their role in increasing local production of goods, which point to a high demand for electricity.

Blog by Sunita Chikkatur Dubey and Ashish Shrestha

<https://blogs.worldbank.org/energy/print/solar-mini-grids-put-nigeria-path-energy-all-2030>

January 25, 2018

## Rwanda: Climate-Smart Productive Landscapes Increase Incomes



Drawing upon IDA and Donor funding and expertise in climate-smart agriculture since 2010, Rwanda has increased the productivity of hillside agriculture tenfold for target irrigated areas, fivefold for targeted non-irrigated areas, doubled the share of commercialized products, reaching over 292,000 beneficiaries (over 142,000 women) and minimizing erosion and sediment load by 76%.

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### Challenge

Rwanda's growth and poverty reduction agendas depend critically on improving agricultural productivity, which occupies 80% of the work force. 90% of Rwanda's arable land is found on hillsides. The agriculture sector faces binding land constraints and was additionally characterized by small average land holdings (<0.5ha), poor water management, poor public and private capacity, limited commercial orientation and limited access to output and financial markets. Intensification in the context of steep and challenging physical requirements makes land husbandry a strict necessity and environmental prerogative to avoid the annual erosion of 1.4m tons of fertile soil. Additionally, irrigation is critical to reducing the sector's chief vulnerability in the climate context: drought and increasingly erratic precipitation.

## Approach

The Land Husbandry, Water Harvesting and Hillside Irrigation (LWH) project has been designed to support the Rwandan government (GoR) to address the critical agenda of hillside intensification through improved land-husbandry and increased productivity in 101 pilot watersheds covering 30,250 ha of land. The LWH project funded several LWH sites in support of the GoR program and has been additionally supporting the formulation of a Common Framework of Engagement (CFE) for investments. Following the integrative approach distinguishing climate-smart agriculture, the LWH project combines participatory land-use processes and a modified watershed approach to promote high stakeholder involvement and buy-in. This allowed to build the necessary capacity and infrastructure at an institutional and community level to introduce sustainable land husbandry measures for hillside agriculture, as well as to develop hillside irrigation, ultimately increasing productivity and livelihoods and reducing climate vulnerability.

## Results

The LWH project has improved the productivity and commercialization of hillside agriculture, strengthened value chains for agricultural products and expanded access to rural finance, while improving hillside land husbandry technologies, techniques, and infrastructure between 2009 and 2017:

- The project developed 20,601 ha cumulatively with land-husbandry technologies, more than the targeted 19,940 ha.
- The productivity of target irrigated command area (\$/ha) increased from 492 to 5,143, versus the target of 2,800.
- The productivity of target non-irrigated command area (\$/ha) increased from 469 to 2,571 versus the target of 2,500.
- The share of commercialized products from target areas (%) increased from 35% to 79.84%, compared with targeted 70%.
- The number of direct Project beneficiaries has grown to 292,732 (of which 150,596 are women), which is higher than the end of project target of 120,000 and 55,000 respectively.

- The proportion of beneficiary farmers in project affected areas using improved farm methods (disaggregated by gender) increased from 30% to 93% for men and from 25% to 89.5% for women.
- The percentage of adult project beneficiaries in the project areas who have access to services of formal financial institutions (disaggregated by gender) increased from 22% to 92.3% for men and from 18% to 89.1% for women, versus respective targets of 90% and 85%.
- The proportion of land protected against soil erosion in project areas (ongoing assessment each year) increased from 26% to 103%, exceeding the target of 90%.
- Sediment yield (volume or weight per unit area of catchment (T/ha/yr) in the project areas was reduced by 76%, substantially more than the targeted 50% reduction.

As such, the LHW project substantially increased food security and the climate resilience of the target populations.

### **Bank Group Contribution**

The Land Husbandry, Water Harvesting and Hillside Irrigation project had a total donor budget of \$140 million, of which \$69 million came from IDA credits, \$3.7 million co-financing from the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), \$7.8 million co-financing from Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and \$50 million co-financing from Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), consisting of 11 public and private donors). To date 97% of funds have been disbursed.

### **Partners**

Partnership arrangements for the LWH project came in the form of: (i) programmatic partnership through the LWH CFE; (ii) co-financing for the IDA-financed project with CIDA, USAID and GAFSP (see above); (c) technical partnership with the IFC on leasing; and (d) linkages with rural infrastructure and finance operations outside the project. With its environmental and social safeguards management framework, the World Bank Group has a strong stewardship and catalyst role for parallel and co-financiers that could not be met through other sources of funding.

## **Moving Forward**

The lessons learned from the LHW project will transpire into and scale up the Government of Rwanda's LHW program, particularly through strengthening of institutional capacities and sector wide approaches. Agricultural productivity and commercialization in difficult topographies will remain a challenge both in Rwanda, the Africa region and beyond, especially in the face of increased climate variability. The LHW project is another proof-of-concept of climate smart agriculture to achieve significant results even in the most challenging environments. The LHW project will inform new projects of the WBG and its development partners will address those challenges in the context of future IDA-financed agriculture projects.

## **Beneficiaries**

Nayirabarinze in Rwamagana District had his life significantly improved by the LWH project. "I used to harvest about 200 kg of maize on one hectare of land." After implementing land husbandry technologies, his production soared. "In 2014 I harvested 11 tons of maize from two hectares." By selling his excess produce, Nayirabarinze ventured into poultry farming and now owns 2,800 chicken layers, supplying about 1,000 eggs to markets in Kigali daily. "I earn Rwf70,000 daily from egg sales and this enables me to expand my business. I am planning to have a savings account for my children so that they can live a better life in future."

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2018/09/10/climate-smart-productive-landscapes-increase-incomes-and-combat-climate-change-hillside-agriculture-intensification-in-rwanda>

September 10, 2018

## Samoa: Improving Access and Disaster Preparedness for Persons with Disabilities



Vaitele street is the main route out of the Samoan capital Apia. Under the Enhanced Road Access Project (ERAP), the road was widened to 4 lanes, added footpaths, traffic lights and drainage to create a safer road for pedestrians and residents.

Samoa has implemented the Enhanced Road Access Project to restore important road assets damaged by extreme weather, also to enhance the climate resilience of critical roads and bridges. One of the actions under the project is to help remove barriers for persons with disabilities, acknowledging that this is a positive step towards ensuring sustainable development in many Pacific Island countries.

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### Challenge

The transport sector in Samoa, and within many Pacific Island countries, currently does not adequately cater to the needs of persons with disabilities. This makes daily tasks, such as getting to and from work, a difficult process. Furthermore, Samoa is highly vulnerable to tropical storms, flooding and seismic activity, which have detrimental impacts on infrastructure service



provision and the ability to access goods and social services such as health facilities. The impacts of climate change mean that there will be further disruptions and the challenges faced by persons with disabilities will only increase. The task faced is addressing how conditions can be improved for persons with disabilities. Two key issues include ensuring accessibility during day-to-day situations to ensure social inclusion and building disaster preparedness for times of crisis to build social resilience for these vulnerable communities.

### Approach

Taking the opportunity to proactively take the needs of vulnerable communities into account and include input from key stakeholders during project implementation, access guidelines and audits were implemented during the design phase for works to be carried out under the Enhanced Road Access Project (ERAP). Access guidelines from the Ministry of Natural Resources and Environment were used as a construction reference for road and bridge work to ensure that designs were inclusive of persons with disabilities and the features of accessibility such as ramps, wider pavements and signage are considered prior to construction.

Access audits were undertaken by persons with disabilities with different needs including a site visit and scoring system to determine where improvements could be made to the design. In addition, higher design standards have been applied to infrastructure investments to help ensure there is increased climate resilience and reliability of the key transport routes financed under ERAP.

### Results

The disability advocacy agency, Nuanua o le Alofa (NOLA), was engaged under the project to undertake the access audits. Access audits have not routinely been carried out in Samoa, therefore the inclusion of these has helped to ensure that there are more suitable and user-friendly facilities. The desired outcome is that persons with disabilities are not only better able to navigate spaces and are able to do so with greater ease, but also feel safer in doing so.

This is in line with the primary outcome of ERAP, which is to provide more sustainable access for all road users. In the longer term, increasing the climate resilience of infrastructure will help to build social resilience during severe weather events through ensuring connectivity and ensuring reliable access that will provide for more efficient and timely responses following disaster events.

Secondly, the project has helped to promote awareness within the community and among the Ministries regarding the challenges faced and the needs of vulnerable communities. There has also been institutional strengthening through greater collaboration and on-going communication between NOLA and the Land Transport Authority (LTA) in Samoa. The LTA are responsible for planning, constructing, maintaining and supervising the country's national roads and land transport infrastructure. For example, LTA provide their services to facilitate the access audits and NOLA have provided training to the LTA on how to communicate through sign language.

#### Bank Group contribution

The Enhanced Road Access Project is funded through a US\$15 million grant from the World Bank's International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank's fund for those most in need, and a US\$5 million grant from the World Bank's Crisis Response Window.

#### Partnerships

The project is being implemented by the government of Samoa. Partnerships with local organizations, such as NOLA, are helping to deliver a great project and wider social outcomes through fostering inclusivity.

The project is also funded through AU\$13 million from the Government of Australia, through the Pacific Regional Infrastructure Facility (PRIF) and the Australia Pacific Islands Partnership.

#### Moving forward

Going forward, the same approach can be used on future projects within Samoa. The benefit in Samoa is that the relationships between stakeholders already exist and can be further built upon. In addition, NOLA have shown strong support for further involvement in future projects.

Across Pacific Island countries there is the potential for the same approach to be implemented using the lessons learned from Samoa to help planning for vulnerable communities. The relatively low time and financial costs associated with carrying out the audits also means that it can be reasonably implemented with no, or only slightly minor, adjustments.

#### Beneficiaries

The principal beneficiaries are persons with disabilities located primarily within Apia. Specifically, the infrastructure investments will help to provide or improve access and assure future access for persons with disabilities to and from places of residences, work, and leisure.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2017/12/01/improving-access-and-disaster-preparedness-for-persons-with-disabilities-in-samoa>

December 1, 2017

## Somalia: Combating Desertification



Saed Mohamud, Farmer in Gebiley, Somaliland

### Story Highlights

- This World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, read stories from Somalia, where only a year after the country declared drought as a national emergency, a famine has been successfully averted
- Four farmers and entrepreneurs share the stories of how they broke out from cycles of drought with help from the FAO, the ICRC, the World Bank and GFDRR, and partners like USAID and DFID
- The Somalia Emergency Drought Response and Recovery Project (SEDRP) includes support to communities for strengthening rural food security and livelihoods

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MOGADISHU, June 15, 2018 – In observation of World Day to Combat Desertification and Drought, delve into four stories of resilience from desert lands in Somalia. Meet two farmers and two female entrepreneurs, who—supported by the Somalia Emergency Drought Response and Recovery Project (SEDRP)—share their experiences of grit, hope, and resilience despite years of

drought and famine risks. Together with partners, particularly the UN's Food and Agriculture Organization (FAO) and the International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC), the project aimed to scale-up drought response and recovery in Somalia.

### **1. An impressive harvest, a happy farmer**

The story of Saed Mohamud may not typically be expected from Somalia in 2017, two years into a severe drought that put the country in a nationwide state of natural disaster and famine—yet Mohamud is not alone. In 2017, thousands of families beat the odds and produced good yields, thanks to concerted efforts from government and partners, and solid donor investment in building farmers' resilience against drought.

Achieving these yields required a special selection of quality seeds sourced from certified local traders. Farmers received training in drought-resilient practices, such as intercropping, to retain soil moisture; on-farm support to plough or irrigate fields, where appropriate; and livelihood packages tailored to the needs and conditions of different production areas of in the country. Cash transfers were also included as part of the package, so farmers could afford to feed their families while restoring their own food production capacity.

During the April–June season in 2017, farmers who received assistance package produced 1.55 tons of sorghum, on average. This was enough cereal for a household of six to feed itself for six months until the next harvest—while, at the same time, generating \$600 in income from the surplus.

The efforts were part of the SEDRP, which included an FAO program, with support from the World Bank and the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery (GFDRR), the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), and the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DFID).

### **2. Transferring opportunities and hope: Enabling entrepreneurship through cash-for-work opportunities**

By the time single parent, Amina Hussein, joined the cash-for-work activity of the project in the Bari region, she had already run out of money. She had borrowed cash from a relative to buy food and to pay some of her daughter's school fees, but she didn't know how she would repay the loan. Amina found new hope and opportunity in working to rehabilitate a water reservoir in her local

community. She plans to use part of the money she earns to repay the loan, and then invest in opening a small tea shop.

### **3. Helping farmers help themselves—her story**

“My name is Osman Cise Mohamed, I have 9 children but we are 11 in my family. I live in the remote area of Yiroowe village. Before the drought, I had 260 livestock—157 sheep, 94 goats, and 9 camels. Now I have 62 animals and lost the rest due to the last drought. Most of my animals are in poor physical condition and they were not producing enough money. After receiving this feed 15 days ago, my animals are getting better in terms of physical condition and milk production. My children are receiving more milk, and I have got surplus milk to sell. I wish I had the capacity to buy such feed, it would have increased my daily income and helped my animals get fatter.”

### **4. Mounds of food for people and animals**

Mahad Abdi Yusuf separates sorghum from the stalks at his farm a few kilometers from Gebiley town, northwest of Somalia. Despite the drought, Mahad produced bountiful crops—large panicles full of grain and tall stalks. Achieving good plant growth and length is a big win for Somali farmers and agro-pastoralists, especially during a drought. The stalks are used to feed livestock and sell very well in the market, when pasture is scarce.

These four stories of resilience from the Danakil to the Guban deserts of Somalia offer windows into hope, and inform on the impact of global collaboration and strategic action—from individuals to partner organizations—on everyday people like Saed Mohamud and Amina Hussein, who bear the brunt of drought, desertification, and the effects of climate variability.

Continuous technical, operational, and financial support, and global strategic action against drought and desertification will bring more stories like these to the fore, making them representative of the hard work and resilience countries like Somalia embody.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/06/15/world-desertification-day-stories-of-resilience-from-somalia>

June 15, 2018

## Sub-Saharan Africa: Investing in Hydromet for Climate-Smart Development



Africa accounts for just 4 percent of global greenhouse gas emissions, but it is highly vulnerable to the impacts of climate change. The Africa Hydromet Program provides real-time weather, water, and climate information and services to support communities, industries, and countries continentwide.

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Tesfaye, a grain and legume farmer in rural Ethiopia, takes a break from guiding his grazing cattle to analyze the skies in Chanco, north of the capital Addis Ababa. The weather is critical to his livelihood, and it is not always reliable.

“This year, the weather was good, but last year, there was less rain to grow teff, barley, and lentils on my farm,” he says. “It will be very helpful if I know about dangerous storms ahead of time, so I can plan for planting and harvesting.”

Farmers like Tesfaye could benefit from dependable weather, water, and climate information—collectively known as hydromet services.

## **Essential information for all**

A combination of hydrology and meteorology, hydromet services offer real-time weather, water, and climate updates; early warnings; and climate outlooks that can help communities predict and prepare for impending disasters. Hydromet services also provide the data needed for weather forecasting and offer additional climate and weather-related services. Everyday people, from students to farmers, and entire industries, including aviation and energy, benefit from hydromet services.

Less than 20 percent of sub-Saharan African countries provide reliable hydromet services to their people and economies. African governments often juggle competing priorities for investment: without adequate funding, national meteorological and hydrological services are limited in their ability to contribute to climate-resilient development and adaptation planning. Improved hydromet services can save African countries from avoidable damage and loss, ensuring that past and current investments in infrastructure, education, and development are not lost to disasters. Hydromet services can break the vicious cycle of damage and recovery.

## **Africa Hydromet Program**

To respond to this development priority, the World Bank, the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, and other partners created the Africa Hydromet Program in 2015 to support collaborative efforts to modernize hydromet services across Africa.

The program holistically addresses modernization needs at the national, sub-regional, and regional levels. This includes upgrading observation infrastructure, interpreting data, and delivering services to offer timely and reliable weather and climate forecasts, especially on impending disaster risks. In the first phase, 15 African countries and four regional climate centers are being supported.

Looking ahead with IDA18 funding, the World Bank aims to expand support to Burkina Faso as well as launch a new multi-phase regional program in West Africa and the Sahel. Starting with Mali, Chad, Togo, and regional meteorological entities, the program will strengthen hydromet services, information sharing, and coordination for improved early warning, disaster response and safety nets systems, and agricultural services.



These investments will translate into life-saving services that protect people, preserve livelihoods, and promote prosperity in climate and disaster hotspots. Jerry Lengoasa, CEO of the South African Weather Service, says citizens directly benefit from hydromet services.

“Hydromet services are essential to everyday life,” Lengoasa explains. “These services provide us with data, predictions, and information so we can prepare for disasters and effectively design our long- and short-term climate resilience strategies, which are essential to achieving our development goals.”

## West Africa: Fighting Coastal Erosion and Waves Of Change



Coastal communities in West Africa are losing ground to the ocean each year. Families are losing their homes and way of life to coastal erosion, flooding, and even breaking waves. Countries are working together to create new solutions to protect the most vulnerable.

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The city of Saint-Louis, once Senegal's shining jewel and a United Nation's World Heritage Site, is fast losing land, livelihoods, homes, and infrastructure due to coastal erosion. Five meters of the Saint-Louis coastline are lost each year and 200 families have had to abandon their homes and assets. Another 1,000 families are at risk.

Climate change and related sea level rise contribute to this emergency, but coastal erosion is also the result of poor planning, with houses, hotels, and infrastructure built in now precarious coastal zones.

“Our concern is to preserve our territory and ensure that the population of Saint-Louis, especially fishermen in the Langue de Barbarie, can live and do their jobs safely,” says Amadou Mansour Faye, Mayor of Saint-Louis and Minister of Hydraulics and Sanitation.

He warns that if the sea level rises and the Langue de Barbarie disappears, “entire territories inside the country will be threatened.”

The situation in Saint-Louis is alarming, but it is not unique. About 40 percent of West Africa’s GDP is generated in coastal provinces, where almost one-third of the population resides. Communities are vulnerable to the effects of poor coastal development and climate change, particularly severe coastal erosion and frequent flooding.

### **Regional solution to regional problem**

West African countries from Mauritania to Gabon are working together to manage threats along their joint coastline in a more collaborative, integrated way. Led by West African governments and supported by the World Bank and other partners, the newly launched Africa Coastal Areas Management Program (WACA) aims to incite greater cooperation among countries and regional institutions.

In April 2018, the World Bank approved \$190 million in IDA funding for the first WACA resilience investment project to support six countries—Benin, Cote d’Ivoire, Mauritania, Sao Tome and Principe, Senegal, and Togo—and the West Africa Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU). Potentially, WACA could grow to include all 17 countries along the West African coastline.

“This project is a collective response to the urgent need to address coastal degradation in a regional, integrated manner. It is an opportunity to strengthen the resilience of West Africa’s communities and transform their livelihoods,” says Makhtar Diop, the World Bank’s Vice President for Infrastructure.

### **Going grey and green**

Across the region, WACA will protect against coastal erosion through traditional “grey” infrastructure, such as building seawalls, dikes, and coastal groins. It will also restore and preserve “green” infrastructure, such as fixing dunes, restoring wetlands and mangroves, and replenishing beaches—all of which play a critical role in preserving the coastline.

Flooding will be reduced by rehabilitating lagoons and drainage systems and by improving watershed management. Interventions will also support pollution control through better treatment of marine litter, oil spills, and industrial and municipal waste.

WACA will also work with WAEMU and three other regional entities to ensure information is shared and recurring trends are monitored and addressed at the regional level. More partners are expected to join WACA as it expands efforts to boost knowledge transfer, mobilize additional finance, and foster political dialogue among countries.

## Yemen: World Bank Brings Renewable Electricity to one of the Largest Hospitals



The current crisis in Yemen has placed enormous pressure on the country's population. Four out of five people in the country need humanitarian assistance. Over 1 million people have been infected by cholera. More than 350,000 children suffer from severe acute malnutrition. Over 2 million people have been internally displaced due to the fighting. Simply put, life has become very difficult for millions of Yemenis.

To help address this crisis, the World Bank through the International Development Association (IDA), and in partnership with the United Nations Office for Project Services (UNOPS), launched a project to help Yemenis by restoring critical urban services. The project targets a number of Yemen's cities hardest hit by the conflict, where the level of public services has significantly deteriorated. The US\$150 million Yemen Integrated Urban Services Emergency Project (YIUSEP) aims to restore access to key services in such as water and sanitation, transport, energy, municipal services, and solid waste management.

*“People of Yemen need our support during this difficult time. Recovery of basic services beyond emergency response is a key element of World Bank engagement in Yemen,”* says **Raja Bentaouet Kattan, World Bank Group Country Manager for Yemen.**

Yemen is a fragile and conflict-affected country and the work is part of the Bank’s effort to support FCV countries during conflict and despite operating in a very challenging environment, the project is starting to show promising results. In the past week, thanks to support from the project, a solar based electricity solution was completed at Al-Jamhori hospital and the adjacent Oncology Treatment Center located in the capital of Sana’a. Due to the conflict, the hospital was suffering from electricity blackouts that had made it difficult to treat patients properly. To cope with intermittent supply of grid electricity, the hospital relied on diesel-based power generation which was not only expensive but also vulnerable to shortages of fuel in the country.

*“Around 4,000 Yemenis benefit from Al-Jamhori hospital services every day. The lack of reliable electricity is a major challenge that impacts our operations,”* said **Dr. Nasr al-Qudsi, Director of Al-Jamhori hospital in Sana’a,** *“the Bank-supported solar solution to provide a steady supply of electricity will expand the capacity of the hospital and ensure we can provide the services so many Yemenis rely on.”*

In response, the World Bank and UNOPS worked together to install solar panels on the roof of the hospital and changed six thousand indoor light bulbs to more energy efficient LED lamps. In addition, five solar powered water heaters were installed to reduce the reliance on diesel-fueled generators. The team also sought to improve the security situation around the hospital by installing better street and outdoor lighting. This intervention would help reduce hospital’s reliance on diesel-based electricity generators.

*“The project is bringing multiple sectors together to provide an integrated solution. In addition to electricity, the project is also supporting restoring water services in the area and rehabilitating any damaged access roads,”* **Tahir Akbar, World Bank Senior Disaster Risk Management Specialist and Task Team Leader of the project.**

To implement the project, the World Bank and UNOPS ensured close coordination with other development partners. In particular, WHO and UNICEF are helping to identify critical health facilities needing renewable energy solutions. The project is complementing WBG financed Emergency Health and Nutrition Project that is supporting Yemen’s health sector.

The biggest reward for the joint effort is that it allows the hospital to function day and night and help doctors and nurses to effectively do their jobs– saving lives.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/09/10/world-bank-brings-electricity-back-to-the-largest-hospital-in-yemen>

September 10, 2018

## Zambia: Unlocking Low Cost, Large Scale Solar Power



Adding power capacity is urgent in Zambia, where less than a third of the population has access to electricity and drought has limited hydropower. The World Bank Group's Scaling Solar Program is helping to procure privately financed solar power and enable rapid rollout.

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In recent years, droughts in southern Africa have significantly reduced the electrical output of Zambia's hydropower plants, leaving many Zambians in the dark. Power shortages and forced rationing have impacted the national economy and pushed the government to mandate the procurement of 600 megawatts (MW) of solar photovoltaic (PV) power and to target an overall increase in installed generation capacity to 6,000 MW by 2030.

With its year-round sunshine and geographical location, Zambia is well positioned to integrate solar power into an energy mix dominated by climate-vulnerable hydropower. The Government of Zambia partnered with the World Bank in 2015 through its newly launched Scaling Solar Program to initiate the first phase of Zambia's national solar plan. It aims to attract independent power producers to develop up to six 50 MW solar PV power plants for a total of 300 MW of new power capacity.



## **Scaling Solar Program**

“Zambia is the first country to implement the Scaling Solar program, which brings together World Bank Group services and instruments under a single engagement aimed at creating viable markets for grid-connected solar energy,” says Ina Ruthenberg, World Bank Country Manager for Zambia.

Scaling Solar is an open and competitive approach that facilitates the rapid development of privately-owned, utility-scale solar PV projects in sub-Saharan Africa. It enables governments and utilities to procure solar power transparently and at the lowest possible cost. Through competitive auctions organized by the program, Zambia was able to attract world class developers to its first two projects and obtain some of the lowest tariffs in Africa at that time (\$.06 and \$.078 per kilowatt hour fixed for 25 years).

Scaling Solar is also quick. Zambia has been able to assess projects and manage competitive tenders in short order. The first plants are now being built with commissioning set to occur within a fraction of the time it would have taken Zambia to do so independently.

“Scaling Solar is a step change for Zambia and other countries facing electricity shortages,” says Madalo Minofu, IFC Resident Representative for Zambia.

### **More power, less expense**

The first projects at Bangweulu (sponsored by French company NEOEN) and Ngonye (sponsored by the multinational Enel) are now under construction with IFC financing and letters of credit backed by IDA partial risk guarantees. Zambia is planning second round with Scaling Solar to develop additional solar plants, which also envision IDA18 payment and loan guarantees to back-stop the plants, coupled with IFC financing.

Zambia’s Minister of Energy, Mathew Nkhuwa, says the projects will not only curb power shortages and provide a source of energy that complements Zambia’s hydro-based system, they “will allow the Government of Zambia to reduce its electricity purchase from expensive diesel power plants.”

Based on initial assumptions, Zambia's savings over the first 25 years would be about \$163 million per 50 MW power plant. The first two plants will increase the country's available generation capacity by 5 percent and will help restore water levels in its hydropower dams.

## GENDER



Fostering gender equality and empowerment

## Afghanistan: Helping Women Improve their Economic Status



"I cultivate vegetables and sell them and also use them as food in my home," says Zarmina. She previously had no job, but after receiving support from the National Horticulture and Livestock Project, she set up an off-season micro-greenhouse and received technical assistance on vegetable production.

### Story Highlights

- Women in some villages in Kabul and Parwan provinces are seeing significant changes to their lives through self-employment and participation in decision making in local development.
- Government and donor-funded programs are building the capacity of these women to give them the opportunity to improve their livelihood, as well as play an active role in their villages.
- Hundreds of women in these provinces have been encouraged to start small businesses, helping them to support themselves and their families.

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**PARWAN / KABUL PROVINCES** – In a valley in Parwan Province, Gul Shirin, 45, sits head bent

over a sewing machine in a small room in her house in Hijan village in Salang district. A seamstress, Gul Shirin is sewing clothes for customers in the district and beyond.

About 100 kilometers away in Gul Dara district in Kabul Province, Zarmina, 35, is checking her micro-greenhouse for vegetables that are ready to be picked for sale. In yet another district in Kabul Province, Fatana Rahmani, 22, is busy preparing for a meeting. As vice chairperson of the Community Development Council (CDC) in her village, Botazar, in Paghman district, she has a long day ahead.

These women reflect small but significant changes taking place in parts of rural Afghanistan. Benefiting from various government and donor-funded schemes and programs, they are improving their livelihoods and playing an active role in village development.

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"The condition of women is much better now. We can participate in the decision-making process of our village's development, as well as have an active role in implementing these decisions."

Fatana Rahmani

Vice chairperson, Community Development Council, Botazar village, Paghman district, Kabul Province

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### Businesses Run by Women

Gul Shirin started her sewing unit in 2012 with a loan of 5,000 afghanis (about \$74) from the Village Savings and Loan Association (VSLA) in her village. She purchased material, a sewing machine, scissors, and other tools needed to start her business. "I started my work from scratch, supported only by the loan from the Association," the mother of six says. "Anything a customer wants or orders, we can make. We make hijabs, wedding dresses, skirts, and even coats for women and children."

Today, Gul Shirin has customers in 20 villages in Salang district, in Parwan's capital Charikar city as well as in Kabul. She is one of hundreds of women in Parwan Province who have received support through activities, such as the VSLA, established by the Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Program (AREDP), under the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development.

AREDP started in Parwan Province in 2009 with the aim of creating job opportunities and increasing the earning capacity of rural residents by supporting the establishment of small-scale enterprises. The program works in six districts in the province and, thus far, has established 868 Saving Groups, of which 488 are for women. Each group is made up of 10 to 12 members. These Savings Groups then federate into VSLAs.

Most of the members in the Savings Groups are women and many run small enterprises. Abdul Wakil Hamidpoor, AREDP Provincial Manager for Parwan, points out that “previously, we did not have any businesses that were owned and run by women in Parwan.” There are now 12 shops run by women in the villages and 62 VSLAs for women. Additionally, the program has established 99 enterprises, 18 of which are owned by women.

The program has brought meaning to Gul Shirin’s life, giving her confidence and a way to not only improve her life but also those of others. “Now I have four sewing machines and six apprentices, who are learning to sew,” she says. “It was a slow start, but the demand for my products has increased. I earn between 15,000–20,000 afghanis (about \$225–\$300) a month after expenses.”

With their own businesses, women like Gul Shirin have been able to contribute to their family income and become productive members of the local economy. “I can say that AREDP has changed people’s attitude,” says Abdul Wakil. “It has worked closely with the community and this close coordination has built trust. Now we receive applications from men and women in Parwan as they are eager to start small businesses and would like our support.”

To date the Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Program has established 99 enterprises of which 18 of them are owned by women. The program aims to create job opportunities and increase the earning capacity of rural residents by setting up small-scale enterprises.

Like Gul Shirin, Zarmina has set up her own thriving small-scale enterprise, supporting her family. “I cultivate vegetables and sell them and also use them as food in my home,” she says. “I support my family and the greenhouse has helped me earn money even in harsh winter months.”

With support from the National Horticulture and Livestock Project (NHLP), Zarmina set up a micro-greenhouse and received improved production inputs and technical assistance on vegetable production. “Previously, I did not have the ability to buy equipment for a greenhouse and technical knowledge to manage it. I had no work in the winter,” says the mother of eight.

“We work with poor women on a small scale and on off-season vegetables,” says Amina Askarzai, the NHLP Extension Worker in the Kabul region. “This program has helped them find another source of income, thus improving their livelihoods.”

NHLP, which operates under the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL), aims to promote the adoption of improved agricultural production practices and technologies, covering 33 provinces. It has reached over 390,000 male and female farmers with improved technologies and knowledge on horticulture and livestock production, as well as post-production practices, such as finding markets for their products and customer interaction.

### **Participating in Decision Making**

While NHLP and AREDP are primarily capacity building projects, the National Solidarity Programme (NSP), which Fatana Rahmani was a part of, aimed to improve service delivery by strengthening local development governance structures and empowering citizens to participate in the decision-making process on development in their communities.

NSP, which operated under the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development, worked to strengthen and maintain Community Development Councils as effective institutions for local governance and socio-economic development, while underlining women’s participation in the process. “The condition of women is much better now,” Fatana says. “We can participate in the decision-making process of our village’s development, as well as have an active role in implementing these decisions.”

More than 35,000 CDCs were established all over the country under the program, which has since closed. The recently launched Citizens’ Charter Afghanistan Project (CCAP) will build on the work of NSP to further improve service delivery to rural and urban areas. CDCs will play an enhanced role under the CCAP.

AREDP, NHLP, and CCAP are receiving support from the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank Group’s fund for the poorest countries, and the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF). NSP, which closed in March 2017, also received support from IDA and the ARTF.

These stories bear testimony to Afghanistan’s unequivocal focus on empowering women and ensuring that they participate in society as partners. As a result of these and other similar initiatives, many communities in Afghanistan are witnessing change. Gul Shirin, Zarmina, and

Fatana are contributing and making a difference, whether at the level of the household, the village, or the community.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2017/10/03/village-women-benefit-from-programs-to-improve-their-economic-and-social-status>

October 3, 2017



## Afghanistan: Kabul Clinic Improves Health for Mothers, their Children, and the Community



Supported under SEHAT Program, the Hootkhail Health Center was established in 2016. The clinic offers a variety of health services for men and women, ranging from treatment of infectious diseases and mental health to family planning and treatment and prevention of malnutrition.

### Story Highlights

- Established in 2016, a comprehensive health center in Kabul city welcomes about 3,000 patients a month, some of them from other provinces.
- The clinic has helped improve maternal and child health through awareness sessions about vital health issues such as family planning.
- The clinic provides medical services and awareness sessions under SEHAT Program.

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KABUL CITY – In a Kabul neighborhood, some two dozen women are gathered outside the blue door of the Hootkhail Comprehensive Health Center . Inside the compound, another two dozen

women, some with their children, sit on benches waiting to see a doctor. More women fill the clinic's corridor, where a female health professional is giving a family planning lecture.

"I am so glad we now have a clinic in our own neighborhood," says 40-year-old Feroza, a mother of nine children. "I used to go to Malalai Maternity Hospital, which was a long distance from my home, but with the establishment of this clinic, I can easily get quality health services."

Hootkhail Health Center, established in 2016, offers a variety of health services for men and women, ranging from treatment of infectious diseases and mental health to family planning and treatment and prevention of malnutrition. Sessions to raise community awareness and to provide information on topics such as maternal and child health are another vital aspect of the clinic's services.

Dr. Farid Ahmad Karimi, head of the clinic, points out that the clinic has made a significant contribution to the community in terms of health services. "Patients no longer have to drive or walk miles to reach a health center," he says, "we provide health services for an average of 3,000 patients a month in this community with a population as large as 60,000."

Dr. Karimi says the community has a particularly high demand for vaccination, maternal health, family planning, and nutrition services.

The clinic was set up to deliver a Basic Package of Health Services (BPHS) under the System Enhancement for Health Action in Transition (SEHAT) Program, implemented by the Ministry of Public Health (MoPH). SEHAT aims to expand the scope, quality, and coverage of health services provided to the population, particularly vulnerable groups. It is supported by the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank Group's fund for the poorest countries, and the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), in partnership with multiple donors.

### **High Quality Medication**

In addition to the medical consultations, the clinic also offers high quality medicines to patients who receive treatment at its outpatient department (OPD). "This is of great importance as most of the patients are not able to purchase medicines because of the poverty rate in the community," says Dr. Karimi.

Basmina, 30, a housewife and mother of nine, is one of the patients who receives her medicines regularly from Hootkhail Health Centre. She travels from the eastern province of Laghman, some

150 kilometers from Kabul city, to obtain the medicines as an OPD patient. Her husband, a disabled beggar, manages only enough for his family's day to day food expenses.

"I have high blood pressure and heart disease, which has led to pain in my leg, and here I receive medication . That is why I travel all the way to this clinic to receive quality medicines," says Basmina. "My leg is getting better with this medicine. I feel much better now."

Mazari Ahmadi, 40, a police officer and mother of six, is another patient who pays routine visits to the clinic. "I have diabetes and high blood pressure, so I come here to do my check-up and receive medicines . I feel better every time I visit this clinic ," she says.

### **Health Awareness Sessions Pay Off**

The clinic's health awareness sessions are helping patients learn to manage and improve their health . Family planning sessions aimed at improving maternal health are particularly important. Low awareness of alternatives contributes to frequent childbirth and short gaps between conceptions, both major health challenges for women.

"The family planning classes were really beneficial . I don't want to have more children. My oldest child is 13 and youngest is 3 years old," says Feroza, 40, a mother of seven, whose husband is an electrician. "We can't afford to have more children, that's why I used Khushi injections, a contraceptive injection, to prevent further conception ," she explains.

Noori Ali, head nurse at the clinic, says, "Women did not even know that pregnancy could be prevented. When they first learned about it, they were very much surprised . But now they are very happy about the fact that they can have longer gaps between pregnancies, which eventually leads to them staying healthy."

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/05/30/health-services-and-awareness-sessions-boost-afghan-mother-child-wellbeing>

May 30, 2018

## Benin: Encouraging Girls to Embrace Skilled Trades



The demand for skilled labor is high in male-dominated fields like construction and car repair. Girls are looking past gender stereotypes to seize opportunities through vocational and technical training.

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On the roof of a building under construction in the Camp Guézo district of Cotonou, Jaëlle Hounkanrin and fellow apprentices deftly install pipes between the rods of a slab. She is training to be a plumber and is proud of it.

“I am the only girl on the construction site, but I do the jobs assigned to me just like the boys. I love what I do,” she affirms, brimming with confidence.

Hounkanrin is a school dropout who now boards at the Training and Apprenticeship Center in the commune of Pahou (Centre de formation et d’apprentissage de Pahou). She and some 30 other girls at the center are training for so-called men’s jobs, braving the social norms.

The center is one of 73 vocational training institutions across Benin supported by the Youth Employment Project financed by the World Bank. With a funding package of \$35 million, the project has already helped some 3,500 young people, half of them girls, obtain their professional qualification certificate.

### **Training for job opportunities**

Chantal Médégnon, who holds a certificate in electricity, construction, and industry, saw vocational training as a path toward better employment opportunities. When she left school at the 8th grade, she determined hairdressing and dressmaking were oversubscribed and not to her liking.

“But in construction you are always in demand and can go from site to site,” she explains.

While their numbers are small compared to boys, Benin’s girls are gaining ground and performing well in vocational training in fields like automobile repair, electricity, cooling and air conditioning, welding, and building construction.

“We want to end the social norms that combine to discourage girls from pursuing these occupations traditionally exercised by men. The model offered by those who are already trained encourages us to urge women to have confidence in themselves and to make the most of their potential,” explains Maxime Sogbossi, Project Coordinator.

### **Building business skills and more**

Besides apprenticeships, the project provides small grants to help young people strengthen their business skills and enter the job market. Already 7,500 young people, half of them girls, have each received CFAF 200,000 (around \$370) for this purpose. Many are girls trained in traditionally male occupations. To further expand their ranks, the project is offering technical and micro-entrepreneurship training in non-traditional trades for 500 girls. It also is providing start-up grants to help them launch and expand their activities.

Momentum continues with three new projects to be financed under IDA18. The Education for Employment Project will build on activities by supporting more young people, including girls, in acquiring the skills needed in priority economic sectors where there is ever-increasing demand for skilled labor. The Youth Inclusion Project will focus on services to promote the social and economic inclusion of young people in various communities. Benin will also join the Sahel Women

Empowerment and Demographic Dividend Project, which, among other support, helps girls gain access to scientific and technological subjects and priority economic sectors.

## Democratic Republic of Congo: Tackling Gender-Based Violence Through Prevention



In Africa's Great Lakes Region, the World Bank is scaling up its support to help victims of gender-based violence and to stop it from happening in the first place. New focus on prevention and community involvement will help shift social norms.

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Pervasive conflict has taken its toll on women in the Great Lakes Region of East Africa. Security remains fragile and public services are weak in the Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC). Burundi has made progress in securing peace, but poverty levels remain high and sexual and gender-based violence is widespread. Rwanda has made dramatic strides since the mid-1990s and plans to redouble its efforts to confront violence against women and children.

In 2014, the Great Lakes Emergency Sexual and Gender-Based Violence and Women's Health Project launched as the first World Bank project in Africa offering integrated services to survivors of gender-based violence. IDA grants totaling \$107 million have since made their way

to DRC, Burundi, and Rwanda to support health and counseling services, legal aid, and economic opportunities for survivors, as well as to strengthen health services for poor and vulnerable women in the region.

### **Mobilizing community organizations**

In DRC alone, 40,000 people, including 29,000 women, have benefitted from these services and support, but more can be done to stop gender-based violence in the first place. In August 2018, the World Bank committed another \$100 million in IDA financing to prevent gender-based violence in the DRC.

The new Gender-Based Violence Prevention and Response Project will consolidate gains made under the Great Lakes regional project and take aim at shifting social norms by promoting gender equality and behavioral change through strong partnerships with civil society organizations. In a country where 75 percent of women and 60 percent of men believe that wife beating is justified, involving men and boys in the process will demonstrate that violence is an issue that must be tackled at the community level and is not just a “private matter.”

“Empowering community-based organizations and mobilizing them in the fight against gender-based violence is of crucial importance,” explains Jean-Christophe Carret, the World Bank Country Director for the DRC. “As the lack of economic autonomy can be a driver of gender-based violence, the project will also build livelihoods and provide economic opportunities through savings and income-generating activities at the community level.”

### **Services for survivors, support for all**

The new project will reach 795,000 direct beneficiaries over the next four years, 400,000 of whom are women and girls.

A critical mass of qualified and reputable community activists (both women and men), including paralegals, health and social workers, teachers, and religious leaders, will be deployed to implement prevention activities in communities across targeted zones in four eastern provinces. Safe spaces will be established for women and girls at the community level where survivors will have access to psycho-social support and other specialized health services.

In addition, the project will rely on the expertise of existing centers of excellence—the Panzi Hospital and Foundation in South Kivu and Heal Africa in North Kivu—with demonstrated



experience in responding to gender-based violence in emergency settings. Both operate mobile clinics in remote areas where insecurity and sexual violence are endemic.

## Ethiopia: Doors Open for Women in Climate-Smart Land Use



### Story Highlights

Land registration reform and certification for women across Ethiopia, boosted by the World Bank's capacity building through the Sustainable Landscape Management Program II (SLMP II), has led to significant progress over the past four years.

A new land certification process in the country means that land rights are now registered in the names of both spouses, ensuring women's ability to own and manage their family land, as a result, play a greater role in securing livelihoods.

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In coffee farming, for instance, women now enjoy more job opportunities in the land use sector. In the Oromia region, the World Bank's BioCarbon Fund Initiative for Sustainable Forest Landscapes in Ethiopia has been working to help coffee farmers boost productivity with improved climate-smart practices. This work involves a training initiative with Nespresso and women are now taking an active part in landscape management, through learning about sustainable farming practices.

Across Ethiopia, programs that support new land management practices have opened doors to opportunities for local communities, especially climate-smart jobs that reduce emissions. But until recently, Ethiopian women's unclear and insecure land rights meant they were effectively shut out of these new income and employment opportunities. Women could only act as heads of households if they had no husband. In most cases, only the male head of household was listed on landholding certificates and, in the case of death, the title passed to another male in the family.

With support from the World Bank's Sustainable Landscape Management Program II (SLMP II), the Government of Ethiopia has made significant progress over the past four years reforming land registration and certification for women across the country, so they are able to take more active roles in their family's farming businesses and community decision-making. The country's new land certification process gives women an opportunity to exercise their own land rights within the family because a household's land right is registered in the names of both spouses.

"This land certificate is our family's future," says Chaltu Beratu, a young widow from the Ejere district in Ethiopia's Oromia region. Her husband recently died, leaving her with two children and no income to support them.

"With this land certificate, I can decide what's best for my family," says Beratu.

Formal recognition and protection of women's land rights has helped to balance decision-making powers in the family. Reforms have also helped to clarify women's land rights under polygamous marriage arrangements.

"A key feature of this national certification program is that it has empowered locally and democratically-elected land administration and use committees at the village level to implement these reforms," says Shewakena Aytensh Abab, from the World Bank's Environment and Natural Resources Global Practice. "Women are actively engaged in these grassroots committees, and they are best placed to deal with conflicts and identify cost-effective solutions to land tenure disputes depending on the cultural or religious dynamics of a given village," says Abab.

### **New opportunities for women in Ethiopia's coffee sector**

Since 2014, the World Bank's BioCarbon Fund Initiative for Sustainable Forest Landscapes (ISFL) in Ethiopia has been working in the Oromia region to reduce deforestation and greenhouse gas emissions in the land use sector. Part of this work has partnered with Nespresso, a global

company producing personal use brewing machines and coffee capsules, to help coffee farmers in Oromia boost productivity with improved farming practices.

Gender equality is a key focus area of Nespresso's Sustainable Quality Program (AAA) and through this initiative, the company aims to ensure that women enjoy the same opportunities in coffee farming as men. Over the past few years, the company has focused on training more women farmers on climate-smart practices, such as planting shade trees and selective picking. One of the ways that Nespresso helped to reach more women farmers was by training and hiring female agronomists, after their research showed that 63% of women prefer a female trainer.

Female agronomists can improve women farmers' access to support, enabling them to take up new practices and empowering them to earn more from their coffee production. These agronomists work with hundreds of smallholder farmers, running group training sessions and making support visits to farms. The partnership with the World Bank's ISFL includes expanding adoption of the AAA Program throughout Oromia, with the goal of enhancing livelihoods of families under the ISFL's multisector, multi-partner intervention on all forested landscapes in Oromia.

"What amazes me about this job is looking at farmers who've adopted the techniques I've shown them and seeing how their lives are changed," says agronomist Meseret Kanto who was trained under the AAA Program.

In September, Nespresso launched a new report and global awareness campaign to highlight the ways in which Ethiopian women are playing a more central role in sustainable coffee production. Key to the success of this initiative has been working closely with local communities to tailor recruitment initiatives. For example, instead of advertising a job opportunity, the program advertises a free training course, which women are far more likely to attend. And at the end of the training, they are hired.

Ethiopia's efforts, enabled by the ISFL, SLMP II, and Nespresso, have not only enabled national-scale land registry reforms and led to sustainable landscape approaches, but also paved the way for coordinated regional and national efforts, including with the private sector, to carry out climate change mitigation, resilience, and conservation efforts.

And it also sends another, vital message: The full participation of women is key to delivering inclusive national land sector transformation and sustainable growth.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/10/17/doors-open-for-ethiopian-women-in-climate-smart-land-use>

October 17, 2018

Photo Credit: Nespresso

## Mali: Using Bikes to Get to School And Stay in School



The SWEDD project is expected to allow 22,000 girls like Déboura to stay in school, continue their studies, and take charge of their lives.

### Story Highlights

- In Mali, the out-of-school phenomenon among young girls in rural areas is disturbing and hinders their empowerment.
- The long distances to be traveled, the high poverty rate, and social norms account for this situation.
- In several villages, the distribution of bikes and the involvement of influential community figures are paving the way for young girls to continue their education.

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BAMAKO, July 25, 2018—One morning unlike any other, Déboura Goita, wearing her backpack, gets off her blue, brand new bike to head toward the big shade tree in the Waki school yard in Kimparana, Ségou region, located 491 kilometers from Bamako. Several bikes are already propped up against the tree. Once she has checked that hers is properly lined up and secure, she goes to her classroom, which is a few steps away.

Sixteen-year old Déboura is a seventh-grade student (first year of lower secondary school). Her mother has been the sole provider for her, her three sisters, and her two brothers since their father died. Before getting this bike, she walked six kilometers every day to get to the closest school to her home.

“On evenings, I was very tired when I got home, and I had neither the time nor the energy to study,” said Déboura, who had to drop out of school and recently returned when she got her bike, which she handles very skillfully and treats with great care.

In the classroom, Déboura is now deepening her knowledge of French, math, history, and geography. “My favorite subjects are physics, chemistry, biology, geography, and civics and ethics,” she said, sitting next to the friends she was able to rejoin while focusing on copying in her notebook the sentences being written by the teacher on the blackboard. “My dream is to become a teacher,” Déboura continued, smiling before lowering her eyes toward her notebook.

Like Déboura, 27 other young girls in Kimparana have managed to return to school and avoid becoming dropouts as a result of the bikes they have received. “Déboura now diligently attends classes, arrives on time every day, and has even taken the second quarter exams, which were administered right after the donation of the bike,” noted Waki school principal Mamadou Konaté.

After school, Déboura usually helps her mother with the housework—preparing meals, fetching water, doing the dishes, and sweeping the yard. She does farm work when she is on vacation.

### **Girls being out of school: a rural phenomenon in Mali**

In Mali, the out-of-school situation among young girls remains a concern. The secondary school attendance rate is 47.8%—52.9% for boys and 42.8% for girls—a situation that is particularly serious in rural areas. In the view of Birama Kassogué, the director of the Kimparana educational outreach center, the school dropout issue is largely the result of household poverty, early marriages, and the distance students have to walk to get to school. “Some villages are more than 15 kilometers away from the school. We hope that the bikes will lead to a lower school dropout rate,” he stated.

In addition to the 27 young girls from the Waki school who have received bikes to get to school, continue their studies, and be able to realize their dreams, 900 young girls from 75 schools in the regions of Kayes, Mopti, Ségou, and Sikasso can now escape the arranged marriages that their parents end up proposing to them when they stay at home.

## **“My challenge: the DEF”**

The provision of these bikes is one of the initiatives funded by the World Bank through the Sahel Women’s Empowerment and Demographic Dividend (SWEDD) project, as part of the effort to curb the school dropout phenomenon among young girls, the slogan of which is “My challenge: the DEF!” (*Diplôme d’études fondamentales*), which certifies the completion of lower secondary school in the ninth grade.

In addition to bikes, the project has also provided school kits containing such items as books, notebooks, and bags to 3,000 girls. They have also received sanitary kits (soap and sanitary pads) and the 900 parents or host families have received grains and other foodstuff.

Furthermore, to offer an incentive to young girls to stay in school and also encourage their parents to keep them there, the project organizes make-up classes in math, physics, chemistry, French, and English for more than 7,400 girls attending the 75 schools selected.

The SWEDD project has also trained 238 teachers and school counselors in children’s rights and raised their awareness with respect to traditional practices that stifle the potential of young girls, such as early marriages and pregnancies, gender inequality, the lack of reproductive health, and gender-based violence.

Because their input is very important to the success of this initiative, 48 religious and community leaders have also been mobilized and trained to become champions of the rights of young girls, particularly in the context of public discussions organized in schools.

It is estimated that 22,000 girls like Déboura will be able to stay in school, continue their studies, and take charge of their lives.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/07/25/a-bike-for-school-in-mali>

July 25, 2018



## Mauritania: Investing in Women to Break the Early Childhood Poverty Cycle



### Story Highlights

- By 2020, about 100,000 of Mauritania's poorest households will be receiving quarterly cash transfers.
- These cash transfers are conditional on the recipients attending courses in early childhood development, healthcare, and hygiene.
- The purpose of the program is to tackle intergenerational poverty by incentivizing parents to invest in their children's development.

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Nouakchott, July 9, 2018—Today's mood is festive in the village of Bachatt Ould Boughrou, in the district of Moughataa de Mbout in southern Mauritania, one of the country's poorest administrative departments. Moustapha and Hawa, two social outreach workers, are here to give a course on the benefits of a balanced diet. Women of all ages have gathered in a tent, listening attentively to the young people's recommendations with their toddlers on their knees.

“What do you want your children to be when they grow up?” asks Moustapha. “Teacher,” shouts one woman. “Doctor,” answers another. “Soldier,” says a third woman. Moustapha and Hawa hope that asking this classic question will get these mothers thinking about the future. “When you feed your children well, play with them, and teach them the rules of hygiene, you guarantee them a better future,” they assure their audience in unison.

Bachatt Ould Boughrou is one of the villages targeted by the Mauritanian Government for the five-year *Tekavoul* (solidarity in Arabic) social transfer program. Mauritania has invested \$10 million from its national budget in the program, and received \$15 million in support from the World Bank, \$4 million from the UK Department for International Development (DFID), and funding from the French Agency for Development (AFD), which has just invested \$2.5 million in the initiative. The purpose of the program is to improve the everyday lives of members of the country’s most vulnerable households and invest in human capital while giving participants incentives to change their behavior.

Every three months, 22,309 households in six of the poorest departments in the country receive the sum of 1,500 *ouguiya* (approximately \$42). To qualify for their payments, members of each household have to attend social improvement courses (like those given by Moustapha and Hawa) covering a range of topics such as nutrition, hygiene, and early childhood development. “By 2020, the program will have targeted no fewer than 100,000 households and will cover the entire country,” says Mohamedou M’Haimid, coordinator of the National *Tekavoul* Program.

“One of the program’s stated objectives is to invest in the next generation and break the poverty cycle by tackling intergenerational poverty,” explains Matthieu Lefebvre, a social protection specialist at the World Bank. “So, there is both a short-term impact as the households can use the money for their immediate needs, generally for food and basic services, and a longer-term impact whereby households can put aside a little money from these cash transfers to invest in their livelihoods and their well-being. Cash transfers to the poor also have a proven knock-on effect on local economies, so they benefit the entire community,” he adds.

Mariam Samba Sow, a 42-year-old mother of five, has been receiving this type of helping hand for over a year now and conscientiously attends the improvement classes. “I used to neglect hygiene,” she explains. “Now, I encourage my family to wash their hands, I sweep the house, and you can already see the difference in the village because there’s less illness such as diarrhea and skin complaints. I’ve also learned what to give my children to eat to improve their diet.”

Penda Sow, deputy mayor of the neighboring village of Forum Gleita, believes the program has had a dual impact: it gives women (the program's main recipients since they are the ones looking after the children) a certain amount of financial independence to provide for their children's needs and allow them to grow.

The *Tadamoun* agency in charge of managing the *Tekavoul* program makes sure that the transfers are efficient and secure with a network of agents using portable terminals to make the payments. Each recipient has a smart payment card.

Yet *Tekavoul* is just one of the three pillars of the social safety net system support project, which includes the deployment of a social registry or database, set up in 2015 to identify the poorest households in Mauritania and improve social program targeting. This registry is used by a host of development players such as the NGO Oxfam, the World Food Program (WFP,) and the Food Security Commission (CSA). The project also supports a shock response mechanism called *Almaouna* (emergency assistance), run by the CSA to provide unconditional seasonal cash transfers that target households hit by shocks such as drought.

A total of 1,014 households have already benefitted from emergency assistance in the department of M'Bout, with each beneficiary receiving 34,000 *ouguiya* (approximately \$95) per month during the lean season, when food reserves are depleted and the harvest has not yet begun. This year, 3,537 households in the drought-stricken neighboring department of Barkewol will receive these "shock-responsive" cash transfers. This financial assistance will mean, for example, that recipients will not have to sell their livestock and will be able to hold on to the few possessions they own.

As Lefebvre, the Bank's Task Team Leader for the project, puts it: "The ultimate aim of the social safety net system in Mauritania is to use a set of programs and tools to break the poverty cycle by tackling certain structural causes of economic and social vulnerability."

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/07/09/investing-in-early-childhood-to-break-the-poverty-cycle-the-case-of-mauritania>

July 9, 2018

## Sahel: Getting Religious and Traditional Leaders on Board to End Harmful Practices Against Girls



### Story Highlights

- About 30% of the population is under the age of 10 years-old, and 44.2% under 15 years old in Mauritania.
- A number of Sahelian countries are backing efforts designed to improve the lives of women and girls.
- The project has helped identify influential Muslim scholars and religious and traditional leaders.

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**NOUAKCHOTT, June 28, 2018**— In large areas of the Sahel, it is difficult for a girl to continue her schooling. After several years of primary education, she may not be able to read and write because of the poor quality of the education she has received. As she develops into an adolescent living in a rural area, her parents may see marriage as a way of keeping her safe.

Getting their daughter settled into a new home is considered a parent's important moral duty in the Sahel, and marriage a primary avenue toward securing a daughter's future.

As a result, the Sahel has some of the world's most alarming rates of child marriage, with adolescent girls experiencing a disproportionately high impact of it, especially on their health and development. Niger has the world's highest prevalence of child marriage (75%), followed by Chad in world's third highest (68%), and Mali in fifth (55%).

Young people comprise a growing and important population in the Sahel. In Mauritania, 30% of the population is under the age of 10 years-old, and 44.2% under 15. Young people find it difficult to get enough training for real job prospects and are impatient to see public policy on employment bear fruit.

African states and governments want to invest in their countries' human capital and in strategic partnerships that strengthen women's empowerment and harness Africa's greatest asset: its youth.

Initiated by the presidents of Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania, Niger and Chad *The Sahel Women Empowerment and Demographic Dividend (SWEDD)* is financed by the World Bank and its implementation supported by the United Nations' Population Fund.

The SWEDD project has helped identify influential Muslim scholars and religious and traditional leaders and from seven countries. In May 2018, they gathered in Nouakchott, Mauritania, to discuss the position Islam takes on issues related to child marriage, maternal and child health, family planning, girls' education, gender-based violence, and women's economic and social empowerment.

In their declaration of engagement, issued after the conference, they said they were *“committed to bring our contribution to the field of girls' schooling [and] reproductive health, including safe motherhood during pregnancy, during delivery, and women's right of access to contraceptive methods of birth spacing.”*

The message from the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar was clear: Child marriage in the eyes of Islam is *haram* (forbidden by Allah). The engagement of this regional network of religious leaders was formalized through a joint declaration and action plans to support the project's goals.

A network running from a nation's top scholars to religious leaders at community level will focus on creating an enabling environment for girls' social and economic empowerment in the rural areas of the Sahel. The second phase of it will see the inclusion of Christian leaders in these efforts too.

## Tonga: Sisters Saving Lives on Tonga's Roads



The 'Road Safety Sisters' from left to right: Team Leader Hepisipa Oko, Road Engineering Officer; Maile Fotu, Administrative Assistant at the Transport Sector Consolidation Project and; Ane Tauki'uvea, Road Technician Officer.

### Story Highlights

- Three women, known as the 'Road Safety Sisters' are working to make Tonga's roads safer through campaigns to students and drivers.
- The Sisters have helped reduce the average annual road fatalities in Tonga.
- Their work is supported by a World Bank project to improve the country's transportation sector.

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Tonga, May 9, 2018 - In the Kingdom of Tonga, three women, supported by the World Bank's Transport Sector Consolidation Project, are working to make the country's roads safer. Over two years of visiting students and running campaigns on road safety, the three women have contributed to reducing Tonga's annual road death toll from an average of 20 per year to five from 2016 to 2017 – earning Hepisipa Oko, Ane Tauki'uvea and Maile Fotu the nickname the 'Road Safety Sisters.'

Between 2012 and 2016, the two main causes of serious accidents and deaths were speeding and drink driving. The Road Safety Sisters believed that by focusing on increasing awareness of road rules and risks, they could contribute to changing dangerous behaviors across the country.

“There’s no driving school in Tonga, seatbelts are optional, and enforcement is often limited because police don’t have enough staff, particularly in the outer islands,” said Ane Tauki’uvea, Road Technician Officer.

### **‘You Only Live Once’**

Through the project and in collaboration with the Ministry of Infrastructure, the Police Department and the Ministry of Health, the Road Safety Sisters have travelled around the country to share facts and lessons on basic road rules and safety that can save – and is saving – Tongan lives.

Tonga’s Crown Prince Tupoutoa ‘Ulukalala was the guest of honor at the December 2016 launch of their first safety campaign, *Koe mo’ui ‘oku taha pe* (Tongan: ‘you only live once’), which was timed to start just before the holiday season when the majority of road accidents occur. The campaign has been strongly supported by media coverage across the country, particularly radio, which is the most effective way to communicate with Tonga’s distant outer islands.

The Road Safety Sisters visits to schools see them teaching kids simple safety tips such as using seatbelts, exiting cars on the pedestrian side, as well as safer cycling. Since 2016 the Sisters have visited around 100 schools across the country, reaching more than 10,000 students. These sessions have had a big impact, says one of the Sisters, Hepisipa Oko, who is a Road Engineering Officer for the Tongan Ministry of Infrastructure.

“We’ve had parents come back to us saying, my kids now tell me off if I speed or try to speak on the phone while driving,” said Oko.

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**“We have produced both ads and instructional videos, showing the risks of drink driving and speeding, but also videos that give useful tips on how we can all be safer road users”**

**Maile Fotu**

*Project Administrative Assistant*

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## Capturing Tongans' attention

However, the Sisters are well aware that for their efforts to be immediately impactful, they need to reach the drivers of today, too. To do so they have distributed information handouts at government ministries and police stations across the country that show road signs and their meanings. They have held radio programs with the police and safety officers to answer common questions from the public and have pushed messages heavily into the media and across Facebook, where videos have been very popular.

“One of the best ways to capture peoples' attention was through videos,” said Sister team member, Maile Fotu, who works as an Administrative Assistant on the project.

“We have produced both ads and instructional videos, showing the risks of drink driving and speeding, but also videos that give useful tips on how we can all be safer road users,” said Maile. “The kids love watching the videos and we leave them with the schools to show them again later and keep the messages alive.”

The instructional videos included information on cycling, being a passenger, pedestrian, and a summary of some of the skills you need for your driving test.

The team also received additional support for their work through the Global Road Safety Facility which has helped to finance some of their much-needed communication materials.

Unfortunately, following Cyclone Gita in February 2018, many street lights remained broken in the weeks that followed, leading to a recent spike in accidents. But this challenge has only spurred them on.

“We've already started on our next plans, and [we will] start speaking directly to communities and church groups again soon,” said Hepisipa Oko.

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/05/09/sisters-saving-lives-on-tongas-roads>

May 9, 2018



## West Africa and the Sahel Building Human Capital by Empowering Girls



Women constitute a well of untapped potential in Africa's Sahel region. With continued schooling, spaced pregnancies, skilled labor, and better gender dynamics, women can contribute much more to household income and national economic growth.

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Across the Sahel, it is difficult for a girl to continue her schooling. After several years of primary education, she might not be able to read and write because of the poor quality of the education she has received. As she moves into adolescence, her parents might see early marriage as a way of protecting her from the social exclusion that pregnancy outside of marriage would cause.

Settling their daughter into a new home is considered a parent's moral duty, and marriage a primary avenue toward securing a daughter's future. As a result, the Sahel has the some of the world's most alarming rates of child marriage. In Niger, 77 percent of women aged 25 to 49 years old were married before their 18th birthday.

## **Child marriage is haram**

In May 2018, in the context of the Sahel Women Empowerment and Demographic Dividend (SWEDD), influential Muslim scholars and religious and traditional leaders from seven countries gathered in Nouakchott, Mauritania, to develop action plans for leading community-based dialogue on the challenges faced by adolescent girls in order to promote healthier, more productive families.

The event was hosted by the Ministry of Islamic Affairs and Original Education and the Oulémas (theologians) of Mauritania. It was preceded by a theological debate, led by the University of Al-Azhar, on the position Islam takes on issues related to child marriage, maternal and child health, family planning, girls' education, gender-based violence, and women's economic and social empowerment.

Engaging with the Muslim scholars, the message from the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar was clear: Child marriage in the eyes of Islam is haram (forbidden by Allah).

Participants agreed to establish a network that runs from a nation's top scholars to religious leaders at community level to focus on enabling girls' social and economic empowerment in rural areas of the Sahel. The second phase of this effort will see a more comprehensive inclusion of Christian and traditional leaders as agents of positive change.

## **Championing the rights of women and girls**

This is just one of the many interventions that the countries involved in the SWEDD are undertaking to champion the rights of women and girls. Initiated by the presidents of Burkina Faso, Chad, Côte d'Ivoire, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, and Chad, SWEDD encourages ministries to work across sectors and borders to help more than 100,000 vulnerable girls stay in school, develop life skills, and access economic empowerment opportunities.

World Bank financing for the SWEDD includes \$205 million from IDA, with additional IDA18 resources planned to assist Benin and other neighboring countries.

The SWEDD is having an impact. For example, four countries have used SWEDD-produced analyses to revise national development plans with a stronger focus on socio-economic policies and gender equity measures that foster an enabling environment for the demographic dividend.

Six countries have adopted a standard, coordinated curricula tailored to low literacy learners and adolescent girls in poor areas. Tens of thousands of young boys and men across the region also are being engaged to develop understanding and support of female autonomy as involved brothers, husbands and fathers.

## Zambia: Empowering Women and Girls to Stay in School



### Story Highlights

- GEWEL, a girl's education and women's empowerment project, offers direct support to 89,000 vulnerable girls and women in rural Zambia.
- The project is supported through three government ministries, allowing a comprehensive approach to empowering women and girls.
- Nearly 20,000 women and girls were helped through the project in 2017, with a goal to reach more than 50,000 in 2018.

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LUSAKA, June 12, 2018 – Mary Maliti lives in Nkana Chiefdom in Lufwanyama District of Zambia, which is located more than 100 kilometers from the nearest urban center, Kitwe in the Copperbelt province. Like many other people in her community, Maliti is a peasant farmer. She grows peanuts, corn and vegetables on her one hectare of land.

Every year, Maliti struggled to grow food for her family's survival with sometimes little or nothing left to sell and earn a bit of income for her other needs. But following a business and life

skills training and a cash grant last year, the 50-year-old mother of five is now able to grow enough to feed her family and to bring to the market in her community and surrounding villages.

Matili is one of thousands of Zambian women and girls who has benefitted from the Girls Education and Women's Empowerment and Livelihood Project (GEWEL). Funded by the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank's fund for the poorest countries, GEWEL supports the Zambian government's goal of ending child marriage and women's empowerment.

The GEWEL Project works toward these goals by helping expand access to secondary school for adolescent girls from poor households through the Keep Girls in School (KGS) bursary. For working-age women, such as Maliti, the Supporting Women's Livelihood (SWL) program offers training and startup capital, as well as savings and mentoring support.

With SWL support, Maliti made enough money to buy seeds, pay for labor to till the land, and a bicycle to deliver crops to her customers. She also bought a pesticide sprayer to help her grow healthy vegetables.

"I am now able to move farm produce from my farm to my home and later sell them to people in this community and beyond," said Maliti. "In the past years, I made losses in my vegetable business because pests evaded my garden and some vegetables wilted before they could reach my customers because of the long distance from my farm."

Maliti has also learned how to save money and make a budget. Every Friday, she joins 41 other members of her saving club to make weekly savings of at least ZMW 12.50 per individual (roughly US\$1.25). This money is used to lend members of the saving club on loan basis to maintain their businesses and later paid back with interest.

"I am now able to save money firstly during our Friday meetings in my mobile money wallet, and a little at home for emergencies," she said.

GEWEL also addresses challenges faced by younger women, specifically adolescent girls. The KGS bursary helped 14-year-old Eunice Sichone return to school. Her father – after losing his wife and business – couldn't afford secondary school fees. Indeed, according to the 2010 Zambia Living Condition Monitoring Survey, most of the girls who dropped out of school reported that it was because of a lack of financial support. KGS aims to alleviate this constraint.

“These programs are specifically designed to help alleviate the challenges faced by vulnerable women and girls in rural areas, by promoting empowerment of women through longer-term investment, as well as enhancing government capacity to manage such interventions,” said Ina-Marlene Ruthenberg, World Bank Zambia country manager.

In Zambia, about 60% of the country’s population is in rural areas, where women and girls are particularly vulnerable compared to men, despite both living in poverty.

“In 2017, nearly 20,000 women and girls were reached through the GEWEL project,” said Emily Weedon, World Bank task team leader for the GEWEL project. “In 2018, the government plans to reach over 50,000 through both programs.”

With the government’s commitment, the project is being implemented across three ministries; the Ministry of Gender, General Education and, Community Development and Social Welfare. The coordinated, cross-ministerial approach is a comprehensive method to tackle the challenge of women’s and girls’ empowerment.

Through these ministries, the Zambian government is also targeting 14,000 girls aged 14 to 18 to return to school, while empowering 75,000 poor and vulnerable women to increase productivity of their livelihood activities through training and a one-time grant of US\$200.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/06/12/project-empowers-zambias-women-helps-girls-stay-in-school>

June 12, 2018

## FRAGILITY, CONFLICT AND VIOLENCE



Breaking the cycle of conflict and poverty

## Afghanistan: New Farming Methods Increase Prosperity and Hope in Khost Province



Promoting improved farming practices, the National Horticulture and Livestock Project supported by the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) has so far supported more than half a million Afghan farmers, including 160,000 women in 300 districts across 31 out of 34 provinces in Afghanistan.

### Story Highlights

- Farmers in Khost Province are improving their lives and livelihoods after adopting modern farming techniques and planting a broader variety of crops on their farms, which is increasing their incomes.
- The farmers are being taught these new methods by the National Horticulture and Livestock Project, which is also providing them hands-on guidance on best practices.
- The project operates in 31 target provinces across Afghanistan, aiming to increase productivity and overall production of plants, fruits, and vegetables.

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KHOST CITY – Mir Abdullah, 25, looks on with satisfaction as water is being pumped out of a well, irrigating different areas of his persimmon and plum orchard. Farmers like Abdullah used to



plant different kinds of fruit trees in one area, not knowing much about tree diseases, or how to irrigate properly.

“If I do horticulture in a better way as a government project has taught me, I can earn up to \$35,000 a year ,” says Abdullah, 25. “In the past I had no income from the horticulture work I did. We used to do horticulture just enough for household consumption.”

With the help of the National Horticulture and Livestock Project (NHLP), Abdullah now knows how best to put his five-jerib land (1 hectare) to maximum use. “I have learnt a lot this year from NHLP officers and have gained more experience, which has given me a better understanding of horticulture ,” he says.

NHLP activities in Khost Province have taught farmers the best practices in farming, encouraging and motivating them to use a modern orchard system. Abdullah is one such enthusiastic farmer: “Having an organized system of horticulture will definitely make us very satisfied and happy. In Khost, our orchards are now modern, very neat and ordered, as it is based on NHLP guidance . There is a good variety of trees and NHLP has taught us to plant them in a very different way from how we did in the past.”

“I have learnt a lot this year from NHLP officers and have gained more experience, which has given me a better understanding of horticulture.”

With a \$190 million grant from the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), the National Horticulture and Livestock Project operates under the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock and is working toward the overarching goal of increased productivity and overall production of horticultural products.

The farmers pay 25 percent of the cost of each tree provided by NHLP, but that share is expected to increase as farmers earn more with the modern system. “Until now, some farmers have contributed 25 percent cost of each tree, others contribute up to 30 percent. We hope their contributions go up to 50 percent ,” says Zaher Jan Saleem, NHLP Provincial Coordinator in Khost Province. “With the trainings we provide, farmers are readier to take on horticulture and get a good harvest.”

NHLP operates under the Ministry of Agriculture, Irrigation and Livestock (MAIL). It is working toward the overarching goal of increased productivity and overall production of horticultural products. The project began its activities in April 2013 and its work will run through the end of

2020. It is supported by a \$190 million grant from the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF).

The project aims to promote adoption of improved production practices by target farmers, with gradual rollout of farmer-centric agricultural services, systems, and investment support across the country. Its activities are currently implemented in 300 districts in 31 target provinces, numbers that may grow as conditions warrant. So far, the project supported more than half a million Afghan farmers including 160,000 women . NHLP activities have three components: horticultural production, animal production and health, and implementation management and technical assistance.

### **Modern and Great System**

Since starting its work in Khost Province in January 2016, NHLP has established more than 1,000 jeribs (200 hectares) of different varieties of orchards, such as pistachio, persimmon, apple, almond, and plum. The project covers 10 districts, including Khost city.

Haji Abdul Noor, 28, is another farmer from Gurbaz District in Khost Province. He has dedicated half of his 10-jerib land to growing almond, persimmon, plum, and apricot trees provided by NHLP. “It is a modern and great system, it will help us to have better harvests in the future ,” he says. Each tree is planted at a distance of 3 to 5 meters from each other and fertilized according to NHLP guidance. “The trees NHLP provided to us are certified and suitable to the environment of Khost ,” Haji Abdul Noor points out.

The project trains farmers in different topics in monthly Farmer Field Schools (FFSs). The training focuses on teaching proper irrigation methods, tree diseases and ways to deal with them, and best practices of farming. Farmer Saeedullah, 43, who has a high school education, says he is extremely happy about NHLP because of the FFS training. “Their horticulture methods are very developed and modern,” he says.

NHLP’s work in Khost Province has helped local farmers to learn better horticultural practices. The new skills and improved seeds for planting have given the farmers the ability and hope to harvest their lands for better livelihoods.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/06/20/new-horticultural-methods-raise-hopes-for-a-better-life-in-khost-province>

June 20, 2018

## Afghanistan: Supporting Inclusive Growth



Continuing uncertainties and security threats resulted in deceleration of growth and increase in fiscal pressures. However, Afghanistan has maintained macroeconomic stability, created conditions for a recovery and demonstrated significant progress in human development, for example, in 2017, approximately 8.5 million youth and children were enrolled in general education schools, representing a nine-fold growth since 2001, while the under-five mortality rate dropped 34 percent from 2003.

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### Challenge

Afghanistan is a deeply fragile and conflict-affected country, where the security situation remains precarious. Civilian casualties have reached unprecedented levels since 2016. The country's humanitarian challenges worsened, with increasing numbers of returnees and persons internally displaced by growing violence. Insecurity continues to affect livelihoods and economic activity, curtailing private investment and consumer demand. At the same time, difficult topography, vulnerability to climate change, and growing population impose additional constraints on development.

Economic growth in Afghanistan has slowly regained momentum as reforms have been implemented and confidence restored: From a low of 1.5 percent in 2015, real GDP growth accelerated to 2.3 percent in 2016, and reached 2.7 percent in 2017 – a decline in per capita terms, since population growth is at nearly 3 percent. Afghanistan has the third highest youth bulge worldwide: more than one-fifth of its adult population is aged between 15 and 24. Yet 55 percent of Afghans live in poverty, nearly 70 percent of the working-age population are illiterate, and youth unemployment is at 28 percent. Poor nutrition, especially of children, threatens welfare and education gains. Despite a 2 percent annual reduction, 41 percent of Afghan children under the age of five are still stunted.

Internal revenue mobilization has improved significantly over recent years, with domestic revenues now equal to around 12 percent of GDP. However, Afghanistan remains highly reliant on aid, with domestic revenues sufficient to finance only around half of budgeted expenditures. Afghanistan faces a difficult adjustment as aid flows decline from current very-high levels over the medium-term. New sources of revenues and foreign exchange receipts will be required.

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"Women did not even know that pregnancy could be prevented. When they first learned about it, they were very much surprised. But now they are very happy about the fact that they can have longer gaps between pregnancies, which eventually leads to them staying healthy."

Noori Ali

Head nurse, Hootkhail Health Center in Kabul city. The center received funding support from Sehatmandi Project.

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## Approach

The World Bank Group's engagement with Afghanistan is determined by the Country Partnership Framework (CPF) for 2017-2020, closely aligned with the government's National Peace and Development Framework. The CPF aims at helping Afghanistan:

- Build strong and accountable institutions to deliver services to citizens and encourage growth of the private sector;

- Support inclusive growth, with a focus on lagging areas; and
- Deepen social inclusion and reduce vulnerability, including among people displaced by conflict.

Over the CPF period the World Bank expects to provide \$250-300 million annually to Afghanistan through International Development Association (IDA) grants. Additionally, the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF) could provide up to \$800 million per year in grants, depending on donor commitments. The International Finance Corporation (IFC) aims to expand from the current \$54 million portfolio to about \$80 million. The Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) stands ready to provide support with a focus on finance, manufacturing, agribusiness and infrastructure.

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"My monthly income from milk collection is about 18,000 afghanis (around \$260). It is good extra income to my main income of selling vegetables. I am so thankful that I make halal money for myself and my children's future."

Ghulam Haidar

Resident of Khaiwa district in eastern Nangarhar Province and a beneficiary of Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Project (AREDP).

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## **Results**

The Citizens' Charter Afghanistan Project (Citizens' Charter) is the successor to the highly successful National Solidarity Programme (NSP), which introduced a community-driven development approach toward rural infrastructure and service delivery and reached about 35,000 communities over 14 years. The Citizens' Charter supports the first phase of the Government of Afghanistan's 10-year Citizens' Charter National Program and will target one-third of the country. The Citizens' Charter aims to improve the delivery of core infrastructure and social services to participating communities through strengthened Community Development Councils (CDCs). These services are part of a minimum service standards package that the government is committed to delivering to the citizens of Afghanistan.

Implementation progress includes: In rural areas: Over 8,400 community profiles (CPs) completed; more than 8,150 new CDCs elected; over 6,900 Community Development Plans (CDPs) completed; and more than 5,700 sub-project proposals prepared.

In urban areas: Implementation has been rolled out in over 666 communities. A total of 633 CPs completed; 633 CDCs elected; 592 CDPs completed; and 509 sub-project proposals approved.

Results expected under the first phase of the Citizens' Charter include: 1) 10 million Afghans reached; 2) 3.4 million people gaining access to clean drinking water; 3) improvements to quality of service delivery in health, education, rural roads, and electrification; 4) increase in citizen satisfaction and trust in government; and 5) 35 percent return on investment for infrastructure projects.

Bringing most of the efforts in public health service delivery under one umbrella in Afghanistan, the Sehatmandi (Health) Project aims to increase the utilization and quality of health, nutrition, and family planning services across Afghanistan. The project supports implementation of a Basic Package of Health Services and Essential Package of Hospital Services through contracting arrangements across the country. Sehatmandi also supports efforts to strengthen the capacity of the Ministry of Public Health at central and provincial levels to effectively carry out its stewardship functions.

Health indicators saw an improvement with the support of the System Enhancement for Health Action in Transition Program, the precursor of the Sehatmandi Project. For example, the newborn mortality rate fell 32 percent from 53 to 36 per 1,000 live births from 2000 to 2015; the number of functioning health facilities increased from 496 in 2002 to more than 2,800 in 2018, while the proportion of facilities with female staff increased; and births attended by skilled health personnel among the lowest income quintile increased from 15.6 percent to 50.5 percent.

The National Rural Access Project focuses on year-round rural access to basic social services. More than 2,000 km of rural roads have been upgraded through projects financed by IDA, ARTF, and other funds. The program also established the new Geographical Information System based network planning and rolled out the first nationwide inventory and condition survey of rural roads.

The ARTF supported the National Horticulture and Livestock Project to promote the adoption of improved technologies by target farmers. The project has financed the establishment of 16,750 hectares (ha) of new pistachio and fruit orchards in 32 provinces. In addition, over 90,000 ha of existing orchards have been rehabilitated and some 96,000 kitchen gardening schemes established.

Financed by IDA and the ARTF, the Irrigation Restoration and Development Project helped rehabilitate 181 irrigation schemes, benefiting 190,000 hectares and 402,000 farmer households. Regular data collection is now occurring from 127 hydrological and 56 meteorological stations. In addition, 40 cableway stations for flow measurement at selected hydrology stations have been installed.

Financed by IDA and the ARTF, the Afghanistan Rural Enterprise Development Project has established 5,450 Savings Groups (SGs) with a membership of some 61,460 rural poor (54 percent women) in 694 villages. The SGs have saved over \$5.56 million and members have accessed more than 52,450 internal loans (65 percent by female members) for productive and emergency purposes with a repayment rate of 95 percent.

To generate economies of scale, 524 Village Savings and Loan Associations (VSLAs) have been established as federations of the SGs. The VSLAs maintain accurate and up-to-date records of accounts with a good governance structure in place. On average, each VSLA has \$4,335 as loanable capital, which is further boosted with a seed grant injection.

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"The NHLP trees are not getting any diseases because they are certified, and we take much more care of them to achieve better harvests."

Saheb Nazar

Resident of Bazarak district in central Panjshir Province and a beneficiary of National Horticulture and Livestock Project (NHLP).

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### **Bank Group Contribution**

The World Bank has 16 active IDA projects in Afghanistan with net commitment value of over \$1.6 billion and continues to engage in rigorous analytical work underpinning policy dialogue.

The ARTF, administered by the World Bank, is a partnership between the international community and the Government of Afghanistan to improve effectiveness of the reconstruction effort. As of July 2018, it has an active portfolio of \$1.6 billion in 23 projects and a Recurrent Cost Window operation that has provided \$5 billion of budget support. The ARTF's support for National Priority Programs, operating costs of government operations, and the policy reform agenda is contributing to the achievement of the Afghanistan National Peace and Development Framework goals.

The Bank has actively supported key reforms, particularly in the fiscal and public administration spheres, while the non-lending activities have played a crucial role in informing the government of its strategic choices.

IFC's cumulative committed portfolio stands at \$200 million and its advisory services portfolio is \$13.9 million. IFC's investments have had a transformational impact in terms of access to finance and outreach.

MIGA has \$116.5 million of gross exposure in Afghanistan.

## **Partners**

The ARTF is a partnership between the international community and the Afghan government for the improved effectiveness of the reconstruction effort. As of July 22, 2018, 34 donors have contributed over \$10.6 billion, making the ARTF the largest contributor to the Afghan budget. A total of \$10.2 billion has been committed to Recurrent and Investment active portfolios (\$5 billion and \$5.19 billion, respectively).

## **Moving Forward**

Afghanistan's achievements in the last 10 years have been impressive in many ways. The coming years will be critical to strengthening Afghan institutions' ability to deliver basic services nationally and consolidate and expand the economic development gains made to date. IDA's role during this period—beyond the provision of its own resources—must be to continue to make the case for these principles, and to help the government effectively prioritize and utilize its own resources.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2018/10/01/supporting-inclusive-growth-in-afghanistan>

October 1, 2018



## Afghanistan: Villagers Accelerate Development Through Community Collaboration



### Story Highlights

- Community Development Councils have been at the center of the successful implementation of National Solidarity Programme development projects and will be strengthened under the Citizens' Charter Afghanistan Project.
- The project is set to build on the legacy of the National Solidarity Programme, which has benefited thousands of communities across Afghanistan.
- Citizens' Charter aims to improve the government's delivery of core infrastructure, emergency support, and social services to participating communities through the strengthened Community Development Councils.

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**BAZARAK DISTRICT, Panjshir Province** – Local villagers are watching the news on TV, their faces visibly exhausted. It is 2 pm, a time when farmers relax after six hours of work in the fields. Amir Shah, 27, laughs loudly at a scene on TV while pouring black tea for his friends.

Amir Shah and his fellow villagers are enjoying the fruits of their labor. In 2015, they built a micro-hydropower station that now provides electricity 24 hours a day to 229 families. “Electricity is good for the people in our village. It has connected us to the world and enabled us to use electronic equipment and we are really happy about this,” says Amir Shah, a farmer and chairperson of the Community Development Council (CDC) of Dangan-e-Nishrab village.

Amir Shah recalls that before its CDC was established, Dangan-e-Nishrab village, located in Bazarak district, Panjshir province, had no electricity, safe drinking water, or organized irrigation canals. The 250 families in the village suffered economically.

Nazir Ahmad, another resident and an elected member of Dangan-e Nishrab’s CDC, agrees that they were difficult times. “There were lots of problems,” he says. “We were weak economically, had few facilities, and used lanterns for light in our homes.”

The CDC was established after the village came under the coverage of the National Solidarity Programme (NSP) in 2003. NSP aimed to enhance service delivery and security while empowering communities to lead their own development. NSP worked in Panjshir province between 2003 and 2016, during which it set up 235 CDCs, which implemented more than 800 development projects in sectors such as roads, drinking water, agriculture, and electricity. With NSP support, Dangan-e Nishrab’s CDC identified, planned, managed and implemented six sub-projects that improved the villagers’ quality of life.

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"Under the Citizens’ Charter, we would like to improve the good relations between people and government, reduce poverty, and bring villages and cities closer."

Shafiqullah Sultani

Citizens’ Charter Provincial Manager, Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development

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### **Projects Met Essential Needs**

Dangan-e Nishrab’s first four sub-projects, started under the first phase of NSP, built irrigation canals and a water reservoir on a total grant of 1.8 million Afghanis (about \$25,000). The irrigation canals reduced water wastage and provided enough water for farming.

Safe drinking water was piped to every home from the water reservoir. “In the past, we used to bring our drinking water from the stream,” says Muhammad Khuram, 45, a teacher and CDC member in Dangan-e-Nishrab. “It was too far from our homes, but now we have safe drinking water in our homes.”

It was under the fifth sub-project, in the third phase of NSP, that the micro-hydropower station was built on a grant of 2.3 million Afghanis (about \$32,000). The power station generates 14.6 kilowatts throughout the year and provides villagers with clean energy.

For the sixth sub-project, the villagers received a Maintenance Cash Grant (MCG) of 640,000 Afghanis (about \$9,000), which helped maintain the canal infrastructure built in the earlier phase of NSP. The project generated more than 1,000 working days in short-term employment for 54 villagers.

NSP, implemented by the Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD), was supported by the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), Japan Social Development Fund (JSDF), and International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank Group’s fund for the poorest countries.

Between 2003 and March 2017, NSP established CDCs in over 35,000 communities across the country. The CDCs managed more than 89,600 rural infrastructure schemes, over 79,000 of which have been completed to date.

### **Hope for a Better Future**

The Government of Afghanistan’s Citizens’ Charter Afghanistan Project (Citizens’ Charter) succeeded NSP in January 2017 with funding from the government, the ARTF, and IDA. In effect a social contract between the government and CDCs, the Citizens’ Charter aims to improve delivery of core infrastructure, emergency support, and social services to participating communities through strengthened CDCs. The first phase of the project aims to reach 10 million people in all 34 provinces of Afghanistan, including four large municipalities, with services including universal drinking water access.

In Panjshir province, the Citizens’ Charter will be implemented in three phases. In the first phase, the project will cover 65 communities in three districts: Shutul, Onaba, and Abshar. “Through NSP, we implemented projects that met many of the challenges people in Panjshir province faced,” says engineer Shafiqullah Sultani, Citizens’ Charter Provincial Manager in Panjshir

province. “Under the Citizens’ Charter, we would like to improve the good relations between people and government, reduce poverty, and bring villages and cities closer.”

Dangan-e Nishrab villagers, who still benefit from the projects that their CDC implemented under NSP, are hopeful about the Citizens’ Charter. “Continuity of NSP will help us a lot and will provide us with more facilities,” says Nazir Ahmad, who had just heard about the Citizens’ Charter on television. His neighbor, Amir Shah, is confident that the Citizens’ Charter will continue the legacy of NSP and support even more development.

The CDCs have been strengthened by their experience in implementing NSP activities, which have prepared the ground for hundreds of villages like Dangan-e-Nishrab to improve further access to basic services. The expectation from communities is that the Citizens’ Charter will continue to empower villagers as well as urban citizens, but in an even better way.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/07/24/afghan-villagers-set-to-improve-service-delivery-based-on-project-experience>

July 24, 2018

## Afghanistan: Villagers Stand in Solidarity to Fight Hunger



Citizens' Charter Afghanistan Project aims to improve the delivery of core infrastructure and social services to participating communities through strengthened Community Development Councils.

### Story Highlights

- In a rural community of Balkh province that depends on agriculture and livestock, poor families face hunger in the autumn and winter when there is no work for them.
- A new grain bank set up by the village's Community Development Council, with support from the Citizens' Charter Afghanistan Project, aims to alleviate their struggles.
- The grain bank is part of a new government initiative to help communities set up philanthropic food reserves for the most vulnerable households, including internally displaced persons and returnees.

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**BALKH DISTRICT, Balkh Province** – Youngsters and elders are gathered in a corner of a muddy yard in Zargarán village, more than 20 kilometers outside the provincial capital of Mazar-e-Sharif. Handwritten posters lining the walls describe the village—its location, development plan, population, and resources. The villagers are discussing how best to support the poor through their newly established grain bank .

Established by Zargarán's Community Development Council (CDC) with support from the Citizens' Charter Afghanistan Project (Citizens' Charter), the grain bank aims to fight seasonal hunger by assisting the most vulnerable households in the community. Seasonal hunger is a major concern for over half the households in Zargarán.

"To date our progress is very good," says Mohammad Esa, 45, Chairperson of the CDC. "We established the grain bank through which we collect things like wheat, rice, clothes, and rugs. We register them in a book and then distribute the goods among people when they need it most." Esa believes that the grain bank can bring locals together as they work to make their village a better place for all.

The Zargarán village grain bank is part of a new initiative by the Government of Afghanistan to set up community philanthropic food reserves that can help the most vulnerable households, including internally displaced persons and returnees. The initiative is part of the Citizens' Charter Emergency Regional Displacement Response, which supports collective community action aimed at improving social inclusion and protecting the ultra-poor and vulnerable. Over 500 grain banks have been established across the country, with plans to scale up.

On entering a village, Citizens' Charter community mobilizers train CDC members to apply a variety of social processes to understand the conditions, resources, and needs of their communities. One process is the Wellbeing Analysis, which helps a CDC identify poor and vulnerable households in the community and tailor initiatives to address their needs.

Zargarán's Wellbeing Analysis shows that village incomes rely heavily on agriculture, livestock, and manual labor. Six of the village's 51 households (12 percent) are the most affluent, while 13 families (25 percent) are middle class. Twenty-nine families (57 percent) are poor and three families (six percent) live in complete poverty.

The poor and ultra-poor families are mostly laborers with no farmland. In the lean seasons when there is no work, these households face food shortages and struggle with hunger. This is precisely the time for which the village grain bank is used to their benefit.

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"We established the grain bank through which we collect things like wheat, rice, clothes, and rugs. We register them in a book and then distribute the goods among people when they need it most."

Mohammad Esa

Chairperson, Community Development Council, Zargaran village, Balkh province

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### **Delivery of Core Infrastructure and Services**

Citizens' Charter is the successor to the National Solidarity Programme (NSP), which introduced a community-driven development approach toward rural infrastructure and service delivery and reached about 35,000 communities over 14 years. The project will support the first phase (four years) of the government's 10-year Citizens' Charter National Priority Program and will target one third of the country.

The project aims to improve the delivery of core infrastructure and social services to participating communities through strengthened CDCs. Citizens' Charter has been set up as an inter-ministerial program to deliver a package of grants to CDCs that will support basic service standards. The Ministry of Rural Rehabilitation and Development (MRRD) is implementing Citizens' Charter in rural areas, while the Independent Directorate of Local Governance is responsible for the project in four major cities: Herat, Jalalabad, Kandahar, and Mazar-e-Sharif.

Citizens' Charter is supported by funds from the government budget, as well as the Afghanistan Reconstruction Trust Fund (ARTF), and the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank Group's fund for the poorest countries.

In Balkh province, MRRD has contracted ACTED, a nongovernmental organization working in Afghanistan since 1992, to mobilize communities, facilitate CDC elections, and help residents prepare community development plans. Implementation began in four of the province's districts in June 2017—Chaharkent, Khulm, Marmul and Balkh district, where Zargaran is located.

### **Support to Most in Need**

Citizens' Charter began working with Zargaran villagers a few months later in October 2017 to help them elect a CDC and start their development activities. Half of the CDC's elected members are women. "Our main objective in the CDC is to make our village more prosperous. Women are taking part in the activities equal to men," says Esa, who was elected CDC chairperson.

Following Citizens' Charter guidelines, the Zargaran CDC established sub-committees on thematic areas, such as agriculture, environment, youth, and vulnerable groups. The community

has applauded the work of the CDC, particularly the efforts of the sub-committee on vulnerable groups, which has led campaigns to gather support for the effort to eliminate seasonal hunger. The campaigns have resulted in generous donations from those with means to contribute to the grain bank. “We can see a nearly 80 percent positive social change in the village compared to the beginning of our work,” observes Nasir Ahmad Muslih, a social worker in Balkh district.

The CDC distributed the donated food and clothes from the grain bank among the ultra-poor families during the winter of 2017–2018. Twenty-eight-year-old Abdul Wahid describes the winter as a difficult one, during which he spent all of his savings on basic necessities. Wahid and his family were among those who received rice, wheat, and cooking oil from the grain bank.

A laborer in dire circumstances, Wahid needed the support, particularly in autumn and winter, when there was no work. “I have a family of eleven members and due to no work opportunities in winters, I am not able to support my family,” he says. “Thank God, last winter the local CDC gave us foodstuff from the grain bank and it helped us a lot.”

### **Poor Communities Willing to Contribute**

The grain bank initiative has proved successful in other ways. Besides tackling seasonal hunger, providing help to the poor families has encouraged them to send their children to school instead of to work on farms after the winter.

The local clergy has supported the charitable initiative as well. As Zargaran farmer Ghulam Mohammad, 45, explains, “People have always helped poor families as it is a highly regarded act in our religion, but the help has not been enough and we did not have a good mechanism for supporting the poor in our community. Now we do.”

The CDC manages the grain bank transparently, involving local officials, civil society, and local media, which helps ensure that donations are not lost or wasted. It also uses donated money to buy goods and distributes the donation-funded purchases and donated goods on a specific day to the families most in need.

The Citizens’ Charter initiative demonstrates that even in poor communities, Afghans are willing to support vulnerable households. “We have received encouraging feedback from the villagers about this initiative and they are helping us a lot in its implementation. I hope our activities will bring the change we want to see in the villages,” says Muslih.



<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/07/10/collective-action-tackles-seasonal-hunger-in-balkh-province>

July 10, 2018

## Afghanistan: Youth Gain Information and Communication Skills to Improve Future



Through business management support as well as technical training courses, the Afghanistan ICT Sector Development Project helped many start-up companies to grow and create job opportunities for the Afghan youth.

### Story Highlights

- Young men and women interested in information and communication technology (ICT) are being identified and trained to meet the coming needs of the ICT sector in Afghanistan.
- The training is part of the plan under the Afghanistan ICT Sector Development Project to encourage start-ups, innovation, and use of technology.
- The project, implemented by the Ministry of Communication, Information and Technology, supports the overall development of the ICT sector in Afghanistan.

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**KABUL CITY** – Ten young men are engrossed on their screens, the blue light from their screens lends an eerie haze to the room. They are hard at work at MSoft Technologies, a newly

established Afghan Information and Communication Technology (ICT) company in Kabul city. Tasked with developing different programs and software for a whole range of clients, domestic as well as international.

The blue calm is punctuated by typing and the occasional client call. In the far corner of the room sits Ahmad Shah Mohammadi, 29, one of the men responsible for setting up MSoft Technologies. “When I graduated from university in 2014, I and three of my classmates had an idea to establish our own company, but at that time it was just a dream for us,” says Ahmad Shah. “I now run my own company.”

MSoft Technologies is one of 22 companies that have received support from the Afghanistan ICT Sector Development Project under the Ministry of Communication, Information and Technology (MoCIT). The project trains young Afghans on all aspects of ICT business management. The target beneficiary pool is Afghan youth who want to deepen their knowledge of ICT and who are interested in setting up IT companies. “We received training on business planning, management system, administration, and marketing, which enabled us to run our own private IT company,” says Ahmad Shah. His company joins a market that is developing, with a whole range of IT start-ups coming up in Kabul.

Ahmad Shah’s company provides a range of services to over 300 national and international organizations across Afghanistan from different sectors, including government, education, health, corporations, nongovernmental organizations, societies, unions, and banks. “We have developed different programs and software, like financial management systems, archives data management, human resource systems, invitation and visa processing systems, to name a few. We also work on website and branding graphics,” he says.

Ahmad Shah started his company with a small team of four young men. With training and business management support from the project, they were able to expand and hire more people. “If I think about my past, I was searching for a job and struggling in 2014. With support from the MoCIT project, I am now creating jobs in my own company. This is a big achievement for me and my country,” Ahmad Shah says.

The main objectives for the ICT Sector Development Project are to develop an ICT innovation culture, encourage use of technology to create efficiency in government service delivery, promote technological adoption in Afghan society, and support the overall development of the

ICT sector in Afghanistan. The project is supported by the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank's fund for the poorest countries.

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"With support from the Ministry of Communications and IT project, I am now creating jobs in my own company. This is a big achievement for me and my country."

Ahmad Shah

Founder of an IT start-up, Kabul city

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### **Training Pays Off**

The project has used various ways to encourage ICT innovation, for example through a ICT sector development award. The 2016 award was won by Mohammad Ismail Shinwari, who received a cash prize of \$2,000. "I made a system that enables people to computerize or make an editable soft copy of a book in Dari and Pashto languages in a few minutes. We never had such software in the past" says Ismail, 26, who graduated from the Computer Science faculty of the Polytechnic University in Kabul city.

The award encouraged and motivated him to work harder. "I spent nine months working on this idea and will continue to work on it, to make it better," he says.

The thrust of the project is, however, on technical training. Since 2013, the project has trained more than 2,000 women and men. Mehri Najeem is one such student who participated in a four-month long database training. "It was a good opportunity for women like me as we received training related to our fields. The curriculum was quite different, and the training approach was very efficient," she says.

Mehri had graduated from the Polytechnic University but felt the need to participate in this course to deepen her knowledge on database. "During the program, I was trained in database management and I built my communication network with people," she says. "The training was good and helped me find a job, which I would not have been able to find otherwise."

The project has literally handheld Afghan youth who want to be a part of the ICT industry, and those who received support from the project are now helping to meet the demands of the industry in Afghanistan. "We have a huge contract for 2017 with the Ministry of Agriculture,

Irrigation and Livestock for developing applications, a website, and other IT systems. This contract will enable me to hire five more people in my company,” says Sayed Arif Sadat, Chief Executive of Turbo Soft Technologies, another start-up that has benefited from the MoCIT project. Although the ICT industry is new in Afghanistan and needs traction, it may soon emerge as a key source of economic growth.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2017/05/30/afghan-youth-undergo-training-to-power-future>

May 30, 2017

## Bangladesh: Rohingya Crisis Needs World's Support



Rohingya women with kids are walking to the camp with relief food at Camp Cox's Bazar, Bangladesh.

On July 2, World Bank Group President Jim Yong Kim and United Nations Secretary-General António Guterres came to Bangladesh to see firsthand the world's fastest-growing refugee crisis.

Before they left, they urged the world not to turn a blind eye to the plight of Rohingya refugees fleeing their homes in neighboring Myanmar.

Over 700,000 Rohingya have taken shelter in Cox's Bazar in southeastern Bangladesh since August 2017. Many now fear that their shanty homes – made of bamboos and plastic sheets, perched on deforested hills – could crumble under the heavy rains of the monsoon season.

But the flow of refugees has not stopped. As Kim and Guterres visited Cox's Bazar under gray skies, more people arrived with stories of hardship and brutality. "I have worked in some of the poorest countries in the world, but the experience here has been deeply troubling," Kim said. "I have been deeply moved by the courage and the dignity of the Rohingya people and appalled by their stories of what they had to endure: rape, torture, killing, burning of homes. As the UN

Secretary-General said, the Rohingya are one of the most discriminated against and vulnerable communities on Earth.”

The Government of Bangladesh has done the world a great service by keeping its borders open and supporting the refugees, Kim said. But the responsibility should not be Bangladesh’s alone. The number of refugees in Cox’s Bazar— one of the poorest districts in Bangladesh—is now more than twice that of the local population.

Despite its own challenges, Bangladesh has been drawing from its own resources to respond to the crisis. Among other measures, the country has allocated 5,000 acres of land for temporary shelters, provided food relief, deployed mobile medical teams, and carried out large-scale immunization campaigns. Bangladesh has built 13 access roads to the temporary and registered camps and established water points and sanitation facilities. With the monsoon rains continuing, the government has relocated 30,000 people to safer ground while preparing to move other vulnerable people, with support from UN agencies and non-governmental organizations.

As the needs continue to grow, the World Bank Group announced last week up to \$480 million in grant-based support to Bangladesh for health, education, sanitation, disaster preparedness, and other services for the refugees until they can return home safely, voluntarily, and with dignity. This financing will also help build the country’s capacity to deal with the crisis. The World Bank’s ongoing programs also will support the people in Cox’s Bazar.

But the UN Secretary-General said more funds are urgently needed as a key \$950 million humanitarian aid plan is just over a quarter funded. Prior to visiting Cox’s Bazar, Kim and Guterres met with Prime Minister Sheikh Hasina to express their gratitude to the people and government of Bangladesh.

“The government’s relief effort, along with those of domestic and international relief agencies, has saved thousands of lives,” Kim said. “We look forward to continuing to work with the government to create and maintain dignifying living conditions for the Rohingya people. We’ve come to an agreement that we will build some more permanent structures and provide more services—the kinds of basic things that everyone needs, such as health care and education.”

Kim explained that support for the Rohingya is one of several areas where the Bank Group is working closely with Bangladesh.

“With respect to the government of Bangladesh, we believe so strongly in the direction they are going – for issues quite separate from the Rohingya – that we provided over \$3 billion of low interest, long maturity loans this year for Bangladesh’s development priorities,” Kim said.

He added that this is the highest level of financing the World Bank has ever provided to Bangladesh from the International Development Association—the Bank’s fund for the poorest countries. IFC, the World Bank Group’s private sector arm, also committed more than \$420 million of financing to private companies in Bangladesh this year.

“We consider Bangladesh an important partner in reducing global poverty, and we’re committed to helping Bangladesh achieve its aspiration of becoming an upper-middle income country,” Kim said.

The joint World Bank-UN visit to the refugee camp signals a closer working relationship with the United Nations to address fragility, conflict, violence, and forced displacement—situations that can last a decade or more, requiring more resources than humanitarian aid alone can provide. Kim, Guterres, and Filippo Grandi, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees, all described the current level of cooperation between the World Bank and UN agencies as unprecedented.

“We have been working very closely with our UN partners to bring humanitarian response and development together,” Kim said. “The refugee situation around the world is everybody’s problem. It’s not just a problem for host countries, or just a problem for the refugees—this is everybody’s problem. What I saw today was heart-breaking and appalling. On the other hand, I was deeply inspired by the courage and dignity of the people who were kind enough to speak with us.”

“The work is not done; it’s just getting started,” Kim concluded. “At the World Bank Group, we are committed to doing more to make sure that the Rohingya, and all of us, can see justice. We are all Rohingya.”

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/07/02/rohingya-crisis-needs-world-support.print>

July 2, 2018



## Cameroon: Linking Humanitarian Aid to Local Development



To help poor countries respond to the needs of both refugee and host communities, the World Bank has created the \$2 billion IDA18 regional sub-window for refugees and host communities. In May 2018, Cameroon became the first country to benefit.

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Hadjidjatou Djibrilla lives in poverty, as do most residents in the commune of Kouba in the East Region of Cameroon. At 38, she has been a refugee for 12 years. She fled her country when fighting between the government and rebel forces intensified.

Cameroon ranks 13th in the world for hosting refugees—seventh in Africa. Almost 350,000 refugees were counted as registered in Cameroon by February 2018, with Central African refugees accounting for 20 percent of the population of the country's East Region and 6 percent of its Adamawa Region. Most may never return home.

“I no longer want to leave,” says an emotional Djibrilla. “I feel safe here and my children are growing up in a peaceful environment. The war in my country has not ended, so why should I go back?”

More than half the world’s refugees have been displaced for over four years. Their situation can no longer be handled as a temporary humanitarian crisis. A more permanent solution must be found—one that offers a new beginning for refugee men, women, and children, while easing pressure on the communities that host them, which are already very poor.

### **A new financing mechanism**

To help poor countries respond to the needs of both refugee and host communities, the World Bank has created the \$2 billion IDA18 regional sub-window for refugees and host communities.

In May 2018, Cameroon became the first country to benefit from this mechanism, with \$274 million in additional financing for four current projects in the development and social protection, education, and health sectors. Cameroon is one of the eight countries selected to pilot this new form of integrated assistance, along with Chad, Democratic Republic of the Congo, Djibouti, Ethiopia, Niger, Pakistan, and Uganda.

Elisabeth Huybens, World Bank Country Director for Cameroon, said additional IDA18 resources specially earmarked for refugees and host communities “will allow us to directly target these persons in existing projects, and to provide support to the State, which can very often be overwhelmed with managing the influx of refugees at the regional level.”

Kouassi Lazare Etien, the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) Representative in Cameroon, believes “this new approach demonstrates that the presence of refugees can also contribute to the development of host communities.”

### **Benefiting refugees and hosts alike**

For example, the third phase of the Community Development Program Support Project (PNDP) will facilitate community development activities and build local government capacity in management and host services. It aims to address the concerns of refugees at the local level, intervening in such sensitive issues as gender-related violence and land tenure.

Activities under the Social Safety Net Project will be stepped up in the host regions, with refugees receiving identification documents to help them access Cameroon's national social protection system, employment assistance, and other citizen services.

The Cameroon Education Reform Support Project will work with the Ministry of Basic Education to assist schools in these regions to integrate children in a normal curriculum and special education programs, as well as bring in more state-paid teachers and textbooks.

## Chad: Finding harmony for refugees and host communities



The number of people seeking refuge in Chad continues to grow, with over 634,000 refugees, asylum seekers, and internally displaced people identified by the UN Refugee Agency in April 2018. IDA18 funding will improve conditions for refugees and host communities alike.

Some 8,000 people are desperately trying to rebuild their lives in the Dar es Salaam refugee camp located along the banks of Lake Chad in the town of Baga Sola, Chad. Dispersed over several kilometers in endless canvas tents bearing the colors of the United Nations, they are struggling to recover from the trauma inflicted by Boko Haram.

Further away in the far south of the country, the Goré prefecture is also buckling under the weight of refugees. “Here, all the returnees and refugees who fled the war in the Central African Republic (CAR) account for half of the local population,” explains Augustin Gongtar, Goré’s former prefect.

The Dar Sila region, which straddles the border with Sudan, has sheltered refugees from Darfur for over a decade, and more recently, from CAR. Here, too, the region’s former governor, General Moussa Haroun Tirgo, paints a bleak picture, “We are hosting roughly 54,000 refugees in terrible

living conditions, with no access to water or basic social services. We are also cut off for five months of the year because of floods.”

### **Improve access to social services**

In September 2018, the World Bank approved \$60 million in IDA grant funding to help Chad improve access to basic social services and livelihoods for refugees and host communities and to help strengthen national refugee management systems through the Refugees and Host Communities Support Project (PARCA).

There are an estimated 1.1 million direct and indirect project beneficiaries, 30 to 50 percent of whom are refugees located in the refugee hosting areas of the East and South regions and around Lake Chad.

“This grant complements the aid already provided to some 450,000 refugees by local communities, the Government of Chad, and international agencies. This project aims to create the conditions that will enable the gradual integration of refugees into the social and economic landscape of the country and strengthen the national refugee management system,” states Soukeyna Kane, World Bank Country Director for Chad.

The PARCA will improve access to health and education services with investments to rehabilitate or build new public service infrastructure in refugee hosting areas. It will contribute to the expansion of Chad’s social protection system to include vulnerable households in Chadian and refugee communities through cash transfer programs or support for productive activities. Support also will go to the National Commission for Refugee and Returnee Assistance and national mechanisms for refugee protection, registration, and monitoring.

### **New partnership for comprehensive response**

The project was developed by a technical inter-ministerial committee chaired by the Ministry of Economy and Development Planning in collaboration with the UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR), the World Food Programme, European Civil Protection and Humanitarian Aid Operations, and other relevant agencies.

“The UNHCR welcomes this World Bank financing for the Government of Chad, which is part of the new Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework and the humanitarian-development

continuum. We stand ready to make a success of this new, inclusive partnership model and replicate it in other projects,” affirms UNHCR Representative, Mbili Ambaoumba.

## Uganda: Renewing Support and Hope in Refugee Host Communities



With a refugee population of 1.5 million, Uganda is the biggest refugee hosting nation in Africa and third in the world. Often overlooked by humanitarian aid, poor host communities are receiving new attention and support to improve their lives.

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Edith Kwarisima is a resident of Kyarugaju, a poor village near the Nakivale Refugee Settlement Camp in the Isingiro district of southern Uganda. Refugees have been coming to this camp since the 1960s, and 52-year-old Kwarisima has grown up around them.

Uganda's refugee policy is considered one of the most progressive and generous in the world, providing free healthcare and education in refugee settlements and permitting refugees to move and work freely. Refugees are allocated plots of land to settle and farm, which has enabled more self-reliance and integration into local communities.

This has brought benefits to the local communities through increased demand for goods and services, creating employment and income spill-over. But the continued swell in refugee

numbers since 2016, due to conflicts in neighboring countries, has increasingly strained social services and the environment as well as the coping abilities of local host communities.

Efforts by the government and humanitarian organizations have largely concentrated on refugees, but more can be done for the communities that have given them a new home.

“The refugees have good health facilities within an easily accessible range and have drugs all the time. We don’t have such privileges,” explains Kwarisima. “Getting health services here is a nightmare. You can’t even make a phone call during an emergency because we don’t have network.”

### **Scaling up support for all**

The Government of Uganda hopes to turn the tide by improving service delivery, expanding economic opportunities, upgrading municipal infrastructure, and improving access to water, health, and education in refugee hosting districts. Additional financing of \$283 million from the IDA18 regional sub-window for refugees and host communities will help make it possible by scaling up support to World Bank-financed projects already underway.

So far, Uganda has accessed financing under the IDA sub-window for two operations: \$50 million for the Support to Municipal Infrastructure Development Program to improve physical planning, land tenure security, and small-scale infrastructure; and \$58 million for the Integrated Water Management and Development Project to improve access to water and sanitation services for several rural and urban refugee hosting communities across Uganda.

Two other operations are still under preparation: The Secondary Education Improvement Project and the Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project (DRDIP), a regional program in the Horn of Africa to expand existing social and economic infrastructure and boost income-generating activities for both refugees and host communities.

### **Addressing needs of hosts**

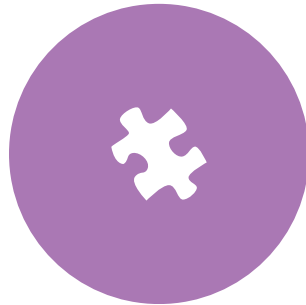
DRDIP in Uganda, supported by a \$50 million IDA grant, is working to protect the interests of host communities in 11 districts, including Kwarisima’s. She and fellow residents of Kyarugaju are pleased to see construction begin on a new local health clinic, and they look forward to new school classrooms to ease overcrowding and other improved amenities.



Neighbor Robert Kyomuhendo says, “this project has given us a lot of hope that things will be better for all of us.”

Robert Limlim, Director of DRDIP, agrees: “With more support, we believe the lives of the locals who are hosting refugees will improve.”

## JOBS AND ECONOMIC TRANSFORMATION



Creating good jobs, supporting a strong private sector

## Albania: Restoring Growth and Improving Prosperity



The New Bazaar is a vivid space and a hip place in Tirana, the newest traditional bazaar in town.

Over the past two decades, Albania has transformed from one of the poorest countries in Europe to an upper-middle-income country, reducing poverty from 25.4% in 2002 to 14.3% in 2012. The global financial crisis halted growth, slowed poverty reduction, and reduced employment opportunities. Albania is implementing macro-fiscal and structural reforms to revitalize growth and job creation, while advancing the European Union integration agenda. Under the Fiscal Year 2015-19 Country Partnership Framework, World Bank engagement is expected to expand to \$1.2 billion in support of Albania's development agenda.

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### Challenge

Albania's key challenges include the need to accelerate growth and create jobs. The high pre-crisis growth rate of 6 percent was fueled largely by domestic consumption driven by the high level of remittances. In the aftermath of the 2008 financial crisis, growth dropped to only 1.7 percent a year in 2013 and 2014; the crisis also exposed the unsustainability of this past growth model and highlighted the need to shift from consumption-fueled to investment- and export-led growth.

There are now early signs of this investment- and export-led recovery, propelled by ongoing reforms in the energy sector, financial sector pensions and fiscal management. Deeper efforts are needed to accelerate inclusive economic growth with the aim of maintaining macro-fiscal and financial sector sustainability, improving the investment climate and unleashing private sector growth, removing barriers to employment for job creation, and improving governance and public service delivery.

Enhancing regional connectivity and access to regional and global markets, coupled with export and market diversification, can help accelerate growth. These aspects are recognized in Albania's National Strategy for Development Integration, which targets reforms for economic recovery, job creation, and more efficient social service delivery. Maintaining reform momentum through resolute implementation is critical to Albania's continued economic growth and aspirations for EU integration.

### **Approach**

In the decades since Albania emerged from communist isolation, the World Bank Group (WBG) has played a major role in supporting reforms, strengthening institutions, and financing investments across a range of sectors.

With prolonged low investment and growth after the global financial crisis, amid reversed poverty reduction and increased macroeconomic and fiscal imbalances, the Government initiated a broad-based reform program with International Monetary Fund (IMF) and WBG support. The Government's six cross-cutting priorities—macroeconomic and fiscal sustainability, competitiveness, governance and accountability in public services, energy, land, and water—are reflected in its National Strategy for Development and in the Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) for Albania.

The WBG's Country Partnership Framework (CPF) FY15–19 significantly boosted Bank engagement, outlining US\$ 1.2 billion in lending support for Albania's reforms, equitable growth, and integration into the EU. The CPF's strategic engagement focuses on restoring macroeconomic balances, creating conditions for accelerated private sector growth, and strengthening public sector management and service delivery.

## Results

Results under the current CPF and the previous FY10–14 Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) include:

### Country Partnership Framework

- Public sector arrears, at more than 5 percent of GDP in 2013, were cleared by the Government in 2015.
- With the energy sector's improved financial situation, government guarantees were reduced by half in 2015, compared to 2013.
- Energy sector distribution losses declined to 31 percent in 2015, compared to 49 percent in 2013.
- The energy sector's billing collection rate reached 98 percent in 2015, from 78 percent in 2013.
- Nearly 2,140 previously ineligible Albanians had access to a social pension in 2016.
- A €200 million Policy-Based Guarantee in 2015 addressed the Government's funding needs and minimized borrowing costs and also helped save €120 million in interest payments.

### Country Partnership Strategy

- Rehabilitation works were completed in 11 irrigation dams during 2009–13.
- An EU-compliant National Metrology Laboratory was established, an EU-compliant regulatory framework for inspections was adopted, and 175 government officials received associated training during 2010–12.
- A new National Inspectorate was established in 2012, reducing the number of inspectorates from 36 to 15.
- Of the over 50 countries assessed under the Bank's Debt Management Performance Assessment (DeMPA) program, Albania is among the few with sound debt management practices in most areas, as defined by DeMPA methodology.
- 110 kilometers of secondary and local road networks were rehabilitated or constructed, connecting 81 communities by road to services and markets during 2009–12.
- The triple shifting of classrooms was eliminated and double shifting reduced from 36 to 16 percent in basic education and 6 percent in secondary education during 2005-12.

- Income generated from improved forestry, agricultural lands and water resources increased by 28 percent and sedimentation was reduced by 200,000 tons in about 250 rural communities in 2012 compared to 2005.
- One of the first countries to sequester carbon by restoring 5,427 hectares of degraded lands. In July 2013, 128,757 certified emission reductions (CERs) were issued by the United Nations Framework Convention on Climate Change. On this basis, the World BioCarbon Fund transferred US\$ 450,000 carbon payments to Albania.
- 45,000 square meters of hazardous waste have been encapsulated in safe landfill facilities, and human health hazards were cleaned up in 2010 at Porto Romano, revitalizing one of the most contaminated sites in Albania.

Albania was declared compliant with the Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI, the global standard of open and accountable natural resource management) in May 2013, after the successful publishing of four EITI reports between 2009 and 2012.

### **IDA Results**

Albania has made encouraging strides over the past two decades and is considered an International Development Association (IDA) success story. It was able to lift 200,000 people out of poverty from 2002 to 2008, thereby halving the poverty rate from over 25.4 percent to roughly 12.4 percent. Albania graduated from IDA in 2008 and is now creditworthy for the International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD). IDA-supported results in Albania include the following:

- 300 schools were built or reconstructed during 1994–2012, benefiting 100,000 children.
- 115 health centers were constructed, reconstructed, and/or equipped in the poorest areas of the country during 1994–2000.
- 335,000 hectares of the irrigation and drainage system were rehabilitated or upgraded, benefiting 100,000 families during 1994–2008.
- Land erosion was reduced by 220,000 tons during 2000–2008.
- 1,700 kilometers of national and rural roads were repaired, constructed, and/or maintained during 1994–2008.

## **Bank Group Contribution**

The WBG's involvement in Albania began in 1991. Since then, the Bank has been seen as a trusted and highly valued partner that has contributed to Albania's growth and development. Throughout the past 25 years, the WBG helped the country achieve impressive results supported by more than US\$ 2.4 billion in assistance through commitments from the IDA, IBRD, the International Finance Corporation (IFC), and the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA).

The current portfolio consists of nine IBRD-financed loans and one IDA credit, totaling US\$ 544 million. IFC's committed portfolio is about US\$ 233 million, and MIGA gross exposure is about US\$ 297 million.

## **Partners**

Foreign assistance continues to be a critical factor in Albania's development. With around US\$ 350–400 million in external annual support, foreign assistance covers 40–50 percent of the capital expenditures in the budget. The Bank and the EU are key strategic partners in Albania and their programs cover multiple sectors. Collaboration and coordination with development partners are strong aspects of the Bank's engagement, leveraging other partners' assistance in some of the key sector programs, such as transport, energy, health, social assistance, public sector management, and environment.

Cooperation remains active with multilateral partners, especially the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the European Investment Bank (EIB), and the United Nations, and with a number of bilateral partners, including Austria, Japan, Germany (through the German Development Bank [KfW]), Sweden, and Switzerland. In-country development partner coordination is led by the Government, and coordination between development partners is organized through the EU, including efforts to move toward a sector-wide approach in key areas, led by joint government-donor sector working groups.

In addition, FDI in strategic sectors including services, banking, and energy sector has averaged 7.7 percent of GDP since the global financial crisis and finances around 65 percent of the current account deficit.

## **Moving Forward**

The WBG program of support is guided by the CPF, which takes the SCD's direction forward to a new economic growth model for rebalancing the economy toward equitable, inclusive, and export-driven growth. The Albania SCD and CPF were the first in the Europe and Central Asia (ECA) region and were among the early successful pilots of the WBG's new country engagement model.

The CPF is built around three focus areas: (i) Restoring macroeconomic balances; (ii) Creating conditions for accelerated private sector growth; and (iii) Strengthening public sector management and service delivery. Implementation of the strategy is progressing well and builds on the Bank's comparative advantages. The CPF includes a mix of lending instruments, with up to 40 percent of the indicative lending in the form of budget support, subject to continued progress on reforms.

Advisory Services and Analytics (ASA) complement the lending program. The ongoing analytic work includes a Jobs and Skills Review, a Country Fiduciary and Project Implementation Assessment, a Subnational Governance and Finance Review, and Land Administration Data Improvement Technical Assistance. IFC investments are expected to be roughly US\$ 150–200 million over the course of the CPF period, and MIGA will continue to explore guarantee opportunities.

## **Beneficiaries**

Albania is renewing environmental and community infrastructure to boost tourism, by upgrading south coastal village conditions and protecting natural and cultural endowments. The Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Clean-up Project has helped upgrade village infrastructure with water supply systems, new roads, and newly paved village squares. "Such improvements are leading former residents to return," says Qeparo village leader, Stefan Kokedhima. "When people saw that the new water supply was being built, there were many requests to come back to the old village."

The upgrade of Saranda's port with Bank financing has boosted the economy through increased tourism. "The number of tourists increased by 20 percent. Last year, it was 500,000. This year it was 600,000, which makes 100,000 more and that was due to the port," says Ben Çipa, tour operator.



Pension reform in Albania, supported by Bank technical advice, allows thousands of Albanians to receive a social pension designed to help people over 70 who had worked but had not paid into the previous retirement plan. “Getting a pension after years of living without one was a big relief,” says Sose Kamberaj, who is 76 and lives in Vlora. “This pension helps me to take care of myself. I feel happy with it because I didn’t get anything in the past. Before, when we only had my husband’s pension, we couldn’t cope. Now we can.”

As part of a Bank-financed project, thousands of Albanians are using an online service to secure their property rights, which are fundamental to well-functioning real estate markets. “It used to take several trips – and lots of stress – getting the papers needed to help clients buy and sell their property,” says Mimoza Sadushaj, an Albanian notary. But now, Mimoza can finally access land and property registration records online. “With one click we can see information, fill out forms, everything! But before, it was harder, you had to work with hard copy.”

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2017/04/17/albania-restoring-growth-and-improving-prosperity>

April 17, 2017

## Bhutan: Supporting Prosperity in the Country of Happiness



Through development policy credits, Bhutan has accomplished critical policy reforms which will create a sound foundation for future development.

Bhutan has reduced poverty and increased shared prosperity over the past decade. Building on the country's success, the International Development Association (IDA) has been supporting policy reforms in the areas of fiscal management and job creation through expanding private sector development to increase prosperity. IDA has also supported rural and urban development through investment lending.

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### Challenge

The public sector, including significant investment in hydropower, has been the main driver of the country's development accomplishments. Private sector remains weak to create quality jobs for youth. As a result, while the overall unemployment rate was 2.1 percent in 2016, the youth unemployment rate reached 13.2 percent. Rapid development has led to urbanization (about 40 percent of the population now lives in the urban areas), which puts pressure on urban infrastructure such as housing, water and sanitation. While about 60 percent of the labor force

is in agriculture, Bhutan's mountainous geography and lack of rural infrastructure have prevented the sector from increasing productivity.

## **Approach**

The World Bank is one of the most important development partners in Bhutan. Its Country Partnership Strategy (FY2015-2019) (CPS) and Performance and Learning Review (PLR) in 2017 are aligned fully with Bhutan's 11th five-year plan for 2013-2018. The CPS focuses on (a) improving fiscal and spending efficiency; (b) increasing private-sector growth and competitiveness; and (c) supporting green development. Programmatic development policy credit (DPC), combined with relevant analytical work and technical assistance, was effective in supporting government policy reforms. DPCs enabled the World Bank Group to better respond to the government's demands to support key policy reforms to address the structural constraints in public finance and private sector development. DPCs have provided a platform for bringing together analytical work, technical assistance and policy dialogue. The investment projects have also helped support key physical and social infrastructures in the most remote communities as well as in the most booming urban towns. These IDA operations have also contributed to strengthening government capacity. Furthermore, the IDA operations have provided an important platform for the World Bank Group to collaborate across Global Practices as well as between the World Bank and IFC.

## **Results**

Through development policy credits, Bhutan has accomplished critical policy reforms which will create a sound foundation for future development. On fiscal management and domestic revenue mobilization, the government approved a debt policy that set debt limits to improve fiscal sustainability in 2016. To this effect, the non-hydropower debt (% of GDP) declined to 19% in 2017/18 from 27% in 2014/15, below the target at 25% in the debt policy. Also, parliament approved the establishment of a stabilization fund in 2017 to manage future inflows of hydropower revenues. Furthermore, the cabinet approved the introduction of Goods and Services Tax (GST) in 2017. Once the GST bill is approved by parliament within a few years, the collection of GST is likely to contribute significantly to domestic revenues to invest in Bhutan's people.

Access to finance remains one of the key constraints to private sector development. Therefore, on private sector development, the government approved the Financial Sector Development Action Plan in 2016. Ever since, the number of micro, small and medium enterprises loans in the collateral registry have significantly increased (348 in 2014 to 2,508 in 2017) and the percentage of people with bank accounts have increased to 65% in 2017 from 34% in 2014. Also, the establishment of an online property and land registration system in Thimphu, the capital city, in 2016 is expected to improve the investment climate.

The recently completed investment project Remote Rural Communities Development Project (RRCDP) has, between October 2012 and May 2018, improved road access to markets to at least 11 project Chiwogs (hamlets) – building 22.9 kilometers of farm roads and benefiting about 299 households. The project has also supported beneficiaries in 88 Chiwogs with access to community and marketing infrastructure, such as power tiller tracks, power tiller machinery, and food bridges – with a total of 3,597 households benefitted.

Through the Second Urban Development Project (BUDP2) approved in May 2014 about 400 households got new piped water connections and about 250 households got sewerage connections by 2017. The project is expected to close in June 2019. BUDP2 has also helped increase local revenue collection of the two municipalities (Thimphu and Phuntsholing by almost doubled and 50% respectively) in the last two years. The project has also enabled issuing new building permits for service plots to 175 plots and is developing two “local area plans” in Thimphu (the capital city). In Bhutan 600 households have been provided new piped water and sewerage connections and 250 municipal staffs have been trained under the project.

### **Bank Group Contribution**

As of October 2018, IDA lending portfolio consists of Development Policy Credit (\$30 million), and BUDP2 (\$29 million). To complement the projects with IDA credits, the World Bank also provides support through more than 12 grants / trust-funded activities including Bhutan Reducing Emissions from Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD) readiness project (\$3.8 million) and Sustainable Financing for Biodiversity Conservation and Natural Resources Management (\$4 million), Global Agriculture Food Security Program (\$8 million), Hydromet Services and Disaster Resilience Regional Project (\$3.8 million), Bhutan BLSS Economic Census (\$0.7 million) and the Preparation of Strategic Program of Climate Resilience (\$1.5 million). These activities are underpinned by Advisory Services and Analytics including a Labor Study,

Managing Environmental and Social Impacts of Hydropower in Bhutan, Investment Climate Assessment, Agribusiness Policy Note, and Practical solutions for addressing labor related barriers to Bhutan's private employment growth.

### **Partners**

The World Bank continues to work closely with other development partners. The Development Partner Group coordinated by the UN functions as the overall coordination mechanism. In addition, the World Bank partners with other development partners on specific projects: (a) the European Commission and the Austrian Development Agency contribute to a Public Financial Management Multi-Donor Fund; (b) a Debt Sustainability Analysis is jointly conducted with the IMF, and (c) Japan contributes to Bank projects through the Japan Social Development Fund, Global Facility Disaster Reduction and Recovery, PHRD (The Japan Policy and Human Resources Development Fund).

### **Moving Forward**

The 2017 PLR confirmed that three CPS focus areas remained relevant to addressing Bhutan's development challenges. The World Bank Group is in the process of conducting the Strategic Country Diagnostics which will be followed by the formulation of the next Country Partnership Framework (CPF) in 2019. Discussions are also underway with the government to build a pipeline of activities in conjunction with the preparation of the 12th FYP for 2018-2023. The new government will be formulated in late 2018 and the WBG plans to start engaging with the new government through a series of policy notes.

### **Beneficiaries**

"I was left by my husband while pregnant with my third child. This new poultry business has given me the motivation to succeed in life. I want to secure the best education to my children – better than what their father would have been able to provide," says Dechen, a 31-year old poultry farmer who lives in a remote community of Trongsa Dzongkhag with her mother and three children. Dechen is a poultry farmer and a beneficiary of the Remote Rural Communities Development Project (RRCDP). Coming to completion in May 2018, RRCDP has improved road access to markets to at least 11 project Chiwogs (hamlets) in Samtse and Trongsa Dzongkhags – building 22.9 kilometers of farm roads and benefitting about 299 households.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2018/10/18/bhutan-supporting-prosperity-in-country-of-happiness>

October 18, 2018

## Burkina Faso: Agriculture as a Powerful Instrument for Poverty Reduction



Director-General of Koba Ranch, a mango conditioning unit: PAFASP support has allowed us to increase our mango conditioning capacity from 10 tons/day to 50 tons/day.

The project's impact includes a rise in beneficiaries' incomes and an increase in agricultural exports. The project reached out to about 385,000 direct beneficiaries, of whom 30 percent were women. About 66 percent of the beneficiaries have increased their income by at least 50 percent. Agricultural exports on international markets have reached 275,000 tons (against an end target of 106,500 tons), and on regional markets 206,000 tons (against a target of 96,000 tons).

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### Challenge

Burkina Faso's agriculture-based economy is still dominated by subsistence production and characterized by low crop and livestock productivity, low but increasing diversification, and the limited participation of formal private businesses in the development of agro-pastoral value-chains. Cotton exports are still dominant and represent about 60 percent of total agricultural

exports, and there is a need to diversify agricultural production and exports from cotton. Therefore, interventions aiming at spurring increases in non-cotton agricultural exports—and particularly at increasing the competitiveness of selected sub-sectors that target national, sub-regional, and international markets—are critical to reduce Burkina’s dependency on only a few commodities and take advantage of new high-growth and higher value-added opportunities.

Burkina has a potential comparative advantage in several non-traditional cash crops, such as fruit (especially mangoes) and vegetables (such as onions, tomatoes, potatoes and beans), both for West Africa’s coastal countries and for European countries, where demand is high, particularly demand for organic products. To take advantage of these potential sources of growth, Burkina needs to address a series of constraints in order to be able to reach a position from which it can increase the competitiveness of its supply chains and gain better access to these markets.

### **Approach**

The Agriculture Diversification and Market Development Project (PAFASP) is designed to promote businesses in rural Burkina Faso, where access to credit from commercial banks and microfinance institutions is limited; it is also designed to contribute to raising agricultural competitiveness in sectors other than cotton, something that is critical to achieving the country’s aim of diversifying its economy while continuing to draw on its natural resource base.

Through the provision of matching grants, this project tries to provide incentives for small and medium enterprises to embark on investment. It also supports the development of commercial infrastructure facilities with private-based management, since access to such facilities is critically important, particularly for small producers so that they can adhere to the same standards of quality as foreign competitors.

In order to secure the quality and quantity of raw materials required for profitable agro-industrial development, the project supports effective, small-scale irrigation schemes that have been developed by the country over the past two decades and which are today considered best practice in the sub-region.

### **Results**

Through both initial and additional financing, the project (2006–2017) has benefitted more than 385,000 people, of whom 30 percent are women, and has significantly contributed to the



development of four, targeted value-chains (meat/livestock, poultry, onion, and mango) whose professional organizations are now well-structured and fully operational. The key impacts of the project include a rise in rural incomes for the project's beneficiaries and a significant increase in agricultural exports.

The outputs of this project that have directly contributed to the enhanced competitiveness of these four value-chains include:

Mango and onion yields have respectively reached 22 tons and 17.5 tons from 7 tons and 17 tons. Agricultural exports for the targeted supply chains have reached 206,000 tons from 6,500 tons, and 275,000 tons from 17,500 tons for sub-regional and international markets.

The total amount of loans secured through local banks and micro-finance institutions to support the financing of micro-projects has reached CFA francs 2.4 billion, linking smallholders to the banking system.

About 162 successful micro-projects have been transformed into small and medium enterprises and are fully operational, their vitality and durability likely to continue after the project closes.

The amount of new, irrigated land resulting from the project is about 3,500 ha, including 1,200 ha of irrigated mango orchards. This is expected to boost the supply of mangoes to meet high demand for them on the European market.

Productive and commercial infrastructure has been rehabilitated or built: 36 livestock vaccination parks; eight livestock markets; two poultry commercialization and transformation markets; three fruit and vegetable markets; three mango conditioning units and transformation infrastructure upgraded; and 60 mango dryers upgraded/installed.

### **Bank Group Contribution**

The Bank's total contribution to this project is US\$116 million. As of June 5, 2017, the World Bank Group's (WBG's) active portfolio comprised 33 projects amounting to almost US\$1,600 million, of which 20 are IDA-financed projects (US\$1,374 million), six Trust Fund projects (US\$76 million), and seven regional projects (US\$149 million). The projects cover sectors such as agriculture, energy, transport, education, public sector modernization, water and sanitation, social safety nets, health, economic governance, citizen engagement, and trade and competitiveness. The WBG is also intervening to support capacity building in the country.

through some economic work in key sectors like agriculture, energy, governance, trade and competitiveness, and macro and fiscal management.

## **Partners**

The WBG has maintained a close partnership with other donors, especially with the European Union, the African Development Bank, the Food and Agriculture Organization, and bilateral donors such as the French Development Agency, German Cooperation, United States International Development Agency, the Swiss Development Cooperation, all of which are active in the agricultural sector. These partnerships have worked especially well to assist the sustained effort made by the Burkinabe government on food security and diversifying agricultural production. The main reason for the success of the WBG's support has been its close cooperation with the Burkinabe government, which views its partnership with the Bank and the project's approach as playing an important role in transforming the agricultural sector through the promotion of agro-sylvo (forestry)-pastoral value chains.

## **Moving Forward**

The World Bank will continue its support to Burkina Faso to encourage strategic reforms in order to help it attract private investment in the production of higher-value products through agro-processing, which could create more paid jobs. This is the main objective of the ongoing Bank-funded study on agro-processing opportunities in Burkina Faso: to identify value-chains with great potential for agro-industrial transformation in order to be able to lend direction to interventions in this sector.

## **Beneficiaries**

Yaya Kone, a native of Bobo-Dioulasso, one of the most productive mango basins in Burkina, has been in the mango business for about 40 years: "At the start, during the mango season I could process only about ten tons of dried mango per season," he said, "but nowadays with the new technology brought in with help of PAFASP, the so called 'tunnel dryer', I managed to process about 40 tons per season. I was so successful that I acquired a third tunnel dryer with my own funds thanks to the revenue generated by my business. Also, with PAFASP support, I have developed a partnership with a Dutch company, which is financing the installation of six more dryers. With this I hope to process about 100 tons per season."

Mariétou Sana is the secretary-general of the women's group Sougri Nooma of Bogoya village. "I used to sleep with the onions in the same room as my children," she said. "Unfortunately, my onions could not stay fresh/resist/stop going moldy? for very long after the harvesting period, so I always had to sell them at low prices. With the new conservation technology 'ruudu' developed by PAFASP, I now conserve my onions for more than six months after harvesting and sell them when the market prices are high. A bag of 100kg of onions is sold at about US\$20 at harvest time in March but can be easily sold for about US\$100 five months later."

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2017/06/29/burkina-faso-agriculture-as-a-powerful-instrument-for-poverty-reduction>

June 29, 2017

## Burkina Faso: Developing Infrastructure and an Enabling Environment for Sustained Access to Water and Sanitation Services for the Urban Poor



For more than 15 years, the World Bank has supported the Government of Burkina Faso's efforts to increase access to sustained water and sanitation services in both urban and rural areas. Three large-scale operations have been financed by the Bank with IDA resources, including the Urban Water Sector Project (UWSP: 2009-2018). Today, more than 1.7 million people have access to improved water and sanitation; the financial equilibrium of ONEA, the national utility, was restored and has been maintained; and an innovative, delegated management approach, piloted with local private operators to serve the poor in peri-urban settlements and rural areas, is being-scaled up.

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### Challenge

At present, Burkina Faso has a population of 18.5 million and the country is becoming more rapidly urbanized, putting significant pressure on scarce water resources and limited

infrastructure. With an urban growth rate of 5.2 percent, a year, 40 percent of the population will be living in urban centers by 2030, in particular in informal settlements.

There is only one permanent river in the country, water resources are limited, and the cost associated in making them available are high. Until 2007, the capital, Ouagadougou, was mainly supplied with water from the heavily polluted Loubila Dam (20 km north of the city) and supplemented by wells around the city. Water shortages were frequent.

Even though Overall access in the country (rural and urban) to improved water sources is 72.4 percent of people in the country, as of 2016 disparities exist in terms of access to improved water supplies between urban and rural areas (92 percent versus 65.3 percent). Access to adequate sanitation facilities remain low in both urban and rural areas (36.1 percent versus 13.7 percent) with 19.8 percent the overall national rate.

### **Approach**

Through the series of Country Assistance Strategies and, lately, the Country Partnership Strategy 2013–2016, the Bank has supported the Government of Burkina Faso (GoBF) Country Poverty Reduction Strategy (2000–2010); the Strategy for Accelerated Growth and Sustainable Development (2011–2015); and the National Economic and Social Development Plan (2016–2020), including the Sustainable Development Goals Investment Plans (2016–2030).

Over the last two decades, the Bank has been Burkina Faso's leading partner in the development of the water and sanitation sector, both through IDA lending and knowledge support. A sum of US\$266 million has been mobilized for Bank operations and technical assistance covering water supply and sanitation projects in urban and rural areas.

### **Results**

Remarkable results have been achieved, thanks to the support provided by the World Bank to the water and sanitation sector in Burkina Faso.

The ongoing Urban Water Sector Project (UWSP: 2009–2018) has already reaped results. As of December 2016, about 610,000 people have gained access to piped water via household connection and standpipes; about 440,000 people have gained access to improved sanitation; and about 120,000 students have benefited from improved school sanitation, contributing to improved child health and school attendance.

The financial equilibrium of the sector is maintained with a net positive cash balance of US\$6 million. And the sector's operational management capacity has dramatically improved and ONEA (Office National de l'Eau et de l'Assainissement), Burkina's state-owned water and sanitation utility, is today ranked among the top performing water utilities in Sub-Saharan Africa, with a staff productivity of 2.9 staff per 1000 connections and a bill collection ratio of 97.7 percent.

Prior to the UWSP, the implementation of the Ouagadougou Water Supply Project from the Ziga Dam (2001–2017, funded by 12 donors, including IDA) led to the following important combined results:

in Ouagadougou, access to improved sources of drinking water substantially improved from 54 percent in 2001 to 90 percent in 2016, of which 63 percent is served by household connections and 27 percent served by standpipes; (ii) there has been a significant drop in water connections fees, from US\$250 to US\$50 per household connection, plus the adoption of a lifeline social tariff for the first 8 cubic meters of consumption per month; (iii) the restoration of the financial equilibrium of the urban sector since 2006; and (iv) the implementation of 160,200 new social household connections (108,000 under Ziga1), including peri-urban settlements and the installation of 711 standpipes (551).

In addition, the Bank has spent about US\$1 million on technical assistance to foster domestic private sector participation in the water supply in peri-urban areas and initiate strategic reforms in the rural water sector.

A pilot project delegated the management of water supply in peri-urban settlements in Ouagadougou and enabled 107,000 people among the city's urban poor (living in informal settlements) to have sustainable access to improved water services. Thanks to the project, their monthly water expenditure decreased from US\$4 to US\$2.8 (at standpipes) and to \$3.5 for household connections.

As many as 110 jobs were directly created and the five domestic private operators contracted combined net profits rose from about \$70,000 in 2010 to \$250,000 in 2014.

Under the Community-Based Rural Development project (CBRD, 2001–2013) about 1.4 million people in rural area gained access to clean water that improves the health of rural population and reduces time spent (especially by women) in collecting water.

## **Bank Group Contribution**

As of December 2016, the total financing of the Bank's operations and technical assistance in the urban and urban Water and Sanitation Sector (WSS), in both IDA and Trust Funds, is about US\$266 million, under the Ouagadougou Water Supply Project/Ziga (US\$70 million); the UWSP (US\$160 million); the CBRD (US\$35 million); and the Technical Assistance program for sector reforms supported by the Water and Sanitation Program (WSP) is US\$1 million.

Furthermore, the Bank has supported sector development through the WSP for more than a decade. It has successfully supported the GoBF's development and implementation of the WSS Millennium Development Goals Strategy and Action Plan in close collaboration with the lead sector agencies, development partners and other stakeholders.

Helping the GoBF mitigate the deficiency in water assets management, through sector dialogue the Bank has: (i) facilitated useful learning visits to relevant countries; (ii) influence the GoBF and stakeholders to mainstream poor and vulnerable groups in the sector policy and strategy papers, as well as in the SDG Investments Programs (2016-2030); (iii) initiated a pro-poor water tariff study in rural areas supported by a sector Public Private Partnership strategy validated by national stakeholders in 2015; and, (iv) assisted ONEA to implement a pilot project in five peri-urban settlements of Ouagadougou, in which small scale private entrepreneurs manage water systems under delegated contracts (in partnership with the French Development Agency).

## **Partners**

The success of the Burkina Faso urban water sector reform stems largely from a combination of sustained commitment from the central government, appropriate governance framework, competent public management at ONEA, innovative recourse to the private sector, and strong financial support from donors.

As the leading partner, the World Bank had contributed to leverage significant resources from donors and bilateral organizations, including the African Development Bank, West African Development Bank the European Union, the French Development Agency, the European Bank for Investment, German Financial Cooperation, Belgium, the Islamic Development Bank, the Arabic Bank for Economic Development in Africa, Japan, Luxembourg, the Netherlands, the Nordic Development Fund, the Saudi Development Fund, Kuwait and OPEC Fund, Sweden, Spain, Denmark, the United Nations International Children's Emergency Fund, United States Agency for

International Development, West African Economic and Monetary Union, and decentralized cooperation partners (for example, south-north cooperation between local governments).

The Bank will support to the GoBF to find solutions to the challenges remaining and consolidate its position as the key partner in the development of the WSS sector.

### **Moving Forward**

Despite the efforts made by the Government of Burkina Faso over the last 15 years, access by the poor to improved water and sanitation services is still a challenge, particularly in peri-urban settlements and rural areas.

Decentralization transferred responsibility for water and sanitation to rural municipalities in 2009. ONEA has remained the main service provider in urban areas, comprising 54 municipalities (including Ouagadougou). The process of decentralization process was at the time incomplete though, and central and local governments needed to improve their service delivery capacity before taking on the responsibility of providing public services like water and sanitation. Up to today, many the responsibilities delegated to municipalities are being borne by national agencies.

The aim of the national plan, or Country Poverty Reduction Strategy, initiated by the GoBF in 2000 was to reduce inequality by prioritizing equity. However, it has emerged that geographical inequality (due to poor hydrogeological conditions and/or low investment) goes hand in hand with economic inequality to the detriment of the poorest segments of the population. For water supply, the specific objective is to achieve universal access to it by 2030 by affirming a pro-poor and pro-vulnerable approach. The successful implementation of this approach requires strong commitment on the part of the key stakeholders, and a major amount of innovation in pro-poor and pro-vulnerable WSS financing mechanisms, technological options, and approaches, as well as new information, education and information tools.

The World Bank has recently completed the Systematic Country Diagnostic for Burkina Faso, which will serve as a basis for the development of the upcoming Country Partnership Framework (2017–2020). The Bank is committed to continue supporting the GoBF by strengthening sector reform, developing the capacity of urban and rural authorities for service delivery; contributing toward addressing the urban–rural divide, especially with regards to sanitation; and boosting the capacity for integrated water resource management.



## Beneficiaries

Rasmané Compaoré has lived in the same, mud-brick house for 40 years in a peri-urban informal settlement in Ouagadougou, Burkina Faso's dry and busy capital. But his dusty courtyard has changed forever. In a corner, near the kitchen, a shiny brass tap tops an aluminum pipe. For the first day in his life, at the age of 82, Compaoré lives in a house with piped water.

He is one of 50,000 customers who have taken the plunge and signed up with ONEA for a household water connection. Outside Compaoré's low wall, a team contracted by the water company are working under the blazing midday sun to cover over a trench connecting him to Ouagadougou's mains water supply. This forms part of an ambitious national project, in which the World Bank took the lead in financing, to increase access to reliable drinking water in Ouagadougou through an expansion of the distribution network, and to improve the management of the urban water sector.

In the past, Compaoré paid 200 CFA (US\$ 0.4) every day for a battered 200-liter drum that one of his four children would wheel 1km to the nearest communal waterpoint. It was an unrewarding chore for a basic necessity.

"My children would wait all day for water and not get anything and often there would be hundreds of people waiting," he says. "In the hotter months, you could not get water. They would come back and then go out again the next morning."

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2017/07/28/burkina-faso-developing-infrastructure-and-an-enabling-environment-for-sustained-access-to-water-and-sanitation-services-for-the-urban-poor>

July 28, 2017

## Cambodia: Investing in Early Childhood Education for Future Success



### Story Highlights

- While the net enrollment rate in primary education increased to about 98% in 2015, nationwide enrollment rate for children 3-5 years old was just 41% in 2016.
- Through the Early Child Education (ECE) project, 100 formal schools and community-based preschools have opened to benefit more than 125,000 students aged 3-5 years old.
- Investing in young children through ECE projects is one of the smartest investments a country can make to address inequality, break the cycle of poverty, and improve outcomes later in life.

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Two years ago, 40-year-old preschool teacher Che Eang presented an ultimatum to her community: Either build a safer school for the 30 primary school children she teaches, or she quits.

“I told them that I will stop teaching, because it was so difficult,” said Che Eang, pointing to a nearby house that doubled as a makeshift school for her students. Citing a long list of hazards and shortcomings – from rain, dust, bare-bones construction, and even aggressive dogs (one of her pupils was bitten) – the beleaguered educator had had enough.

Today, Che Eang looks forward to each day of teaching at her community’s new school in Phnom Prasat village in Banteay Meanchey province. She is hopeful for a bright future for her young students.

Built by the community it serves, Phnom Prasat’s is one of 500 community preschools nationwide supported by the Early Child Education Project. It is funded by the multi-donor Global Partnership for Education and administered by the World Bank, in partnership with project implementers the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sport.

Communities always wanted to have their own preschools. In the example of Phnom Prasat, parents were reluctant to send their children to the public preschool as it requires crossing a highway – a dangerous task for small children. The community should have its own preschool, said parents, and the community can build it. Through the project, representatives of the communes are trained to monitor the construction of the schools.

Tith Sokhon, Director of Tountean public preschool in the Soutr Nikhom district of Siem Reap province, listed the benefits of attending preschool: development of skills, regular exercise, and practicing good hygiene; developing morals and learning respect; participating in activities that encourage collaboration; improving thinking skills, and gaining proficiency in the Khmer language.

Graduates of preschools are popular with Grade 1 teachers such as Vay Chanthy at Komrou primary school. “A student who went through preschool catches lessons very fast,” said Chanthy, adding that former preschoolers sail through the next grade. In contrast, only half of those who did not go to preschool pass Grade 1, and often find the first few months of school difficult.

In addition to building schools, the Early Child Education Project trains pregnant mothers on first aid, cooking nutritious food, and proper hygiene such as washing hands, among others, for both a healthy pregnancy and children.

So far, the project is reaping results. For example:

- By June 2017, some 100 formal schools and 1,000 community-based new preschool facilities have opened.
- More than 47% of children between 3-5 years old are now enrolled in preschools, both in urban and rural districts. By May 2017, more than 125,000 students between 3-5 years old have directly benefited from the project.
- More than 3,800 community-based early child education teachers and mothers have been trained on health-care, school construction, and child-rearing skills.

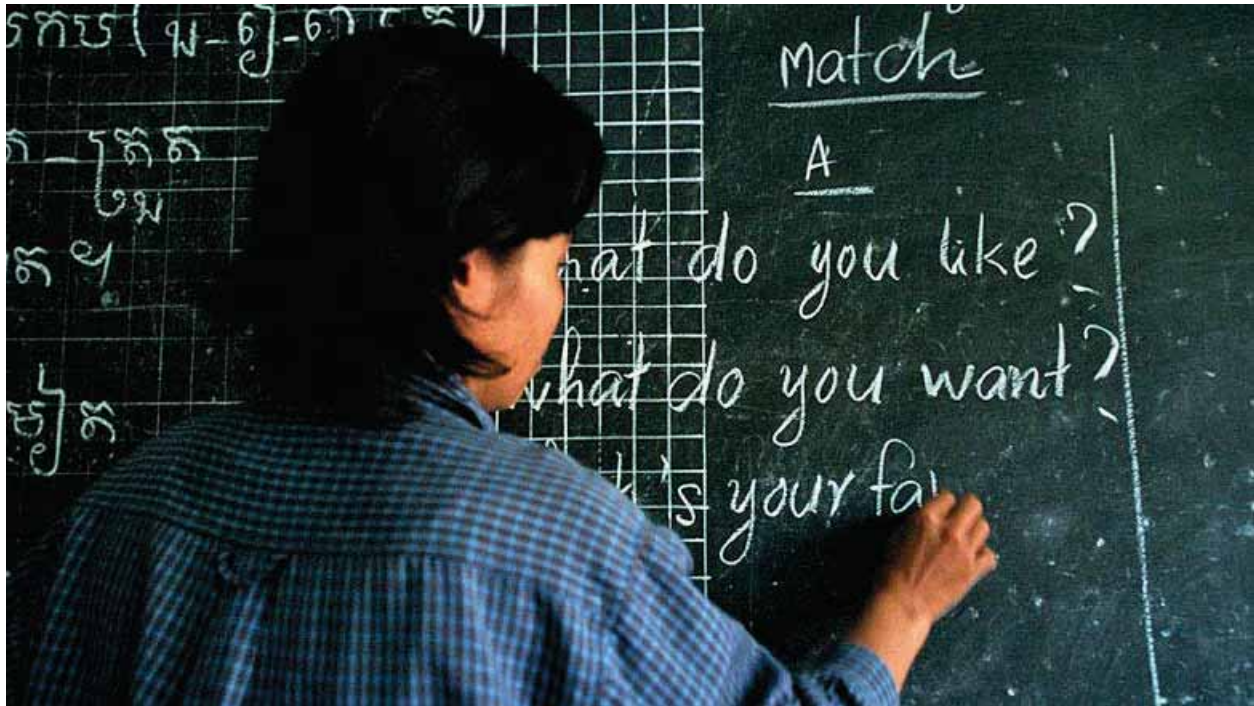
The government hopes that this marks just the beginning of more progress for future generations. That is why H.E. Dr. Hang Chhuon Naron, the Minister of Education, Youth and Sport, continues to encourage parents to pay more care to the early years of child rearing, from pregnancy to the 3-year mark – regarded as the golden years for developing physical and mental health.

Said Minister Naron, confident that early childhood education opens worlds of opportunities: “Parents should allow their children to attend preschools, which is the foundation for their success in pursuing primary, secondary and higher education.”

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2017/10/05/investing-in-early-childhood-education-for-cambodias-future-success>

October 5, 2017

## Cambodia: Raising Reading Scores



Drawing upon World Bank financing and expertise since 2005, Cambodia has conducted national assessments in reading. Based on test results, Cambodia made the teaching of reading a national priority, leading to the training of 24,577 teachers, the publication of two Khmer-language text books, and almost all Grade Eights students nationwide capable of reading and comprehending text.

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### Challenge

Literacy, the ability to read and write, allows people to access information, increase their productivity, and achieve their full potential. Research has shown that early literacy is a threshold which countries must pass to grow economically.

Emerging from years of political turmoil, Cambodia needed to improve language acquisition, especially in the early school grades. Up until 2005, there was little baseline data on reading proficiency to guide government policy on how to improve literacy. The national language, Khmer, is also one of the most complex languages in the world, making it challenging to teach.

## **Approach**

With World Bank support, Cambodia conducted its first national assessment of the Khmer language for students in 2006 and again in 2009. Results showed that reading levels were very poor. This led to a rethink on how Cambodia taught reading. The method changed from “whole word” recognition” to a vowel and consonant combination approach. From 2010-2012, Cambodia focused on reading skills in pilot schools. Thousands of students and their teachers received their own copy of Khmer language books. This was unique at a time where most children had to share a book. Students were encouraged to read at home and their progress was measured against clear targets. Thousands of teachers and education officers were also trained in teaching.

## **Results**

The IDA Cambodia Education Sector Support Project and the World Bank-supervised Global Partnership for Education’s Education Sector Scale Up Action Program and Second Education Sector Support Projects have helped to support improvements in several key outcomes:

Capacity-building of a team in the Ministry of Education, Youth, & Sport, leading to Cambodia’s first national assessment of the Khmer Language and Mathematics for grade three students in 2006;

Results of a World Bank-supported baseline test for 2,400 students in 40 pilot schools in 2010 led to the Ministry of Education, Youth, & Sport announcing that the teaching of reading would be a national priority;

As part of the pilot, 24,577 teachers and 3,097 provincial and district education officers were trained in teaching reading in 2012;

The World Bank’s work in helping to establish national assessments through the Cambodia Education Sector Support Project (CESSP 2005-2011) and constant support for the national assessment team in the ensuing years, contributed to the establishment of a dedicated National Assessment office in the newly established Department of Education Quality Assurance; and

An analysis of the Grade 8 National Assessment (2014) showed that almost all students in this level can read text and answering questions about that text.

## **Bank Group Contribution**

In 2005, the International Development Association (IDA), which is the part of the World Bank that helps the world's poorest countries, provided \$28 million in financing to build Cambodia's national assessment capacity. This led to Cambodia conducting the first national assessment of Khmer Language and Mathematics for Grade Three students in 2006 and in 2009.

## **Partners**

Cambodia received a \$95.9 million trust fund from Global Partnership for Education (2007-2016). The fund was supervised by World Bank. The partnership contributed to the Early Grade Reading Assessments and Early Grade Reading Interventions in Cambodia. It supported the Ministry of Education, Youth, and Sports mainstream the assessments into the national assessment system.

## **Moving Forward**

Despite the recent robust growth in the economy and an increase in both Cambodia's GDP and the total government recurrent budget to education, the education sector still lacks basic resources and highly qualified teachers. Moving forward, the World Bank intends to support:

The full implementation of the results-based monitoring and evaluation plan which will encourage schools, teachers, students, parents and communities to be accountable for their results;

Introduction of Programme for International Student Assessment for Development. This is where survey instruments relevant for the contexts found in middle- and low-income countries are used to measure the aptitude of 15-year-old students in math, reading, and writing; and the Implementation of a five-year United States Agency for International Development funded project to support early grade reading.

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"I like reading a lot because it helps me to know more. (The program) helped me to love reading books, magazine and newspapers. I want to be a lawyer after graduation and I know that a lawyer needs to read a lot."

Nov Rathana, 11-year-old student who took part in the pilot reading program in 2010, when he was in Grade One.

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"I've seen how the text book has helped students read and comprehend quicker. There are a few steps they have to learn before comprehensive reading. First, they must learn spelling, vocabulary, and synonyms. Being able to read (without difficulty) attracts students to books. I believe that reading is very important for them. Reading and comprehending makes for better students who have a better chance at excelling in all subjects."

Khun Chanrong, 36-year-old teacher who received training on how to teach the new Khmer-language book.

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## Congo-Gabon: Toward Regional Digital Integration



A student of the Faculty of Sciences at the Université Marien Ngouabi, Brazzaville, Marinette Moyo cannot imagine how she would be able to complete her studies without the internet.

### Story Highlights

- The Republic of Congo recently concluded the first phase of the fiber-optic backbone project in Central Africa by connecting its terrestrial fiber-optic network with that of Gabon.
- With almost 504 kilometers of new fiber-optic infrastructure, the country now has a second high-speed internet access point.
- The Republic of Congo is thus boosting its regional digital integration, which is expected to contribute to information and communication technology development and job creation.

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**BRAZZAVILLE** – A student of the Faculty of Sciences at the Université Marien Ngouabi, Brazzaville, Marinette Moyo cannot imagine how she would be able to complete her studies without the internet. Like her classmates, whether she is in class or at home, she does not let go of her mobile phone or laptop. How could she do without online search engines to give a presentation or study for an exam?

It is the same for Gilles Massamba, a young, tech-savvy film promoter, and for numerous other Congolese nationals for whom the internet has become an indispensable social, administrative, and professional tool. The problem is that when the connection lags and is sporadic and expensive, you lose time, patience, and money. It is difficult to wait for 20 minutes to download a document or to be constantly disconnected during a Skype conversation with a relative living in the country's interior.

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"Studies conducted in Africa, particularly by the World Bank in 2010, prove that a 10% increase in the number of high-speed internet connections leads, among other things, to an increase in economic growth of 1.3%"

Jérôme Bezzina

World Bank task team leader and telecommunications specialist

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### **High-speed internet through fiber optics**

"For the majority of Congolese people, fiber optics remained an abstract notion," Gilles says. "Until a ship sailing along the coast of Pointe-Noire accidentally severed the submarine fiber-optic cable. Then, everyone made the connection because no one had internet in Brazzaville anymore. It's scary to think that it is all hanging by a thread, both literally and figuratively."

In many ways, development of the digital economy and the achievement of regional integration in Central Africa are "hanging by a thread." More specifically, they are hanging by the fiber optics that are in the process of being installed under the Central African Backbone (CAB) project, the first phase of which was completed on April 6, 2018 with the interconnection of the fiber-optic backbone between the Republic of Congo and the Republic of Gabon.

### **Becoming an interconnected region**

Launched in April 2007 by the countries of the Central African Economic and Monetary Community (CEMAC), during the summit in Ndjamena, Chad, the Central African Backbone (CAB) project aims to promote sub regional integration and reduce the digital divide through high-speed, fiber-optic terrestrial infrastructure. The aim is to boost the capacity of the digital link among the 11 CEMAC countries.

“It is the culmination of a decade of ongoing efforts and the fulfillment of the strong ambition expressed by the leaders of the sub region to anchor the countries in the digital economy and thus promote regional integration,” explains Yvon-Didier Miehakanda, coordinator of the CAB project in the Republic of Congo.

The first phase of this project was launched in the Republic of Congo in July 2011 with \$30 million in joint financing from the Government and the World Bank. The goal? Build a 521-kilometer fiber-optic backbone (reduced later to 504 kilometers) between the Matombi landing station (from the ocean city of Pointe-Noire) and the border landing station in Mbinda. The work was completed by the Chinese company Huawei, a global telecommunications leader, in collaboration with the Congo–Ocean Railway (CFCO), which facilitated installation of the fiber-optic cable along the railway.

The Congolese backbone continues up to the border city of Lekoko where it connects to the 1,100 km of the Gabonese terrestrial network, which runs up to Libreville.

This new interconnection infrastructure with Gabon gives the Republic of Congo a second fiber-optic connection point that will allow the country to ensure a relay connection in the event of a new breakdown of its submarine cable, which was commissioned in 2012, or of the Matombi connection point in Kouilou.

The first phase of the recently completed CAB project gives way to the second phase, which involves the construction of two new fiber-optic networks in the north of the country in order to connect the Congolese network to the Cameroonian and Central African networks by 2020. Cofinanced by the African Development Bank and the Congolese Government to the tune of 66.56 million euros, this second phase includes, among other activities, the construction of a national “Datacenter” to host data and a technology hub to develop new technologies and the digital economy.

Finally, the third phase of the project, financed exclusively by the World Bank for \$5 million, is expected to create a digital economy development fund aimed at financing the development of start-ups and job creation in this sector.

### **Faster, cheaper internet service**

“If this new infrastructure effectively helps enhance internet service in the country, the logical consequence should be the lowering of connection costs for users,” states Aymar Kodja, a young,

seasoned internet user. “And that is good news, because the current rates charged by both public and private operators are simply exorbitant (1 Mb costs CFAF 65,000 or \$122!).”

On the heels of installing the fiber-optic network, the CAB project also equipped the public university with software tools and interconnected the 11 higher education establishments in Brazzaville. The students are now waiting for the national telecommunications operator, Congo-Telecom, to activate high-speed internet so as to fully benefit from the new technological environment available to them. “I can already see myself having access to unlimited documentary resources, downloading huge files freely, doing research or taking online courses like students in developed countries. That would be really great!” says Marinette.

“Studies conducted in Africa, particularly by the World Bank in 2010, prove that a 10% increase in the number of high-speed internet connections leads, among other things, to an increase in economic growth of 1.3%,” explains Jérôme Bezzina, World Bank task team leader and telecommunications specialist. “In the Republic of Congo, it is estimated that the ICT sector represents 4% of GDP. With better infrastructure, its contribution is expected to be even greater, especially in the services sector where it already figures prominently.”

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/04/09/congo-gabon-toward-regional-digital-integration>

April 9, 2018

## Ethiopia: Transformational Approach to Universal Electrification



### Story Highlights

- With abundant untapped energy resources but electricity access at only 30 percent, the Government of Ethiopia has launched an ambitious plan to bring power to all citizens by 2025, combining on- and off-grid electrification, backed up by state-of-the-art technologies.
- The World Bank is supporting Ethiopia's efforts through the \$375 million Ethiopia Electrification Program, which focuses on last-mile connections along with strengthening the capacity of the sector and institutional reform.
- The Program will directly support new connections for over one million households in Ethiopia. This is one of the largest World Bank electrification programs in Africa.

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When it comes to energy, Ethiopia has tremendous advantages. It has the second-highest installed available capacity for electricity generation in Sub-Saharan Africa, at 4.5 GW. It has a well-developed transmission and distribution network, with nearly 80 percent of the population living within proximity of medium-voltage transmission lines. It has abundant sources of

renewable energy just waiting to be tapped – including wind, solar and geothermal– enough to easily supply the power needs of the country. And it is one of the few countries in the world where the electric grid is nearly 100 percent supplied by renewable sources.

These advantages, however, stand in contrast to the realities on the ground. About 70 percent of the population in Ethiopia live without electricity. The lack of power also impacts basic services – only 24 percent of primary schools and 30 percent of health clinics have access to electricity.

This discrepancy – between abundant resources and unmet needs – points to the need for a radical new approach.

With the World Bank’s support, in November 2017, the Government of Ethiopia launched the National Electrification Program (NEP), a comprehensive plan to reach universal access to electricity by 2025. To achieve this, the NEP takes a coordinated approach combining both grid and off-grid solutions, with a focus on last-mile service delivery to consumers.

By 2025, the plan is for 65 percent of the population to have electricity through the grid, and the other 35 percent through off-grid technologies - stand-alone solar systems and mini-grids. Another priority will be providing reliable electricity to schools and health centers. A state-of-the-art geographic information system (GIS) will be used to optimize the planning for both the grid- and off-grid infrastructure, and act as a monitoring and evaluation platform for the program.

To strengthen the capacity of the utility, the government is also putting in place system-wide institutional reforms, including actions to promote gender equity - child care services and increased number of women in managerial positions. To improve citizen engagement, the government will run information campaigns on the use of electricity services.

Providing modern energy services for over 10 million households within 7 years will not be an easy task. The financing required for the first five years of implementation of the NEP alone is estimated at \$1.5 billion.

The World Bank is supporting Ethiopia’s efforts through the Ethiopia Electrification Program (ELEAP), a \$375 million International Development Association (IDA) credit approved by the World Bank Board on March 1, 2018. This will directly finance new electricity connections for over one million households and strengthen the planning and implementation capacity of the

utility, and the policy and regulatory capacity of the Ministry. ELEAP will nearly double the rate of electrification in Ethiopia, reaching over 50 percent of the population during the program period.

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"The Ethiopia Electrification Program will ensure the sustainability of service delivery over time, moving away from a project-by-project approach. This is one of the largest and most ambitious electrification programs the Bank has ever undertaken in Africa"

Rahul Kitchlu

Team Leader for the Ethiopia Electrification Program

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Ethiopia is emerging as a role model of energy development for other countries in Sub-Saharan Africa. The lessons from Ethiopia's experience will be of great value as others attempt similar feats.

Though much work remains to be done, Ethiopia's underlying advantages, political will, financing and support from the World Bank and other partners, and the innovative solutions the country is now putting in place, all point the way to success.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/03/08/ethiopias-transformational-approach-to-universal-electrification>

March 8, 2018

## Gambia: How Donkey 'School Buses' Benefit Early Grade Children



Rising at 7:00 am to take children to school may seem like a regular activity for many. But what about bringing ALL your community's youngest children to school, on a donkey cart no less?

Every morning, children from the Sinchou Demben village in central Gambia meet Malang Demto. Stick in hand and a smile on his face, he leads them to the closest elementary school, located approximately three kilometers away. Mr. Demto is a farmer who for a little over a year has also overseen the village's 'school bus,' the donkey-pulled cart he drives to Sare Babou.

It takes just under an hour for the cart to make its way through the bushes with 10 children aboard, and reach the school at 8:00 am, on the dot, for the beginning of the morning classes. The same scene unfolds in more than 125 villages across rural Gambia as small children clamber their way onto the distinctive mint green donkey-pulled carts during the morning sunrise.

Although more children are enrolling in schools in The Gambia, nearly 30 percent of school-aged children still do not attend classes. The donkey cart program is a small part of the Government's



broader education strategy, which seeks to boost equitable access and improve quality of education. In a concerted effort to reduce inequity, the government abolished school fees and increased the number of communities that have schools within three kilometers from 83 percent in 2013 to 95 percent in 2018. More construction is planned over the next five years to close the gap and further reduce the distance to two kilometers. The donkey carts, which are placed in rural communities, are designed to transport children in early childhood development programs as well as first and second year students (ages 3-8) who find the three kilometers walk too cumbersome. The initiative, which is community- managed, with support from 'cluster monitors' who oversee groups of schools, helps ensure that children attend school daily and helps allay parents' concerns that their little ones can make the long distance safely.

The World Bank, which has engaged in The Gambia for many years, supports improved quality of teaching and learning and equitable access to schools through the Results for Education Achievement and Development Project, financed by a grant from the International Development Association and the Global Partnership for Education (GPE) in 2014. A new project, the Education Sector Support Program, also financed by the World Bank and GPE, was approved this March. The continuation of the donkey carts initiative is one piece of the approach.

It was a former Permanent Secretary, having come from a rural village himself, who dreamed up the donkey cart initiative as the government sought to find low-cost options to facilitate enrollment, especially for young children, as part of the growing focus on providing access to quality early childhood development. Donkeys, a common means of transport in The Gambia, were a natural, yet innovative, choice and different communities across the country were enthusiastic about the idea.

An initial pilot revealed that while the original carts were an effective means to transport children to school, these were too heavy and needed to be redesigned. As a result, a lighter 2.0 model of the cart was launched in 2015. Built with locally-sourced materials, the revamped carts handle more easily, have a seat for each child, and incorporate important safety features such as a gate and easy-to-grab handles. Currently approximately 2,000 young students in rural communities across the country rely on about 200 donkey carts as their daily mean of transportation to and from school. An additional 100 donkey carts will transport 1000 more young children in the next phase of the project. The per child unit has dropped to about 10 cents per day, and the carts, having been designed with locally sourced materials are easy to repair.

Adama Jobe from the Ministry of Basic and Secondary Education oversees the coordination of the donkey cart initiative and the dialogue between communities and the ministry. He regularly visits the schools and explains the process: “First, we planned to determine the communities in need, did a consultation and developed guidelines. Then, money was put in the school accounts, and head teachers and school management committees bought the donkeys.” These committees continue to manage the donkey carts in consultation with the local communities. It is the collaborative process that has made the approach successful.

In the city of Medina Manneh, between Banjul and the country’s northern border with Senegal, the school received three carts to help transport children from the villages of Fafanding and Sam Njoben, each located approximately three kilometers away.

Kebba Sonko, the school headmaster, explains that the carts transport about half of the schools’ two early childhood development classes – roughly 30-35 children between the ages of 3 and 6 – while the other half that lives less than one kilometer away, walks to school. The link to the government’s expanded early childhood development plan is critical, since not only are children who benefit from quality ECD programs more likely to enroll on time, but they show higher levels of attendance, completion, and achievement once in school. In The Gambia, where 38 percent of children do not start school at the official age of 7, quality early childhood development is not only important for its developmental benefits, but also as a critical entry point into school.

Caring for donkey carts is ensured by community-selected volunteers who can benefit from the animal and the cart when it isn’t being used as part of the project, by for example, transporting goods.

Drawing from the ministry’s guidelines, Lamin Jabarteh, a school headmaster developed a set of rules to manage the carts. The school management committee is a key reason why this program runs so smoothly, as it is the first point of contact between the Sare Babou village and the school – and the village Kholo or chief. “In a community it’s joint work, it’s not a burden to us as long as we’re part of the community” says Ali Balo, the school’s other “bus” driver from the Sara Adama village, who brings his son Musa to school on his cart along with the other children.

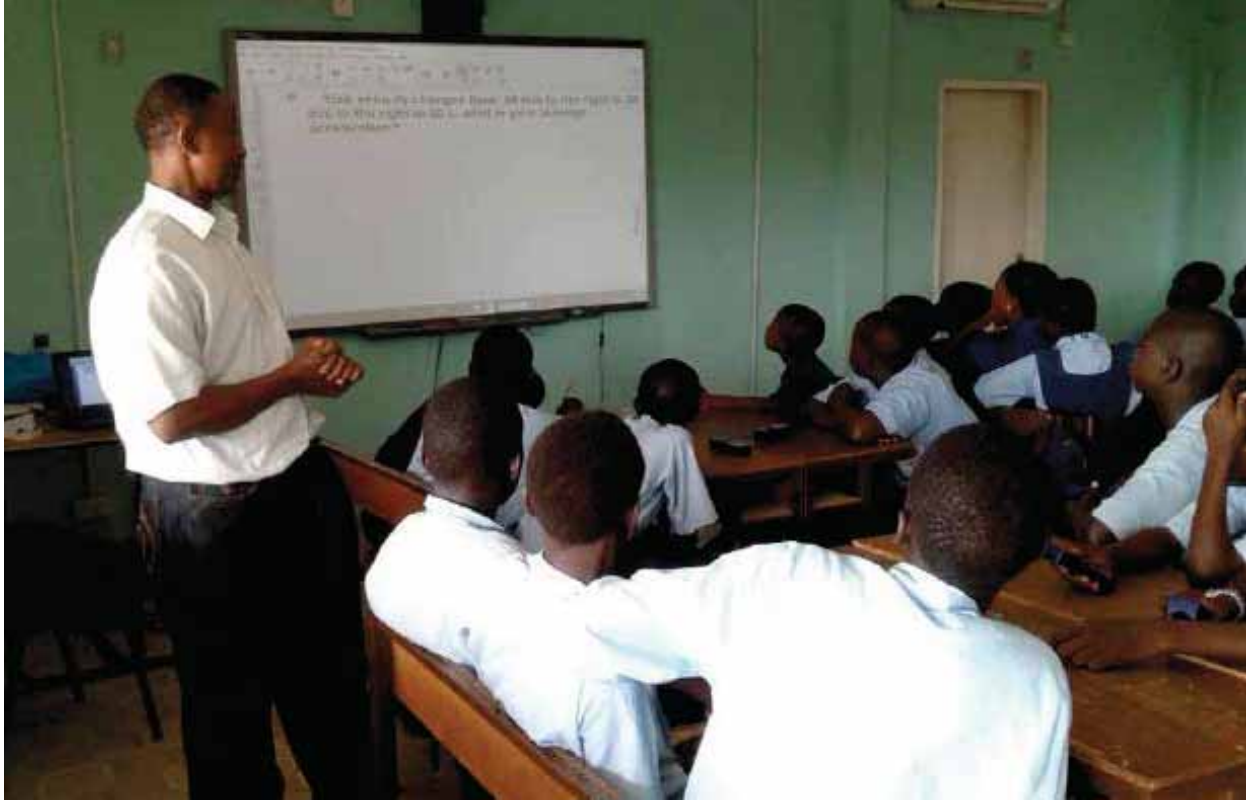
“The initiative is something we can be proud of as a ministry,” says Mr. Jobe of his enthusiastic team, as he walks along behind a donkey cart, “Children want to go to school and we support them. The donkey carts have really made a difference.”

<http://blogs.worldbank.org/education/print/how-donkey-school-buses-benefit-early-grade-children-gambia>

By Alison Marie Grimsland

May 29, 2018

## Gambia: Transforming Math and Science Education with Technology



Classrooms in The Gambia are piloting an innovative program that combines technology tools, course materials, and teaching methods to enhance math and science education in secondary school. Test scores prove it works and IDA18 is expanding the program.

To produce the scientists and engineers it needs to solve development challenges and advance socio-economic ambitions, The Gambia has partnered with the World Bank and others to raise the quality of its math and science education. In 2012, a pilot program introduced the Progressive Science Initiative and Progressive Math Initiative (PSI-PMI) in 24 upper basic and senior secondary schools. Developed by the New Jersey Center for Teaching and Learning, this adaptive approach facilitates classroom engagement and student learning through technology. Dusty chalkboards were replaced with interactive smart boards and classrooms were outfitted with solar panels to overcome the intermittent supply of electricity. Teachers received training

and online course materials to standardize the curriculum and make it more student-centered. Students received handheld smart responders to use in class to answer problems in an engaging, game-like manner—and to allow teachers to gauge student understanding in real-time.

### **Profound effect on learning**

According to Samuel Koidia, a physics and math teacher at Nursat Senior Secondary School in Serrekunda, The Gambia’s largest urban area, PSI-PMI’s methods and use of technology have had a profound effect.

“There is a shift in the whole delivery of the subject matter—a shift in the pedagogy, a shift in the understanding, a shift in the time,” he explains. “In the conventional mode of teaching, the teacher must do 80 percent of the work and the student is only given 20 percent of the time to interact. Now, it is the reverse and it is helping students to understand concepts.”

Usman Kuraisy, a science teacher at nearby Charles Jow Memorial Academy, says the use of smart responders improves class dynamics and learning by “making it very easy for me to assess my children. As we go along, I see how they are moving—the weak ones, the strong ones—and I know when to go back over my lesson and when to continue.”

Both Koidia and Kuraisy see a jump in their students’ academic performance and their enthusiasm for math and science. Ansumana Jobarteh, an 11th grader at Nursat Secondary School agrees, “Before PSI-PMI, I was doing fine, but now that I can compare the results, I can say that I love the subject of physics more than before.”

Preliminary independent evaluations of the pilot indicate that PSI-PMI students scored 21 percent higher on a math test relative to a comparable group of non-PSI-PMI students from non-PSI-PMI matched schools.

### **Expanding PSI-PMI**

The Gambian government aims to expand PSI-PMI supported by the new Education Sector Support Program. With grant funding of \$30 million from IDA18 and \$5 million from the Global Partnership for Education, the program expects to benefit over 400,000 school-aged children, including those enrolled in Majalis (religious schools).

In addition to scaling up PSI-PMI in upper grades, it will support systemwide improvements in teacher training and expanded early childhood education initiatives. The curriculum of all core

subjects in lower and upper basic schools will also be reviewed, and revised textbooks will be printed and distributed to every school in the country.

## Ghana: Giving a Fair Chance to the Poorest Families to Succeed in Life



### Challenge

Ghana had experienced a period of significant economic growth, with Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth rates rising from 4.0% to 15.0% between 2005 and 2013. Ghana met the Millennium Development Goal One (1) target of having halved poverty since 1990, with poverty rates dropping from 56% to 24.6% (and again from 28.5% in 2002/03), and extreme poverty rates dropping to 8.4% (from 18.2% in 2002/03). Enrolment in primary schools also increased, and access to preventive health care was improved.

However, the benefits of economic growth and poverty reduction have not been equally distributed across the nation. Ghana's relatively high level of income inequality continues to rise (the Gini coefficient in 2016 was 42.3), with significant differences existing both between regions and between rural and urban areas. Poverty rates in northern regions of the country are two to three times the national average, and chronic food insecurity remains a critical challenge. There are also pockets of extreme poverty in the south. Despite positive strides made in developing an effective social protection system, the system is still in its nascent stages, and

requires further focus to strengthen it. There is room to improve the accuracy of targeting (to ensure the intended target beneficiaries receive the needed assistance), as well as to promote better coordination between social protection programs to reduce the duplication of effort, and to enhance citizen feedback mechanisms so that beneficiaries' grievances are heard and addressed. Additionally, more resources will be required to generate sustainable livelihood activities for the social assistance beneficiaries who have labor capacity, and to promote youth access to more productive jobs.

## **Approach**

The GSOP project has 3 main components: (i) Social Protection Systems Strengthening, which improve the overall social protection system through increased capacity building and the development of the Ghana National Household Registry to assist social protection and poverty alleviation programs in Ghana, to identify, prioritize, and appropriately select households living in extreme poverty and vulnerable conditions; (ii) LEAP Cash Transfers Implementation and Capacity Building and (iii) Labor-intensive Public Works Implementation and Capacity Building.

The latter two focus on leveraging technology to improve the efficiencies of the two, flagship safety net interventions through the introduction of management information systems, electronic payments, the development of a single-window case management system, and improved monitoring and evaluation systems—all aimed at improving the efficiency of service delivery. These three key areas have been supported through the \$138.6 million project (\$88.6 original credit and \$50 million in additional financing).

The World Bank team also used the following approaches to augment their support:

- coordinating different development partners and organizing joint missions;
- instituting strong grievance redress and citizenship feedback mechanisms;
- undertaking regular environmental audits to ensure compliance and sustainable benefits to communities; and
- restructuring the project development objective at the mid-term review to ensure that the project is outcome focused; and completing the Ghana Social Protection Assessment and Public Expenditure Review in 2016.



## Results

Through technical and financial support from IDA and trust funds in the last 6 years, the GSOP project has contributed to:

### On LIPW:

- Unskilled beneficiaries earned wages totaling \$19 million since project inception;
- The rehabilitation of 250 (25,485,869.2 cubic meters) Small Earth Dams and Dugouts (water catchment holes dug in the ground);
- 338 (1,266 kilometers) of Feeder Roads;
- 2283.64 ha of degraded land placed under rehabilitation through the planting of tree crops; and 40 social infrastructure sub-projects rehabilitated
- According to a 2016 Impact Evaluation, LIPW projects decreased individual unemployment rates in intervention communities, by 15% under feeder road and small-earth dam/dugout sub-projects respectively, and by 11.5% for communities that benefited from the climate change sub-project during the study period. Furthermore, labor force participation increased by 21%, 14.6%, and 22.6% for individuals in households that benefited from the feeder roads; climate change and small-earth dam and dugout sub-projects were improved respectively during the off-farming season; and beneficiary households in the three northern regions had a significant reduction in out-migration. The likelihood of at least one household member out-migrating due to paid work reduced by 3.1 percentage points.

### On LEAP:

- Coverage of the LEAP beneficiaries had increased from 78,000 in 2013 to 213,000 by June 2017; 60% were female.
- 61% (372,844) beneficiaries for Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LIPW) are female;
- The 2012 impact evaluation posits that LEAP has increased school enrollment among secondary school-age children by 7 percentage points, and reduced grade repetition among both primary and secondary aged children. Among primary aged children, LEAP has reduced absenteeism by 10 percentage points. At the household level, the project has

impacted positively on both food security and happiness, especially among female headed households.

### **Productive Inclusion Pilot:**

Furthermore, in an effort to examine opportunities for reducing vulnerabilities through productive inclusion interventions through a grant by the Japanese Social Development Fund administered by the World Bank, 4,200 LEAP and LIPW beneficiaries have been trained and provided with cash grants to support income generating activities like shea-butter processing, basket weaving, and the rearing of small ruminants in the Upper East Region of Ghana.

The project has contributed to the achievement of Pillar Three of the CPF (as documented in the 2016 performance and learning review of the CPF) and prior actions and triggers of the DPL series. In particular, progress under pillar three of the CPS has been strong overall, with one objective already achieved, and the other on track for completion by the new CPS end date (June 2018). In broad terms, results have been positive with respect to social protection, in part because of the continuing emphasis on maintaining an adequate safety net (as reflected in the prior action and triggers of the DPL series) despite the fiscal difficulties that Ghana has had to overcome. Developments within this Pillar are discussed below in more detail.

As part of the effort to address growing inequality along the North–South divide in Ghana, the CPS sought to expand the safety net and increase its effectiveness in the poorer northern part of the country, as well as to improve the targeting of benefits to women, children, and disabled persons. IDA support for this objective has been provided through the Ghana Social Opportunities Project (GSOP), for which Additional Financing was approved in 2015. The GSOP has been helping strengthen Ghana’s premier social protection programs, including programs for labor-intensive public works and cash transfers, with respect to overall management and operations, payment mechanisms, and monitoring and evaluation. These improvements, in turn, have enabled the significant, appropriate expansion of both safety net programs: as a result, cash transfer beneficiaries have more than tripled from 70,000 (2014) to 213,000 beneficiary households by 2017, significantly improving the coverage of orphans/vulnerable children, the elderly and the disabled. The public works program completed a total of 802 sub-projects with 13,339,502-person days of employment created by September 2017 versus a CPS target of 45,000-person days for 2016. In addition to improvements in beneficiary reach, the project has also benefited from the strengthening of the social protection system with the introduction of

Management Information Systems (MIS), electronic payments, and the launch of the Ghana National Household Registry. These new systems have led to efficiencies in program management and implementation.

### **Bank Group Contribution**

IDA funding of \$138.6 million for the GSOP project (including \$88.6 million original IDA credit, plus \$50 million AF) and two RSR Trust funds of \$900,000; Japanese Social Development Fund of \$2.8 million.

### **Partners**

IDA has maintained close partnerships with other development partners on the implementation of LEAP, including with the United Kingdom's Agency for International Development (DFID), which provides parallel funding of approximately GBP 50 million per year to the LEAP cash transfers program, and the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) and United Nations Children Fund (UNICEF), which also provide funding and technical assistance towards the LEAP program. Additionally, IDA has partnered with ILO to provide capacity building and technical support on LIPW activities. IDA organizes joint missions, and development partners meet periodically to identify ways to coordinate programming and reporting in order to promote efficiencies. Country Ownership was ensured through the support of the SP Policy that was built based on the lessons from among others GSOP. The policy was supported by DFID, UNICEF, and the Bank. The Bank leveraged its convening role to bring together donor partners, and also ensured that international and regional research and experiences were identified, and the knowledge shared for implementation, as applicable. National consultations across the country, briefs to legislatures, and approval by cabinet all ensured strong country ownership. Furthermore, a Social Protection Sector Working group has been established to bring together key stakeholders within the sector, including government, civil society organizations, private sector and development partners, to discuss challenges, good practices, and how to collaborate on implementation. The sector working group is currently co-chaired by the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection, and the World Bank.

### **Moving Forward**

In line with the Ghana Country Partnership Strategy, the Ghana Social Opportunities Project (GSOP) contributes to addressing: (i) the improvement of economic institutions; (ii) the

improvement of competitiveness and job creation; and (iii) protecting the poor and vulnerable. For sustainability, productive inclusion is being promoted through livelihood enhancing activities supported by the Japanese Social Development Grant.

### **Beneficiaries**

**Azunne Asakiboba:** At about 65 years old, Azunne is from Gamborongo community in the Bongo District of the Upper East Region, and the sole breadwinner of her household. She benefits from the national cash transfers program—the Livelihood Empowerment Against Poverty (LEAP) program and had benefited from the Labor-Intensive Public Works (LIPW) program, which provided seasonal employment in 2014. Madam Azunne enrolled in the Complementary Income Generation Support Scheme, supported by the Japanese Social Development Fund and implemented through the World Bank in 2016, where she was provided with vocational skills training in straw basket and hat weaving, and was subsequently provided with a start-up grant of Ghc.645.00 (\$147) to commence a trade in basket weaving. The JSDF productive inclusion initiative was established as part of efforts to strengthen the Social Protection system in Ghana to ensure that beneficiaries can escape from poverty through access to coordinated services and a sustainable livelihood.

With the support she has received, Madam Azunne is now able to produce three baskets on average per week, from which she makes a profit of Ghc.30.00 (\$7). From this supplementary income, she can pay the school fees of three children in basic education, and also provide three square meals a day for her household. Additionally, she has joined a village savings (*susu*) scheme, where she can access credit to in times of emergency.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2018/02/23/promoting-community-resilience-and-inclusive-growth-giving-a-fair-chance-to-the-poorest-families-in-ghana-to-succeed-in-life-through-the-ghana-social-opportunities-project>

February 23, 2018

## Haiti: Improving Access to Education for the Poor



After the devastating earthquake in January 2010 that left hundreds of thousands dead and hundreds of thousands more displaced, Haiti undertook to strengthen the nation's education system by improving its accessibility and quality. Efforts to achieve these objectives, included tuition waivers, school feeding programs, pre-service and in-service teacher training, and technical and material support to strengthen the Ministry of National Education and Professional Training (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle) and the education system overall.

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### Challenge

With a GDP per person of US\$673, Haiti is the poorest country in Latin America and the Caribbean and one of the poorest countries in the world. In the last several years, a series of external shocks have hit, including the 2010 earthquake, exacerbating the country's fragility and reversing the poverty gains achieved since 2001. Haiti's education sector faced tremendous challenges post-earthquake, including significantly diminished capacities for responding to them. The losses of schools, teachers, and staff from the Ministry of National Education and

Professional Training (Ministère de l'Éducation Nationale et de la Formation Professionnelle, MENFP) compound the problems of a sector that already faced a shortage of schooling infrastructure, trained teachers, and effective governance mechanisms.

On the supply-side, there were simply not enough spaces for children to enroll in free public schools, as four out of five primary schools in Haiti are private. Tuition, even in the lowest-cost private schools, was prohibitive for poor families, especially for those living in rural areas characterized by poverty rates of 82 percent (77 percent living in extreme poverty). Although access to education has improved dramatically over the past twenty years, due to high demand from families and a proliferation of low-cost private schools, challenges still exist regarding late entry and school progression due to the cost burden on families and the relatively low quality of education. While 90 percent of children aged between 6 and 12 are enrolled in school, they start primary school on average two years later than national goals suggest, and once at school, only 50 percent of students successfully reach sixth grade on time.

### **Approach**

The objective of Education for All Project for Haiti: Phase II is to support (i) enrollment of students in select non-public primary schools in disadvantaged areas; (ii) student attendance in select public and non-public primary schools in disadvantaged areas; and (iii) strengthened management of the Haiti's primary education sector. Project financing aims at (i) improving access to primary education through the tuition waiver program and provision of basic educational services in underserved rural communities; (ii) supporting teaching and learning through a school health and nutrition program, as well as through pre-service and in-service training for primary school teachers; and (iii) improving sector management by building the institutional and monitoring and evaluation capacity of the MENFP

### **Results**

The project has yielded substantial results from inception through 2016. Among the achievements attained are the following:

- Over 430,000 tuition waivers were financed, allowing disadvantaged children to attend school free of charge.
- Daily hot meals, snacks, deworming, and vitamin A were provided to more than 370,000 students across 430 schools.

- Schooling was provided to more than 6,500 children in poor, rural Haitian communities previously underserved. These children were also provided with school textbooks and pedagogical materials.
- Over 3,500 student-teachers benefited from accelerated pre-service teacher training, resulting in 3,570 additional qualified primary school teachers.
- Nearly 300 primary school teachers and 300 school directors benefited from scripted in-service training on early grade reading.

### **Bank Group Contribution**

The World Bank, through the International Development Association, provided a grant in the amount of US\$ 70 million to complement efforts made under the first phase of the program to guarantee access to quality education, improve the management of the system, and increase school attendance.

### **Partners**

The Education for All Project: Phase II was co-financed by the Canadian government (through the Haitian Reconstruction Fund) and the Global Partnership for Education for a combined total of US\$ 119 million. The Caribbean Development Bank and the Inter-American Development Bank also contributed directly to some activities under the program.

### **Moving Forward**

To prevent students from leaving school after Hurricane Matthew, the World Bank and its partners scaled up school feeding, building rehabilitation, and support for the Ministry of Education in its efforts to restore access and improve educational quality for Haiti's children through the Education for All: Phase II project. In addition, the Bank, through the International Development Association, approved in November 2016 a grant in the amount of US\$30 million to maintain access to quality education in the areas most affected by Hurricane Matthew.

### **Beneficiaries**

The project directly benefited more than 900,000 children. Among these beneficiaries is Jessica Prudent, an eleven-year-old student who attends Coeurs Unis school in one of the poorest neighborhoods in Port Au Prince, Carrefour Feuille. She is among the 50 percent of students who reached grade six on time, in large part due to the tuition funding she has received through the

program over the past six years. “I really like French, social science, and math. I feel very proud that my grade average is 9.8. I am always at the top of my class.... I would like to be a nurse so that if someone in my family is ill, I can care for them. To succeed, I have to finish school. I must study a lot to move to the next class. The Education for All Program has enabled me to get this far. Without it, I don’t know where I would be,” says Jessica, who is now in her final year of the tuition waiver program.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2017/04/11/improving-access-to-education-for-the-poor-in-haiti>

April 11, 2017



## Haiti: It All Starts with a Road - The Key to Mobility



Jean-Douby Florville, 13, can now take all his time to eat and review his homework before going to school. The eldest son in a family of four children, Jean-Douby crosses the eight kilometers that link the village of Labadie to downtown Cap-Haïtien, where his mother's hardware store and the good schools of the region are located. Before, the journey took 90 minutes on a dusty road. Since the rehabilitation of the road, the same journey takes only 30 minutes.

“Before, there were a lot of accidents on the road because it was too narrow in some places. In the rainy season, it was difficult for us to get to school because even motorcycles couldn't get through,” recalls Jean-Douby.

This road was opened in February 2018 by Haiti's President, Jovenel Moïse, accompanied by the Prime Minister of the Bahamas visiting Haiti to attend the CARICOM summit, and the World Bank Country Director, Anabela Abreu. In his speech, the President of the Republic welcomed this achievement, the result of effective cooperation between the World Bank and the Haitian Government. “We would like to commend the World Bank for financing the construction at the request of the Haitian Government.”

## **A road to resilience**

Residents living in communities along this main road are unanimous in recognizing that since the beginning of the construction, they no longer feel threatened by rain, which often led to flooding. Channels and drainage works have been undertaken and retaining walls have also been constructed to prevent landslides.

“Now I feel proud to live in the area. I feel like I live in Pétion-ville or the other accessible areas of Port-au-Prince. Despite the fact that our communal section generates a lot of money thanks to the tourists who come to Labadie, we were a little isolated and marginalized, especially when it rained,” said Anthony Saint Preux, a resident present at the road opening ceremony.

## **Revitalize the economy of the regional centers**

The World Bank is supporting the Government’s integrated approach to the development of this dynamic Grand Nord region, and this investment is part of a broad, integrated program of the World Bank Group to support sustainable mobility for all.

“It all starts with a road,” said Anabela Abreu, World Bank Country Director in Haiti. “A road is a window of opportunity that opens up and facilitates the movement of people, products and services. The rehabilitation of this road shows how much this type of infrastructure can transform the economy and the lives of the residents of Cap Haïtien.”

The construction of this road is a first step toward facilitating better connectivity within the Greater Cap Haïtien area, promoting trade and the development of tourism sector.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/02/28/tout-commence-par-une-route-la-cle-de-la-mobilite-en-haiti>

February 28, 2018

## IDA18 Private Sector Window: Giving Big Opportunities for Small Enterprises



IFC and MIGA are committed to creating more impact in areas that need it most, especially International Development Association (IDA) countries and other vulnerable places. To ensure small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) in emerging markets can access the capital they need to grow and prosper, IFC is leveraging a new tool—the IDA Private Sector Window (IDA PSW)—to support SME innovation and economic growth across Africa, Asia, and beyond.

SMEs play a central role in driving dynamic, competitive, and inclusive economies and are important job creators in emerging markets. Yet barriers such as weak regulatory structures, volatile markets, lack of information on SME performance, and higher credit risks often deter private investors. IFC estimates there is a \$4.5 trillion SME financing gap in emerging markets and is working to unlock private investment where it is needed most—despite the challenges.

In 2017, the World Bank Group launched the \$2.5 billion IDA PSW to catalyze private investment in IDA countries and fragile or conflict-affected states. The window recognizes the private sector's role in realizing the World Bank Group's Maximizing Finance for Development approach and achieving the Sustainable Development Goals. It provides concessional finance, which IFC and MIGA blend with their own resources, to help mitigate the risks and challenges private

investors face when initiating high-impact development projects in difficult environments. In turn, this attracts additional private sector funding, which is what billions to trillions is all about.

IFC has always been a leader and first mover in SME advancement. IDA PSW is allowing IFC to push this work even further and pursue higher-impact development deals that would otherwise struggle to get off the ground. Five groundbreaking projects were recently approved to support SMEs in IDA markets in three novel ways.

**Local currency financing.** In Cambodia's highly dollarized economy, rural SMEs that rely on Cambodian riel (KHR) struggle to secure affordable loans. Further, an undeveloped debt-capital market means financial institutions lack access to local currency financing. Establishing a local bond market would enable financial institutions to sustainably source KHR and increase lending to rural SMEs. But exchanging currency is expensive, meaning IFC cannot normally offer local currency financing at affordable enough rates given the additional costs of hedging. IFC is working with a Cambodian microfinance institution to issue the first-ever KHR bonds up to the equivalent of \$30 million. IFC will provide \$20 million, which it will exchange to local currency at a concessional swap rate via IDA PSW's Local Currency Facility. The new bond will allow the institution to offer 60 percent more (14,000) micro loans in KHR—two thirds of which will be for women. The bond issuance will also serve as a first step in developing a local debt-capital market and facilitate World Bank Group and Cambodian government-supported de-dollarization plans.

**Private equity funds.** SMEs account for 60 percent of jobs in the Kyrgyz Republic but face significant credit constraints that hinder economic growth. IFC is helping launch a first-of-its-kind private equity fund for Kyrgyz SME investments under its innovative SME Ventures program. Until now, political instability, a large informal economy, and other factors obstructed private investment in such a fund. However, IDA PSW offered \$4 million in concessional funding, which will be matched with \$4 million in IFC funds. This contribution will help the fund attract additional investors and reach its \$30 million target, eventually spurring creation of a local private equity market for SMEs. IFC is also using IDA PSW to support two similar projects: one in Myanmar and one for 13 countries in West, Central, and East Africa.

**Risk-sharing mechanisms.** SMEs' informality, lack of collateral, and undocumented financial performance can make them risky investments—especially when they operate in volatile environments. Further, local financial institutions in IDA PSW markets often lack the capacity to manage lending to SMEs. Offering a programmatic approach to risk-sharing as well as

comprehensive advisory services, IFC's Small Loan Guarantee Program aims to address these market failures and boost lending to SMEs in 54 IDA PSW-eligible countries—especially female-owned SMEs or those working in priority sectors such as climate or agriculture. During phase one, IFC is expected to invest up to \$166 million in risk-sharing facilities for a total SME portfolio of \$333 million supporting around 25,000 loans. IDA PSW is providing a \$50 million pooled first-loss counter guarantee to the program. The program will strengthen the capacity of financial institutions for risk-taking and financing SMEs in IDA PSW countries, helping close the estimated \$155 billion MSME financing gap.

Without IDA PSW and other blended finance facilities, IFC and others would struggle to support SMEs in fragile and frontier markets. Instead, IFC is ramping up investments in these markets—helping formalize and legitimize SMEs to create jobs and drive economic growth.

<https://worldbankgroup.sharepoint.com/sites/news/Pages/IDA-Private-Sector-Window-Gives-Small-Enterprises-Big-Opportunities-25062018-163024.aspx>

June 2018

## IDA18 Private Sector Window: Making Homes Affordable



### Story Highlights

- Replacing today's inadequate housing will cost trillions of dollars and in developing countries, mortgage finance is almost non-existent for poorer people.
- To kickstart and scale up a market for longer-term affordable mortgages and construction projects in West Africa, IFC is investing in a regional mortgage refinancing company with support from IDA's new Private Sector Window.
- Through blending concessional funds alongside IFC and other private investment, the PSW can reduce investment risks and lower interest rates on loans, leading to more affordable homes and stimulating the wider economy.

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By 2030, almost 60 percent of the world's 8.5 billion people will live in urban areas. Yet, in emerging markets, the housing sector is falling behind this rapidly urbanizing world. Today, 1.2 billion people live in substandard housing. By 2030, an estimated 3 billion people will need new housing and basic urban infrastructure. Worse, 93 percent of adults don't have access to formal housing finance. The affordable housing gap stands at \$650 billion a year and continues to grow as developing countries urbanize.

## **Addressing the housing crisis with private sector investment**

Replacing today's inadequate housing will cost trillions of dollars—necessitating significant private sector investment. To help crowd in private finance for development, the International Development Association—the World Bank's fund for the poorest—created a \$2.5 billion IDA Private Sector Window (PSW) as part of its record \$75 billion replenishment. Leveraging IDA resources, the PSW is expected to mobilize at least \$4-6 billion in additional private sector investment in the poorest and most fragile markets by 2020.

Through blending concessional IDA funds with private investment, the PSW helps mitigate the uncertainties and risks deterring investors from entering frontier markets, unlocking needed investment for high-impact projects across key development areas—including affordable housing. The PSW is enabling the International Finance Corporation (IFC)—a member of the World Bank Group and leading investor in housing finance in emerging markets—to scale up its housing investments in two key ways:

### **Lowering mortgage rates for low-income borrowers**

In developing countries, mortgage finance is almost non-existent for poorer people. For example, in West Africa, less than 7 percent of households can afford a home; mortgage rates are very high, and loans must be repaid within just eight years on average. West African financial institutions are unable to lend at more affordable rates or for longer periods, hampered by short-term liabilities and poorly developed local capital markets.

To kickstart a market for longer-term affordable mortgages in the region, IFC is investing in regional mortgage refinancing company Caisse Régionale de Refinancement Hypothécaire (CRRH) with support from the PSW. Foreign exchange risks previously limited the availability of local currency financing and prevented such a project from being commercially viable. However, the PSW is reducing the foreign currency risk through acting as a swap counterparty, enabling IFC's investment and serving as a catalyst to attract other private investors.

Thus, the PSW enables IFC to provide cost-effective local currency financing, which will allow CRRH to extend the tenor of their bonds—making mortgages more affordable and paving the way for other long-term mortgage products. Building on this experience, IFC is supporting a similar project with the PSW in Bangladesh—which has one of the largest housing deficits in the world—as well as exploring similar ventures in East Africa.

## **Driving down construction costs in developing countries**

Every day, African cities become home to 40,000 more people, many of whom find themselves without a roof over their heads. The cost of construction in Africa is high—up to three times higher than in India or China. Businesses struggle to secure finance for construction and low supplies of raw materials, such as cement, drive up prices.

IFC is committed to providing more affordable housing in the region and encouraging an industry that has the potential to be a major employer. The PSW can help IFC scale up affordable housing finance and construction projects in Africa. Through blending concessional funds alongside IFC and other private investment, the PSW can reduce investment risks and lower interest rates on loans, leading to more affordable homes and stimulating the wider economy. This will build needed housing units and create jobs—on average five jobs per home built.

IFC is also exploring ways the PSW can boost uptake of environmentally friendly building materials, such as energy efficient bricks. Providing concessional financing to green material manufacturers can help lower production costs, building demand for these products and enabling them to compete with cheaper, less efficient materials.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/09/12/making-homes-affordable-with-the-ida-private-sector-window>

September 12, 2018



## Kenya: Boosting Prosperity, Improving Equity in North and North Eastern Regions



Camel farmers in the town of Wajir, in North Eastern Kenya, have a hard time selling their camels because the poor state of the roads make access to the market difficult.

NAIROBI– In the North and North Eastern regions of Kenya, nearly 70% of residents live in poverty and have poor access to basic services. Frequent droughts pose a significant threat to livestock, the main source of food and income for nearly all of the people who live in this area. Socio-economic indicators fall significantly below the national average; for example, the female literacy rate is 41%, well below the national average of 89%.

A new initiative aims to improve some of these challenges. The Government of Kenya, with the support of the World Bank, launched a \$1 billion North and Northeastern Development Initiative (NEDI) to increase investments in transformative and integrated infrastructure and sustainable livelihoods to the region.

NEDI will be spearheaded by both the national and county governments. Its success will depend largely on strong collaboration between the stakeholders: the two levels of government, the private sector, civil society organizations and development partners.

“The people living in the region are among the poorest in the country,” said Diarrietou Gaye, World Bank country director for Kenya. “This calls for more investments in the region, much more than we have done in the past.”

NEDI will benefit 10 counties: Garissa, Isiolo, Lamu, Mandera, Marsabit, Samburu, Tana River, Turkana, Wajir and West Pokot. It has six new projects in energy, road transport, water and sanitation, agriculture, social protection, and a program that will support communities hosting refugees.

### **Improving Lives and Livelihoods**

The North and North Eastern regions are characterized by profound infrastructure deficits, including lack of access to roads, electricity, water, and to social services.

“Think about it; if there is no electricity, communities will live in the dark with limited ability to seize economic and social opportunities,” said Helene Carlsson Rex, World Bank program leader for sustainable development. “Without roads, people have difficulties accessing jobs, markets and to social services.”

The region is in dire need of electricity connection.

“We are not connected to the National Grid, as such we have limited power supply through diesel generators and also limited to a few towns, the rest of the towns don't have any electricity connection,” said Ali Roba, the governor of Mandera.

To increase access to electricity in the region, the Kenya Off-Grid Solar Access Project will harness the area's renewable energy resources. Mini-grids in underserved counties will provide electricity services to households, community facilities and boreholes, and efficient cookstoves. This way, the project will reduce energy poverty by increasing access to modern energy services in these counties.

Through the North-Eastern Transport Improvement Project, roads will be improved, travel time reduced and, it will also provide access to jobs and markets to the people living along the corridor. The Water and Sanitation Development Project will connect households to piped water, provide community water points, and improve sanitation services in Wajir town and for Dadaab host communities in Garissa County.

Pastoralism and agriculture are the foundations of the economy, but their huge potential remains unexploited. Harnessing this potential would improve livelihoods of the local people and, the region can become a breadbasket that can feed the growing market for agricultural produce and livestock products in the Horn of Africa. The Kenya Climate Smart Agriculture Project intends to increase productivity of livestock systems, promote integrated soil fertility and market access.

“This way, the communities in the northern arid lands will be empowered to effectively exploit the livestock and crop farming potential,” said Gandham N.V. Ramana, World Bank program leader for human development. “Value chains will be improved through strengthening of partnerships with the private sector.”

### **Supporting Refugees and Host Communities**

The protracted presence of large numbers of refugees in this region has had an impact on the environment due to deforestation as well as excessive use of water, reducing the water table. Presently, the area is hosting over 600,000 displaced persons from the neighboring countries.

The Kenya Development Response to Displacement Impacts Project will improve access to basic social services, expand economic opportunities, and enhance natural resource management for communities hosting refugees in the sub-counties of Turkana West, Wajir South, Fafi, Lagdera and Dadaab in Kenya.

“By improving the severely degraded environment and making sure there is resilience through livelihood initiatives for example, much more sustainable local economies will be created,” Ramana said.

Through the \$50 million additional financing to the National Safety Net Program, the existing program coverage for this region will be expanded with additional 50,000 new households. The expanded program aims to promote more equitable growth and to increase resilience of poor and vulnerable families through regular cash transfers.

“Promoting equal opportunities across the country will strengthen Kenya’s transformation from a low-middle income to a newly industrializing, middle-income country by 2030,” Diarietou Gaye, World Bank Country Director for Kenya. “The new investments in the north and northeastern region, which covers over 55% of the country, will spur growth that will contribute significantly to Kenya’s growth with equity.”

Progress in the region is being largely driven by devolution, the national and county governments, and Kenyans. The World Bank continues to play a supportive role.

“While NEDI brings significant investment, it is not a silver bullet that will resolve all the issues confronting the region,” Rex said. “It opens the door for the private sector and other development partners to work together to address the region’s challenges.”

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/05/08/boosting-prosperity-improving-equity-in-north-and-north-eastern-kenya>

May 8, 2018

## Kenya: Modernized Aviation Sector Set to Boost Regional Trade and Tourism



### Story Highlights

- After a series of modernization and expansion projects funded by the World Bank, Jomo Kenyatta International Airport stands ready to handle non-stop flights to and from the United States for the first time.
- Jomo Kenyatta International Airport passenger capacity increased to 7.5 million from 2.5 million, boosting economic growth and creating thousands of jobs.
- Kisumu International Airport has also benefitted from World Bank support, making it the country's fourth international airport.

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NAIROBI, September 25, 2018 – On Sunday, October 28, a Kenya Airways, Boeing 787 Dreamliner will leave Jomo Kenyatta International Airport (JKIA) for the first of its daily, non-stop flights to John F. Kennedy International Airport in New York City.

A decade in the making, Kenya, met all international safety standards in 2017, gaining the Category 1 status needed to provide service to the United States. The direct flights will boost trade and tourism, key elements to the economy of both Kenya and the East Africa region.

“This is an historic milestone in the growth and development of civil aviation in Kenya and in the East African region,” said Jonny Anderson, Managing Director of the Kenya Airport Authority.

Two International Development Association (IDA)-funded projects have contributed to the improvement of air transport in Kenya - the Northern Corridor Transport Improvement Project (NCTIP) and the Kenya Transport Sector Support Project (KTSSP).

The projects supported several activities, including the JKIA’s expansion and modernization program implemented by the Kenya Airports Authority (KAA), as well as the modernization of the air navigation systems and building the capacity of the Kenya Civil Aviation Authority (KCAA). KCAA is the state corporation responsible for regulating the country’s aviation industry and providing air navigation services in the Kenyan airspace.

The construction of a modern terminal separating arriving and departing passengers has boosted airport security and has also raised the airport’s annual capacity from 2.5 million to 7.5 million passengers.

“Expansion and modernization of JKIA is a key flagship project under Vision 2030, our long-term national development plan,” said engineer James Theuri, Project Coordinator for Development Partners Financed Projects in the Ministry of Transport, Infrastructure, Housing and Urban Development. “This is because of the very critical role that the airport plays, contributing over 10% of our national economy. Presently, JKIA alone supports over 10,000 jobs for Kenyans directly and an additional 60,000 indirectly, making it a nerve center of the national economy.”

The construction of the JKIA parking garage and grade parking has boosted customer experience at the facility. In March 2018, JKIA was recognized by Airport Council International as the Best Improved Airport in the African Continent in customer service.

Support for institutional reforms in the aviation sub-sector institutions has bolstered their mandate and financial autonomy, strengthening oversight of aviation security and safety. For example, the KCAA is now equipped with modern equipment and information communications technology, as well as an increased number of sufficiently trained staff to effectively police Kenya's airspace.

These changes contributed to the KCAA meeting the safety standards set by the United Nations' International Civil Aviation Organization (ICAO). In the ICAO's first authority audit on safety oversight in February 2017, Kenya scored an overall mark above the world average and was ranked third in Africa, behind Egypt and Gambia. ICAO has also accredited the East African School of Aviation as a regional training center of excellence—one of 16 such centers in the world.

“KCAA compliance with the ICAO audit shows our compliance jumped from 66% before institutional reforms and modernization to 78% compliance by the end of the IDA-supported project,” said Charles Kombo, KCAA's Chief Planning Officer.

JKIA is not the only airport in the country that has been upgraded through the projects. Located in Kisumu County, Kisumu International Airport's runway has been extended to 3.3 kilometers, enabling larger planes to operate from there. A new passenger terminal building and facilities have been constructed, including a 150-car park, elevating it to the country's fourth international airport, handling more than 400,000 passengers annually, compared to 80,000 in 2005.

Other transport sub-sectors have also gotten support from the NCTIP and KTSSP, such as roads and maritime, particularly in the establishment of independent entities such as Kenya National Highways Authority and the Kenya Urban Roads Authority.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/09/25/kenyas-modernized-aviation-sector-set-to-boost-regional-trade-tourism>

September 25, 2018

## Kiribati: Making Main Road Safer



The South Tarawa Road

### Story Highlights

- Kiribati has only one main road connecting the East and the West of Tarawa, the main island in the country.
- The South Tarawa Road has been in poor condition for a very long time, making travel slow and unsafe.
- A project has now rehabilitated over 36 kilometers of road, making travel safer for drivers, but also pedestrians and cyclists.

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Tarawa, Kiribati – The South Tarawa Road is, in no uncertain terms, an important road. That is because it's *the only road* in South Tarawa, connecting more than 50,000 people between Betio seaport in the west and Bonriki and the international airport in the East, making it a lifeline for those who live along it.

Tarawa is the capital of Kiribati (pronounced Ki-ri-bas), one of the most remote countries in the world, with 33 coral islands spread across an area the size of India. Of the 100,000 i-



*Kiribati* (people from Kiribati), more than half call Tarawa home, making it extremely densely populated.

Kiribati's main road has been in poor condition for a very long time.

For many years, though, the road was in extremely poor condition. Much of the road had not been rehabilitated since the 1970s. With heavy rain and significantly increased use, large potholes formed, making travel along the road slow, uncomfortable, and dangerous, particularly after rain. During the dry season, excessive dust would collect along the road and was a major contributor to upper respiratory illnesses for the people of Tarawa. Tenneke Matireei, a local ambulance driver, knows just how important a good road is.



Tenneke Matireei, Ambulance driver

“My work had been tough due to the bad condition of the road, particularly when considering the comfort and urgency of each patient we transport.

“You have to drive very slow... Some patients have died on the road as we couldn't make it to the hospital in time.”

Recognizing the urgent need to fix the road, the Government of Kiribati partnered with the World Bank, Asian Development Bank and the Government of Australia to repair the road and prepare for its ongoing maintenance.

The Kiribati Road Rehabilitation Project has now rehabilitated over 32 kilometers of the South Tarawa Road, and upgraded six kilometers of feeder roads. Footpaths have been installed and pavement marking added to improve pedestrian safety; improved drainage means less flooding and damage from heavy rain; and solar street lighting, and road signage was added to increase safety.

“Kiribati is one of the most remote countries in the world and has limited local products that can be used for the roadworks,” said Oliver Whalley, joint Manager for the Kiribati Road Rehabilitation Project. “Everything, except for water, some locally sourced aggregates and sand, had to be shipped in, creating challenges in terms of cost, transport time and managing resources.”

Despite these challenges, the road is now in a much better condition.

“There is definitely a big improvement now,” said Matireei. “Before the road reconstruction it was literally impossible to drive faster than 10 kilometers an hour. But today we can carry out our service more efficiently and effectively.”

The roadworks not only provide a smoother ride for drivers, but also a safer route for pedestrians and cyclists. Fifty-seven kilometers of footpaths have been added to provide a safe space to walk and 36 bus shelters provide shelter from the rain, wind or sun, for those waiting for a bus. To promote safe driving speeds, 114 speed bumps have also been installed.

The significantly improved road conditions mean vehicles – including Matireei’s ambulance – require less frequent repairs, saving money for car owners and families.

“Today, I feel that the patients we transport feel more comfortable because the road is in a much better condition.” said Matireei. “Our fleet of ambulances will also last longer now that the road is complete, because back then they would not last a year before breaking down.”

### **Ensuring that the road will last**

To keep the road in good condition going forward, the project is supporting routine maintenance through local contractors. By providing training, operational support and the purchasing of basic equipment, minor roadworks can be done by local contractors.

“We will support and train them, so they can clean the drainage system, clear the roadway, fill potholes on unsealed roads, report to the Ministry of Public Works any cracks, potholes or

broken edges in the pavement of sealed roads, and maintain the signage,” said Pierre Graftieaux, joint Manager for the Kiribati Road Rehabilitation Project. “These routine maintenance jobs will make the roadworks more sustainable, while at the same time reduce the cost to the government and create employment opportunities.”

Initiated in 2010, the US\$60.4 million Kiribati Road Rehabilitation Project is the largest economic infrastructure investment in the country since World War II. It is funded through US\$27 million from the World Bank – its first-ever International Development Association-financed investment in Kiribati – US\$16.4 million from the Government of Australia, US\$14.4 million from the ADB, and US\$2.6 million from the Government of Kiribati.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2016/11/22/making-kiribati-main-road-safer>

November 22, 2016

## Kyrgyz Republic: Partnering for Economic Growth and Job Creation



With limited natural resources and one-third of the population below the poverty line, the Kyrgyz Republic is working with the World Bank Group (WBG) to improve the national governance system; fight corruption; boost economic growth, public finances, and global competitiveness; as well as improve social conditions. With support from the International Development Association (IDA), the country has maintained macroeconomic stability; rehabilitated roads, the power supply, and irrigation schemes; and improved the learning environment in rural schools and the poor's access to health services.

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### Challenge

Landlocked and largely mountainous, with a population of nearly 6 million and a GNI per capita of US\$1,250 in 2014 (Atlas methodology), the Kyrgyz Republic is one of the poorest countries in the Europe and Central Asia region. Barely 7 percent of the land area is arable; the rest is glaciers, mountains, and pastureland or steppe that supports livestock grazing.

The country's natural resources—minerals (mainly gold) and water for hydropower generation—are also limited. The Kyrgyz economy is vulnerable to exogenous shocks, owing to its reliance on one gold mine, Kumtor, which accounts for over 10 percent of GDP, and on workers' remittances, equivalent to about 30 percent of GDP in 2011–15.

Over the past decade, the country has achieved significant reductions in poverty, but progress has been uneven: poverty declined from 68 percent to 37 percent between 2003 and 2013, with faster poverty reduction between 2003 and 2008 than from 2009 onward.

According to the National Statistics Committee (NSC), the absolute poverty rate in 2014 was 30.6 percent. Although its economy and society are the most liberal in Central Asia, the country has experienced significant political and social instability since independence in 1991; weak governance and entrenched corruption were major stress factors underlying political and social upheavals in 2005 and 2010.

For the Kyrgyz Republic to realize its growth potential—including to export hydroelectricity as a nexus for regional trade and transport and to promote tourism—economic activities need to be diversified through increased private sector development and improved occupational skills and productivity in the young labor force.

Above all, dramatic improvements in governance are required, as public trust in government institutions at all levels and private sector confidence have eroded.

## **Approach**

The strategic focus of the ongoing WBG program highlighted in the 2013–17 Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) has been supporting the Kyrgyz Republic's efforts to improve governance, with emphasis on three broad areas of engagement: (i) public administration and public service delivery; (ii) the business and investment climate; and (iii) natural resources and physical infrastructure.

Support for these areas of engagement has been provided through concessional IDA lending averaging US\$55 million annually (supplemented where appropriate by trust fund financing, including the Multi-Donor Health Results Innovation Trust Fund) and intensified analytical and advisory activities that emphasize practical, problem-solving advice.

A balance between investment and development policy lending has been maintained: in FY2014-2015 approved IDA lending made US\$142 million, while development policy financing constituted US\$74 million (2:1 ratio). The International Finance Corporation (IFC) has contributed to the CPS program by promoting private sector development through investment and advisory services that encourage diversification and competitiveness.

## Results

### Public administration and public service delivery:

- Public Sector Reform Roadmap (PSRR), developed with WBG technical assistance, adopted in 2014 (PSRR is medium-term action plan identifying priority these measures: anti-corruption, public financial management, public administration, civil service, judicial reform, and governance in energy and extractives)
- Judiciary sector development action plan adopted in 2014
- New Public Procurement Law, developed in line with good international practice, adopted (2015)
- Road Asset Management System, a database of 18,000 kilometers of roads and the condition of 1,500 kilometers to support maintenance planning, programming, and budgeting and to monitor performance, established
- Automated Information System for Municipal Property Management developed and operational
- National full-year preschool program was launched in 2015 and now covers 65 percent of six-year-olds, who otherwise would not have possibility to enroll in elementary school preparatory classes
- Number of villages with improved social and economic infrastructure increased from 1,000 in 2007 to 1,698 in 2015
- Mortality rate from cardiovascular disease (40–59 years per 100,000) declined from 310 in 2011 to 284.5 in 2014
- Share of social assistance spending on poverty-targeted programs increased from 18.5 percent of GDP in 2011 to 24.5 percent in 2014
- Water-borne diseases in IDA project areas decreased by 62.5 percent in 2009–14.

### **Business environment and investment climate:**

- Government's Private Sector Development Strategy and Action Plan adopted in 2014, with World Bank Group support
- Business regulations simplified, particularly in tax payments and inspections
- Kyrgyz Republic rose to 67th out of 189 countries in 2016 Doing Business report (102nd in 2012); report highlights improvement in the country's "Distance to the frontier" score and recognizes the government for reforms in getting credit (with WBG-supported reform of the credit bureau) and registering property
- Institutional capacity building of commercialized or new entities (private credit bureau and credit registry) and strengthening of microfinance institutions (MFIs) to expand deposits and their outreach
- Volume of micro, small, and medium-sized enterprise (MSME) loans provided by MFIs supported by IFC rose from US\$150 million (2011) to US\$190 million (2014)
- Private credit bureau coverage (percent of adults) increased from 24.6 percent (2012) to 36 percent (2015)
- New framework for risk-based streamlined business inspections implemented by pilot agencies (2015).

### **Natural resources and physical infrastructure:**

- Independent regulator in energy sector created in 2014, new medium-term tariff policy adopted, and performance indicators established in energy generation, transmission, and distribution utilities
- WBG-supported reform in pasture and forestry sector to improve natural resource management; new integrated ecosystem-based approach to management of forests, pastures, and unproductive lands adopted through government forestry reform and implementation of new pasture law
- Travel time along rehabilitated project road sections in Batken region reduced from 68 minutes (2009) to 40 minutes (2014)
- 72 water users associations (WUAs) in 2015, ensuring that water distribution to farmers closely matches irrigation demands in 80 percent of rehabilitated systems (10 WUA systems in 2008)

- 5 percent average increase in crop productivity in IDA-funded project areas compared to non-project areas in 2012–15.

### **IDA-Related Results**

- 83,000 people have improved access to clean water, thanks to new connections for 3,902 households and the improved access of an existing 1,000 piped household water connections, as well as from the construction/rehabilitation of 226 community water standpipes from 2009 to 2014.
- 212,537 children were immunized, and 8,959 health personnel received training from 2012 to 2015.
- 10,000 teachers were trained to implement the revised curriculum in 2015–16 and significantly improved teaching learning practices.
- 419 WUAs were established and 182,888 hectares of land nationwide have improved irrigation and drainage services (2007–15).
- 454 pasture users unions were established, with increased access to an additional 51,000 hectares of pasture through community investment in bridges, tracks, and watering points.
- Vehicle use of the rehabilitated Osh-Batken-Isfana road increased from 3,046 per day in 2009 to 4,570 in 2014, with a tenfold increase in truck traffic. Travel time has halved, thus improving the access of the population to services and markets.

### **World Bank Group Contribution**

Since the Kyrgyz Republic joined the World Bank in 1992, the Bank's financial assistance has amounted to over US\$1.3 billion. Currently, 45 percent of the IDA's assistance is provided in the form of grants; the other 55 percent are highly concessional.

Since 1992, 50 IDA-funded investment operations for US\$1.1 billion have been completed and closed, and 13 large projects (nine IDA projects and four large stand-alone trust funds, such as from the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP), Global Partnership for Education, Multi-Donor Health Results Innovation Trust Fund, and Government of Switzerland) for a total of US\$217.74 million are ongoing as of April 2016.

IDA lending in FY14–16 included: (a) three development policy operations totaling US\$74 million supporting governance reforms in public administration, public services delivery, anti-corruption



and transparency, and the energy sector; and (b) seven investment projects totaling US\$166 million in energy, roads, pasture and livestock management, rural infrastructure, and forest management.

The Kyrgyz Republic also benefited from three IDA-funded Central Asia regional projects: Central Asia Road Links Project, Central Asia Hydromet Project and CASA-1000. Programmatic poverty analysis and public expenditure reviews and advisory products on energy tariff regulations and public services standards underpinned this lending program and informed key policy reforms.

The deployment of Conflict Filter tools to consider social factors because of the ethnic tensions contributed to the post-conflict reconciliation effects of WBG projects.

## **Partners**

Donor coordination has been a landmark of the WBG's ongoing operations in the Kyrgyz Republic to date. Through its convening role, the WBG coordinated policy dialogue with other partners involved in budget support, macro-financial assistance, and structural and sectoral reforms.

In areas where the Bank Group has a track record of technical quality and leadership, it leveraged substantial donor funds. For example, the Bank spearheaded the efforts of seven development partners under the Health and Social Protection Project (SWAp); mobilized a significant amount—equal to two-thirds of IDA's annual allocation—from GAFSP for the Agricultural Productivity and Nutrition Improvement Project; and raised and administered the funds of three key donors for improving public finance management.

Although limited, the IDA financing envelope for the Kyrgyz Republic allowed for significant financial leveraging, which has been instrumental in mobilizing much-needed additional resources to supplement the Bank's investment program, technical assistance, and advisory services.

## **Moving Forward**

Over the next several years, the WBG will continue to aid the Kyrgyz Republic, supporting the Government's important public investments program and maintaining the CPS focus on governance. However, with the deterioration in the external environment and weaker prospects for growth, the WBG aims to focus on helping the country to mitigate the impact of the

slowdown on job creation, provide protection to vulnerable populations, and exploit new opportunities for private sector development, while accelerating the pace of structural reforms.

These adjustments will tilt the Bank's engagement toward a greater focus on growth and jobs, helping the Kyrgyz Republic take advantage of the opportunities emerging from membership in the Eurasian Economic Union and from improved prospects for broader regional cooperation in Central Asia and addressing the sources of macroeconomic vulnerability.

### **Beneficiaries**

Women self-help groups under the Agricultural Productivity Assistance Project start with about US\$20–25 worth of high-quality seeds and fertilizer per member, and members take classes in basic agriculture. The value of seeds and fertilizers that farmers receive through the Bank-supported project is repaid by group members in the fall to allow further on-lending to new members.

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"We grow high-value crops like tomatoes. And now I can pay for my daughter's education—before I wasn't able to. And another good thing, we have this healthy food on the table."



Farida Mamytova, Farmer, beneficiary of the project

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<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2016/04/13/partnering-for-economic-growth-and-job-creation-in-the-kyrgyz-republic>

April 13, 2016

## Lesotho: Championing Agricultural Entrepreneurs



More than half of Lesotho's citizens live in rural areas, and the majority engage in subsistence agriculture. Because the urban economy has limited ability to absorb new entrants to its labor market, expanding agricultural productivity and profitability is essential.

Ntuba Masena is the owner of a thriving vegetable and fruit drying company in the market town of Hlotse in northern Lesotho. Faced with retirement from nursing, and looking for additional sources of income, she learned about produce drying at a farming workshop she attended. The idea of starting a value-added business appealed to her, so she bought a few bags of apples, a fruit slicer, and began her journey into entrepreneurship.

At first, Masena was sun drying her produce, but adverse weather patterns hindered her work and business suffered. She applied for and received a grant from the World Bank-supported Smallholder Agriculture Development Project (SADP), which she used to buy a dehydrator. With the new equipment, drying times are down—apples take just four hours to dry rather than a day and half—and profits are up.

## **Improving productivity, marketability**

Since 2012, SADP has provided a combination of competitive grants and technical assistance to help smallholder farmers and agricultural entrepreneurs like Masena increase productivity and market opportunities. Over 55,000 people across four of Lesotho's ten districts have benefitted from the project. This includes over 16,800 grant recipients, half of whom are women who have ventured into pig and poultry breeding, climate-smart vegetable production, and other smallholder agricultural activities.

Malisema Masheane is one of them. A long-held love for pig farming was always thwarted by a lack of funds and time as she juggled two jobs to make ends meet. In 2016, she heard about SADP and successfully applied for grant support. With the \$21,000 she received from the project, she bought 10 sows and one boar, built a barn, and installed a water system linked to a borehole. With her dream realized, Masheane plans to expand and encourages others to follow her lead. "A lot of people—men and women—are very impressed by this work and would like to own pig farms of their own. I always encourage them to find opportunities along the value chain so we can all benefit from the industry," she says.

## **Expanding support to more districts**

Agriculture is an important source of employment and food in Lesotho. More than half of Lesotho's citizens live in rural areas, and the majority engages in smallholder subsistence agriculture. Because the urban economy has a limited ability to absorb new entrants to its labor market, agriculture plays a major role in Lesotho's development strategy.

SADP has shown that opportunities exist for developing commercially viable smallholder agriculture, especially as urbanization, climate change vulnerability, and changes in consumption patterns force the agricultural sector to adapt. In 2018, the \$24.5 million project received an additional \$10 million in IDA financing to expand its support to three more districts and add new focuses on climate-smart production and agribusiness initiatives.

Molapo Mahala, Lesotho's Minister of Agriculture and Food Security, agrees that promoting the commercialization of smallholder agriculture has gained a great deal of traction, and "these added funds will focus on continuing to increase the capacity of farmers in Lesotho to build more productive, climate resilient, commercial agriculture systems."

## Liberia: Increasing Access to Electricity to Reenergize the Economy



As Liberia works to diversify its commodity-based economy and boost trade and investment, it is looking first to its energy sector. Expanding electricity services and reducing costs to businesses and households can spur economic growth, job creation, and poverty reduction.

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Yassah Kpassakoi owns the Kpassakoi Trading Corporation (KTC), which operates a 15-bedroom hotel and entertainment and shopping center in bustling mid-town Monrovia, Liberia's capital.

Once dependent on expensive generators to keep the lights on and her business open, Kpassakoi is thrilled with her new connection to the national power grid.

“I am happy that I do not have to pay so much money to operate generators. Our profit margin has increased, which will help us expand our business,” she says.

Kpassakoi is among thousands of Monroviaans who have gained access to cheaper, more reliable electricity thanks to ongoing efforts to expand electricity services and make them more affordable for businesses and households.

### **Increasing supply of affordable electricity**

The Government of Liberia is committed to increasing the supply of reliable electricity while shifting away from expensive diesel-powered generation toward cheaper thermal sources, such as heavy fuel oil (HFO), and increasing the share of renewable sources of electricity, mostly hydropower. Investments in generation capacity have dropped the electricity tariff from \$0.54 to \$0.39 per kilowatt hour—a significant reduction but still high by regional standards.

Liberia aims to lower costs further by importing cheaper electricity from the regional market through the Côte d’Ivoire, Liberia, Sierra Leone, and Guinea (CLSG) Power Interconnection Project. The World Bank is supporting the project, most recently with \$45 million in additional financing from IDA18, as a key component of the West Africa Power Pool (WAPP) program. It is working to establish a cooperative power pooling mechanism for West Africa to bring more stable and reliable electricity at affordable costs to the citizens of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS).

The CLSG project will support the construction of 225-kilovolt transmission lines to interconnect the four participating countries into the WAPP regional energy market. This will allow Liberia to sell surplus electricity from the Mount Coffee hydropower plant on the Saint Paul River. It also will help bring future generations into the regional market and enable commercial users, such as large plantations and mining firms that currently generate their own electricity, to buy power directly from the market. The transmission lines would also provide electricity to communities located within a kilometer of it.

## **Expanding the grid**

Liberia is also investing in its national transmission infrastructure to bring grid-connected power to more urban and rural communities. Despite progress, Liberia still has one of the lowest access rates in Africa: 4.9 percent nationally and 20 percent in Monrovia.

The ongoing Liberia Accelerated Electricity Expansion Project, supported by \$95 million in IDA financing, aims to expand grid connections to over 47,000 households and small businesses and 400 larger scale customers. So far, more than 17,200 customers have been connected, mainly in Monrovia.

It is also financing the construction of 110 kilometers of 66-kilovolt transmission lines and 2,000 kilometers of distribution lines in Monrovia and outlying counties. Five new substations will be constructed and one rehabilitated.

## Mali: Easing Rural Mobility to Connect People, Services, and Opportunity



Isolation from markets and services is, quite literally, a roadblock impeding the development of Mali's rural agricultural areas, where most of the poor lives. A rural mobility project under IDA18 aims to boost productivity by rehabilitating 1,700 kilometers of vital roads.

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The inhabitants of Zanina, a rural commune in southern Mali some 350 kilometers (km) from the capital Bamako, rejoice in the construction of not one, not two, but three concrete bridges connecting their communities to each other and regions beyond. The wide, sturdy bridges now bring vehicles, motorcyclists, pedestrians, shepherds with their herds, and a new level of liveliness to farming villages like D  b  la. Located six km from the main road, D  b  la used to be difficult to enter or exit after heavy rains. Now it is accessible year-round.

For Chata Diarra, a member of the D  b  la village women's association, the new bridges mean greater financial security and peace of mind.



“We welcome these works that allow us to transport our products on time to neighboring markets in any season. We also no longer worry about the children going into the field or taking the animals to graze. With these bridges, they can easily return home,” she says.

### **Reliable access to markets**

These and other bridges are part of the Mali Rural Mobility and Connectivity Project, funded by \$70 million from IDA18. It aims to rehabilitate 1,700 km of rural roads in the Koulikoro (dryland zone) and Sikasso (southern zone) regions of Mali and benefit some 650,000 people, mostly farming communities.

“The engine of the Malian economy is agriculture, and road access is part of an integrated approach to addressing the low productivity of rural farmers,” says Soukeyna Kane, World Bank Country Director for Mali.

Alou Diallo from the small commune of Blendio knows first-hand how critical roads are to the flow of people, goods, and services across this rural landscape. He recalls a recent event when pouring rain made their narrow, dilapidated bridge impassable, blocking market vendors.

“They had to remain on the other side until the water receded, and they arrived late to sell their products. The farmers lost their perishable foodstuffs and the livestock producers had to wait for the next weekly market,” he explains.

Fortunately, the Blendio-Kounia access road, an 84-km stretch that includes this unsafe bridge, is already undergoing reconstruction along with portions of National Highway 7 in the southern Sikasso region.

### **Better access to services, jobs**

In addition to boosting agricultural productivity, improving road access will increase community connections to basic services like schools, health centers, and government offices. The project will also finance small common facilities, such as water wells, small warehouses, and vegetable gardens for women, to foster social cohesion and empowerment.

Moreover, the rehabilitation of these roads offers employment to the local workforce. Some 144,000 jobs will be created in five years, helping to reduce poverty in target areas. Community-level teams also will be formed to ensure ongoing maintenance of improved roads. By engaging

its citizens, Mali is paving the way to more collaborative and responsible management of its vital infrastructure.

## Moldova: Reducing Poverty and Boosting Shared Prosperity



Moldova's recent growth performance has reduced poverty and promoted shared prosperity: extreme poverty declined from 7% to 3.1% between 2011 and 2013. The World Bank Group works with Moldova's government to increase competitiveness (particularly in agriculture), improve labor skills through better education, and ensure sustainable and equitable social assistance. A competitive economy and skilled labor force will enable all Moldovans to benefit from European integration.

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### Challenges

Moldova is a small, land-locked country with a population of 3.5 million and a GDP of US\$ 7.9 billion (2014). The economy is dominated by agriculture and the food industry, but remittances are also central, amounting to around one quarter of GDP during 2011–14. A series of governments over the past decade have promoted European integration, and in 2014 Moldova and the European Union (EU) signed an Association Agreement that also set up a free trade area between them.

Moldova faces persistent challenges in its political and market transition and other important concerns, such as an aging population and a warmer climate. A series of droughts and floods between 2007 and 2015 displaced many people and destroyed social infrastructure, housing, crops, and livestock.

Moldova has established the formal institutions of a market economy, and growth has led to marked reductions in poverty in the past 15 years. Since the 2009 global economic crisis, economic performance has been strong, although the deterioration in external conditions, together with a series of summer droughts and increased governance challenges, particularly in the financial sector, have resulted in slower growth in 2015. Moldova needs to improve its competitiveness and the business environment if progress is to be maintained. Additionally, Moldova's human potential needs to be maximized by improving the quality of education and health services.

However, the biggest challenge is the need for major improvements in governance. Corruption increased markedly between 2012 and 2014 with Moldova falling from the 30th to the 20th percentile for Control of Corruption according to the Worldwide Governance Indicators (2015), undermining actions intended to increase competitiveness and exemplified, inter alia, by the banking sector crisis in late 2014; political instability increased during the same period, and public trust in government institutions, along with private sector confidence, has eroded.

### **Approach**

The WBG is helping Moldova to address the challenges above and to boost shared prosperity and reduce poverty by capturing the full benefits of EU and global integration. Three strategic areas of engagement are highlighted in the 2014–17 Country Partnership Strategy (CPS): increasing competitiveness; enhancing human capital and minimizing social risks; and promoting a green, clean, and resilient Moldova. Improving governance cuts across all of these areas.

Over the past 10 years, the WBG has provided support through International Development Association (IDA) and International Bank for Reconstruction and Development (IBRD) financing, Trust Funds (TFs), and technical and policy advice. Development policy (general budget support) and investment lending (projects in specific sectors) have been maintained with flexibility, allowing the Bank to shift toward investment lending if conditions require. As of mid-2016, the

CPS envisaged total lending of US\$ 480 million, of which US\$ 75 million is development policy lending.

## **Results**

### **Competitiveness**

- The WBG's collaborative effort has helped to improve competitiveness:
- Safety regulatory framework harmonized with EU regulations, facilitating food exports to the EU.
- In 2006–12, roughly 500 matching grants provided to 479 firms for international quality certification and business development. Over US\$ 22 million provided as a line of business credit to 60 enterprises.

### **Agriculture**

- A range of IDA-funded operations led to a series of important achievements:
- During 2003–13, over 1,000 business start-ups launched and US\$ 30 million disbursed to rural entrepreneurs and start-up businesses, helping create over 5,600 new jobs.
- Strengthened farmer preparedness for climate risks: 26 irrigation subprojects financed, 3,000 hectares of on-farm irrigated area rehabilitated, and 38,000 farmers trained on irrigation since 2011. Drought adaptation agronomics adoption rate was 30 percent.

### **Education**

- In 2010–14, IDA-funded activities were a driving force behind efficiency improvements:
- 65 rehabilitated kindergartens provided preschool to 1,100 children, resulting in enrollment increase from 77 to 82 percent.
- Preschool teachers in 950 institutions received key teaching materials, and 260 mentors and 40 inspectors were trained to support 8,400 teachers.
- Per-student financing formula introduced, increasing transparency and efficiency.

### **Energy**

- IDA's extensive engagement in the energy sector during 2004–12 contributed to:
- Improvements in 23 schools and 12 health institutions, benefiting over 27,000 students and teachers and 1.2 million patients, staff, and visitors, with 90 percent improvement in heating efficiency.

- Reduced greenhouse gas emissions of 90,000 tons of carbon dioxide, equivalent to 19,000 vehicles off the roads for a year.
- Reduced energy demand, helping public entities save 30–40 percent in heating costs.
- Reduction in non-technical losses to zero, outage rates by 59 percent, and unserved energy to 0 percent.

### **Social Assistance**

- In 2009, the IDA-financed Ajutor Social program was introduced, providing social benefit payments to the poorest:
- Monthly number of beneficiary households reached 66,000 by 2016, including 18 percent of poorest households. Poorest group received over two-thirds of total transfers.
- Between 2010 and May 2016, 185,000 households received benefit at least once.
- Costlier categorical benefits discontinued to ensure resources for expansion of targeted transfers and preserve system sustainability.

### **Health**

- IDA has supported several important achievements in the health sector:
- National health insurance scheme now covers 85 percent of the population, versus 76.7 percent in 2007.
- Better health services available through rehabilitation of 22 primary health care facilities and construction of 57 primary care centers during 2007–14.
- Average stay in hospitals reduced from 9.5 days (2011) to 8 days (2015).
- Coordination between WBG, EU, and Council of Europe Development Bank in building the new surgical block allowed new and complex surgeries.

### **Communities**

- A series of IDA-financed community-focused and emergency response interventions since 2000 have had a significant impact:
- Over 850 community infrastructure facilities upgraded: 404 schools, 278 kindergartens, and 191 water management projects, benefiting an estimated 1.2 million people.
- School attendance increased by 5 percent during winter due to central heating installation.

- 100,000 person/days of employment generated in poor rural areas affected by global economic crisis.

### **Public Services**

The IDA-financed governance e-transformation project implemented in 2011–16 has brought innovation:

- 50 percent of public institutions migrated information systems to Government’s Cloud Computing Infrastructure, with US\$ 1.8 million in savings generated.
- Open Government Data and General Government Services Portal launched, facilitating interaction between over 495,000 people (51.8 percent women) and government.
- 28 sectoral and cross-sectoral platform-shared enabling services launched, reducing administrative burden and corruption.

### **Bank Group Contribution**

The International Finance Corporation’s (IFC) committed portfolio in Moldova stands at US\$ 56.8 million, consisting of 82 percent loans and 16 percent equity and quasi-equity in a total of 12 projects. IFC technical assistance is supporting agri-business, in particular, improving food safety standards to bring them in line with EU practices, and helping the Government to improve and streamline the regulatory framework for businesses.

The net exposure of the Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) in Moldova amounts to US\$ 17.1 million in projects that support foreign bank subsidiaries in the country, including microfinance organizations and leasing operations. [Back to top](#)

### **Partners**

Donor partnerships have been effective in leveraging co-financing and speaking as one on key reforms. The WBG convened the multi-donor Briefing Book, the basic document for donor policy dialogue with governments during 2015–16. The Bank leads the transport donor group, is organizing a similar arrangement for the energy sector, informally coordinates health donors, and participates actively in government sector councils. Collaboration with the EU Delegation, Commission, and member states has been essential, particularly in the energy sector and on governance reforms.

WBG operations have also attracted support from other development partners, including the Global Environment Facility, the Governments of the Netherlands, Sweden, Switzerland, and Japan, the United Nations Children’s Fund, and the U.S. Agency for International Development, which co-financed IDA operations, financed carbon operations, and provided other forms of support, including for Advisory Services and Analytics. Four new technical assistance activities to be implemented under the cross-cutting governance theme will be financed from the United Kingdom’s “Good Governance and Investment Climate” TF.

The Bank has provided technical leadership in sectors where it has leveraged resources from other partners. It provided technical assistance on the Land Transport Infrastructure Strategy and a US\$16 million IDA credit, after which the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development and the European Investment Bank provided parallel financing of US\$ 450 million to the State Roads Administration to improve national roads and manage the road network.

### **Moving Forward**

The WBG has a long-term relationship with Moldova, and although the country continues to face various economic and political uncertainties, the Bank will continue to support reforms when opportunities arise. There is likely to be less emphasis on policy-based lending and more on investment programs with tangible results for the population, and the future program will be anchored in Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) priorities, namely, improving economic and service governance and skills.

IFC will continue its support to enhancing competitiveness, particularly in the agriculture sector, including further efforts to ensure food safety and quality, addressing competition issues in selected agri-food markets, and improving trade logistics.

### **Beneficiaries**

#### **Reducing weather risks**

“We learned our lesson in 2012 when a severe drought ruined the harvest,” says Ion Baban, a farmer. “In 2013, though we had more rainy days, our own irrigation system financed by the grant allowed us to see a 40 percent increase in our yield. And it improved both the quantity and already high quality of our grapes. And better quality means better prices.”

#### **Targeting social assistance**



“It’s important help for us. The money we receive helps us pay for food and school supplies and buy clothes,” says Sergiu Robu, head of a rural family of 11 children. “My children are growing up; we need more money to buy food, clothes, and to finish the construction of our house.”

### **Empowering local communities**

In Transnistria, 98 percent of Parcani residents voted to put a much-needed roof on the local school. Until two years ago, there was no roof at all. “We couldn’t use the third floor or the second floor, really,” says 9th-grader Carolina Gaidari. “It was impossible to concentrate because of the damp and the mold in the classrooms.” Her classmate Dmitrii Nicolaev agrees. “We like it very much now. There is no leaking water and we don’t have to work with buckets everywhere.”

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2017/04/17/moldova-reducing-poverty-and-boosting-shared-prosperity>

April 17, 2017

## Myanmar: Turning on the Lights in Rural Areas



### Story Highlights

- Only 30% of Myanmar's population is connected to the electricity grid while candles and batteries offer dim light, limited lifespans and eat up a large fraction of daily income for many rural households.
- The Government of Myanmar, with the help of the World Bank, is currently rolling out off-grid electricity services as part its National Electrification Plan, installing solar PV systems in eight of Myanmar's states and regions, benefiting over 2,000 villages and 140,000 households.
- Ultimately, the National Electrification Plan will benefit approximately 700,000 people by October 2017 and more than 2 million people by 2021 from off-grid electrification alone.

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The late afternoon breeze brings the village of Sai Pyun out— children race each other on bikes, weaving through neighbors fetching water in metal jugs on their heads or yellow plastic tanks carried on their shoulders, and through strutting hens and their chicks pecking at feed on dusty, sun-cracked roads.

As in much of rural Myanmar, residents of this village in Ayeyarwady make the most of the sunlight each day brings. Open doors, windows and slits in patterned rattan walls let in what light they can of the afternoon sun when the village is tinted gold. Chores that were too hot to do midday are completed, village residents bathe and wash clothes in the river. Mothers squat around a fire, cooking their families' dinner, smoke rising behind wooden, lattice fences.

Sometimes the sun sets as early as 5:30 pm, swallowing the village in darkness and leaving residents to rely on the dim light of candles or the limited lifespan of inverter batteries. Ei Po Po Aung is one of these residents who in two weeks' time, along with her 11<sup>th</sup> grade classmates, will take her university entrance exam. She has ambitions to become a teacher, but she faces a few obstacles to achieve this dream.

"Last year, only nine out of 45 students in Grade 11 passed the exam," said Ei Po Po Aung. "I want to pass the exam with many distinctions, but we have seven family members and only one light bulb for the whole family. I study about six hours every night and after the battery runs out, I rely on candlelight, but I cannot see clearly and sometimes the wind blows the flame out."

Ei Po Po's eldest sister suffered from tuberculosis in her childhood and had to quit school after 5<sup>th</sup> grade to help her father fish.

"I really feel sorry that my eldest daughter didn't have a chance to study well," said Ei Po Po's father, Win Bo. "So, for Ei Po Po Aung, who is outstanding in her education, my biggest wish is to help fulfill her dreams. We really worry for her so getting electricity can be a big help for my daughter to pass these exams."

Most of Sai Pyun's 76 households, including that of Win Bo, rely on fishing for their livelihood, but the bulk of the fish they catch are mainly to feed themselves. Candles and recharging batteries are practically a daily expense. Win Bo spends 500 kyat (40 US cents) on candles per night and 300 kyat (20 US cents) to recharge batteries every two days. With each household earning an average of 3-4,000 kyat or \$2-3 each day, expenses on candles and batteries eat up a large fraction of daily income.

For many families like Win Bo's, connecting to Myanmar's existing energy network seems like a far-off dream. Only 30% of Myanmar's population is connected to the electricity grid and as of 2014, only 16% of rural households were connected.

Now the Government of Myanmar, with the help of the World Bank, is rolling out on-grid and off-grid electricity services to rural communities as part of its National Electrification Plan. The plan aims to bring electricity to everyone in Myanmar by 2030, installing modern solar home systems and mini-grids for remote villages that would otherwise have to wait years for a grid connection. The plan calls for a phased approach— 50% access by 2020, 75% by 2025, and universal access by 2030.

The project's first procurement package for the supply and installation of solar PV systems for households, schools, clinics, religious buildings and street lights was launched through international competition in early 2016, and the resulting prices were more than 40% below budget and saved Myanmar \$37 million. These savings allowed an increase in the number of solar home systems for the benefit of more families and a 30% reduction in the families' contributions. Installation of solar PV systems by local Myanmar companies is now under way in eight of Myanmar's states and regions, benefiting over 2,000 villages and 140,000 households. The next round of international competitive bidding has started, and installation is expected to start early 2018, aiming to electrify an additional 95,000 households.

Ultimately, about 450,000 solar home systems, 23,000 solar-based community connections for clinics, schools and religious buildings will be created, and over 150,000 public lights will be put up in the duration of the project. It will benefit approximately 700,000 people by October 2017 and more than 2 million people by 2021 from off-grid electrification alone.

As new electricity services are being rolled out, it has the potential to transform life in rural Myanmar. New sources of electricity will help Ei Po Po Aung to study without disruption, conquering one more obstacle on her way to achieving her dream, and help her family save on daily expenses while enabling them to be more productive.

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2017/06/29/turning-on-the-lights-in-rural-myanmar>

June 29, 2017

## Nepal: What the World Bank Group is Doing After the Earthquakes



Here's an overview and status update on the World Bank Group and its partners' reconstruction efforts in Nepal after the 2015 earthquakes:

### Financing for Reconstruction

The World Bank Group has offered up to half-a-billion dollars to finance the reconstruction of Nepal and this consists of:

- **\$200 million for housing reconstruction:** was approved by the World Bank Board of Executive Directors on June 29, 2015. This credit from the International Development Association (IDA), the World Bank's fund for the poorest countries, will provide grants to home-owners to rebuild about 55,000 houses for the poor in rural areas. The grants are being disbursed in tranches after verification that houses have been constructed to standards resistant to natural disasters. The credit will also finance technical assistance to improve disaster risk management systems. It has been extended on standard IDA terms with a maturity of 38 years and a six-year grace period.
- **\$300 million additional financing for housing reconstruction** was approved by the World Bank Board of Executive Directors on December 15, 2017. This supplemented the

US\$200 million credit approved by the Bank on June 29, 2015. The additional finance will help the Government of Nepal meet a share of the financing gap in its housing reconstruction program. The additional credit will finance hazard-resistant reconstruction of an additional 96,000 houses.

- **\$100 million for budget support:** was also approved by the World Bank Board on June 29, 2015. This IDA credit provided the government of Nepal with much-needed short-term financial support to accelerate and expand relief and recovery efforts. It also supports policy measures to strengthen the country's financial sector, which has weakened along with the economy. This was fully disbursed in September 2015.
- **\$50 million is allocated for roads:** This will support repairs and upgrades to Nepal's strategic roads network.
- **\$100 to \$200 million reallocated from the existing portfolio:** Of the 22 projects that the World Bank currently supports in Nepal, 12 have reallocated funds or extended their durations to assist in the recovery. These include the repair of damaged roads, irrigation and drinking water schemes; expansion of vocational training in areas related to post-earthquake recovery; as well as healthcare, nutrition and livelihood support in the poorest communities. Any reallocated money will be replaced with additional funds.
- **\$50 to \$70 million liquidity facility and \$9.8 million of quick post-earthquake response from IFC:** the liquidity facility from the World Bank Group's private sector arm has been available to commercial bank clients to support recovery of small and medium enterprises in tourism or housing. This USD facility can also be used to import essential capital equipment and for working capital needs. The \$ 9.8 million quick response initiative accelerated commitments and disbursements to clients in tourism and agribusiness to ensure business continuity.
- **Multi-Donor Trust Fund (MDTF):** has been set up to enable donors to coordinate their finance for housing reconstruction. Current committed financing include: (i) \$200 million from IDA's Crisis Response Window; (ii) \$100 million credit from JICA for parallel financing; (iii) \$25.5 million in the World Bank-administered Multi-Donor Trust Fund (US – \$9.6 million, Switzerland - Swiss Francs 9 million, and Canada – CAN\$10 million); (iv) about \$200 million earmarked by I/NGOs for the sector; and (v) \$50 million from the World Bank's budget support. The Government of Nepal's budget appropriation for its overall reconstruction activities is \$900 million for fiscal year 2016.

- **Tranche payments disbursed:** As of April 11, 2017, 626,695 beneficiaries have been identified in 14 most affected districts. Out of this, 90 percent of beneficiaries (561,845 beneficiaries) have signed the Grant Participation Agreement, 542,963 beneficiaries have already received the first tranche payment and 4,206 beneficiaries have received the second tranche payment.
- **Assessment and trainings:** 626,000 houses have been assessed for earthquake damage under the program, and around 8,800 masons have been trained on safer construction techniques. Enrolment into the program is almost complete.

### **Initial Response and Rapid Needs Assessment**

Immediately after the earthquake and during the many aftershocks, the Bank supported government departments to undertake a structural damage assessment to determine the safety and soundness of public and private spaces such as schools, hospitals, government offices as well as modern urban housing blocks and traditional inner-city and sub-urban dwellings. This helped determine whether students could safely go back to school, medical wards required temporary relocation, or families could secure their homes. Teams were also deployed to study the impact on highways and bridges and to make sure they stayed open.

The Bank supported several government ministries in assessing the damage, sector by sector, and identifying priority actions. This rapid needs assessment later fed into the more formal Post-Disaster Needs Assessment, which involved a wide range of experts and development partners.

### **Post-Disaster Needs Assessment (PDNA): Rebuilding a Resilient Nepal**

The Post-Disaster Needs Assessment estimates that Nepal's recovery needs will amount to the equivalent of a third of its economy. It takes stock of the extent of the damages inflicted by the earthquakes and calculates economic losses and needs associated with the development of sound reconstruction programs to build a more resilient Nepal. It will also inform strategies for planning and preparing better for risks, hazards, vulnerabilities and future disaster-related economic shocks. The PDNA prices the damage at \$5.15 billion, losses at \$ 1.9 billion and recovery needs at \$6.7 billion, roughly a third of the economy.

The PDNA was led by Nepal's National Planning Commission and conducted jointly by more than 250 government officials and a small team of experts from the Asian Development Bank, the EU,

the Government of India, the Japan International Cooperation Agency, the UN, the World Bank, as well as other development partners across 23 sectors and aspects of public life.

### **National Reconstruction Authority**

A National Reconstruction Authority (NRA) was established in December 2015. Since its inception, important progress has been achieved in terms of policies, legal procedures and direction – all of which are necessary to advance with reconstruction but were not in place before the NRA was established. The NRA has expanded its presence in the 14 districts most affected the earthquakes and it is still staffing itself, streamlining procedures and procuring equipment to effectively carry out its role. The World Bank, with support from USAID, JICA, DFID and key I/NGOs, is providing technical and financial support to help build the NRA's institutional capacity.

### **Post Disaster Recovery Framework**

A post-disaster recovery program of Nepal's scale requires a commitment of financial and human resources, as well as focused efforts to prioritize and sequence reconstruction over several years. The Government of Nepal, with support from the Global Facility for Disaster Reduction and Recovery, is preparing a Post Disaster Recovery Framework (PDRF). Going forward, the PDRF will be a common framework for all partners and stakeholders and will guide the planning, financing, implementation and monitoring of recovery and reconstruction.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/country/nepal/brief/fact-sheet-world-bank-doing-nepal-after-earthquake>

December 27, 2017



## Nicaragua: Toward more Shared Prosperity



Despite notable progress in reducing poverty over the last decade, Nicaragua still faces key challenges to reduce vulnerability and improve productivity. The World Bank Group (WBG) has been working with Nicaragua to improve basic public services and enhance competitiveness, with important results in maternal health, water & sanitation, land rights, roads infrastructure and agricultural productivity.

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### Challenge

Nicaragua is the poorest country in Central America with gross national income (GNI) per capita of US\$1,940 (2015). Decades of civil conflict and a series of catastrophic natural disasters have left the country lagging behind most of its neighbors in terms of economic and social indicators. Despite notable progress in poverty reduction over the last decade, much work remains, as 29.6 percent of the country's more than six million inhabitants live in poverty; 8.3 percent in extreme poverty. Most of the poor live in rural areas, often in remote communities where access to basic services is still constrained by very limited infrastructure. Social and basic service indicators in

the rural Atlantic coastal regions are significantly lower than in the rest of the country, disproportionately impacting indigenous and Afro-descendant populations.

Though economic growth has been stronger than average for the Region and prudent macroeconomic management has underpinned the country's solid economic performance, key challenges remain in reducing vulnerabilities and increasing productivity. Nicaragua ranks among the most vulnerable in terms of natural disasters and extreme climate; other major vulnerabilities include dependence on oil imports, concentration of food exports to limited countries, and the drought affecting Central America. Given the country's low level of per capita income, higher growth rates are necessary to further reduce poverty and boost shared prosperity. Furthermore, aggregate productivity has been declining over the last decade, constraining Nicaragua's ability to move to a higher growth equilibrium and requiring additional efforts to improve productivity.

### **Approach**

Against this backdrop, the WBG approach in Nicaragua has focused on improving the delivery of basic services and strengthening competitiveness as a means to accelerate income growth. The IDA (International Development Association) lending program has helped Nicaragua raise welfare by improving access to quality basic services through scaling up of new service delivery models in health, education, social protection, and water & sanitation, particularly in areas where Nicaragua faces significant challenges linked to achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The WBG program also seeks to raise incomes by enhancing competitiveness and diversifying exports, deepening the impact of programs in rural infrastructure, and incorporating a focus on productivity into land and small & medium enterprise (SME) administration, as well as by ensuring greater synergies with International Finance Corporation (IFC) and Multilateral Investment Guarantee Agency (MIGA) engagements in agribusiness, and in the energy and financial sectors. The WBG program also incorporates a focus on mainstreaming issues related to gender, indigenous peoples, disaster risk mitigation and climate adaptation.

### **IDA Program Results**

Enhanced health services in rural and indigenous territories: Through "casas maternas," a component of the Improving Community and Family Health Care Services Project, maternal and infant health has improved: from 2012 to 2015, the percentage of pregnant women receiving

four prenatal controls increased from 50 to 73; institutional deliveries increased from 72 percent to 87 percent; and the percentage of children under age one immunized with the Pentavalent vaccine increased from 88 to 98 in targeted municipal health networks.

**Increased access to water & sanitation:** From 2009 to 2015, over 168,000 beneficiaries of the Greater Managua Water and Sanitation (PRASMA) Project gained access to reliable water supply (16 hours per day) in urban areas, and more than 62,000 beneficiaries gained access to sanitation services. In rural areas, from 2008 to 2015, more than 68,000 beneficiaries from the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project (PRASNICA) gained access to water supply and sanitation services (of which 44,000 were in indigenous territories); and by the end of the period, women were serving as presidents or treasurers in 70 percent of the Water & Sanitation Committees involved.

**Land rights have been strengthened,** benefitting 15 of Nicaragua's 21 indigenous territories in the historically marginalized Atlantic regions. From 2005 to 2013, through the Land Administration Project (PRODEP), over 104,000 people from 214 communities in five major ethnic groups benefited; 18 percent of the national territory was registered and titled with support of the project.

**Improving roads sustainably:** Through the Rural Roads Infrastructure Improvement Project, a successful, scalable model for investment and maintenance of rural roads has been implemented through the development of "módulos comunitarios de adoquines" or community participation associations focused on road construction with locally-made blocks that allow for faster, more sustainable road works while creating jobs for vulnerable communities. From 2012 to 2015, four-hundred and ten kilometers of rural roads were constructed, more than 280 Community Modules for Adoquines created, generating short-term employment for over 900 people, of which 34 percent were women. Overall, more than 9,000 short-term jobs were created, providing people with skills and the ability to look for future employment. In addition, 52 micro-enterprises were established to carry out routine maintenance of 3,200 km of rural roads.

**Enhanced agricultural productivity through technology adoption:** With support from the Second Agricultural Technology Project, between 2005 and 2014, more than 33,000 producers adopted at least two new production and/or processing technologies; over 3,000 producers were trained in food processing, business administration and marketing; and more than 1,400 producers from 30 cooperatives produced certified seeds of basic grains. Overall, productivity

indices of participating farmers (25 percent of which were women) increased an average of 16 percent, and crop production increased from 1,800 to 4,728 metric tons.

### **Bank Group Contribution**

As of June 2017, the IDA portfolio in Nicaragua reached US\$560.82 million in net commitments, focusing on the sectors of water & sanitation, health, education, food security, disaster risk management, land administration, roads infrastructure and connectivity, social protection, and public financial management.

From 2012 to 2016, IFC's investments in Nicaragua have grown from 11 projects totaling US\$166.9 million, to approximately US\$279.4 million, including advisory services and investment projects in agribusiness (coffee, sugar, forestry), the financial sector, mining and energy (geothermal). MIGA's guarantees more than doubled in the same period, from US\$34.9 million to US\$76 million, focusing on the renewable energy sector.

### **Partners**

Implementation of the WBG program has benefited from an efficient division of labor among key development partners, as well as more coordinated programs among donors. Key WBG partnerships in Nicaragua, including through trust funds, are featured in: (i) the education sector, with the European Union (EU) and Global Program for Education; (ii) public financial management, with the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) and EU; (iii) the water & sanitation sector, with Switzerland and Spain; (iv) roads and transport, with Japan; and (v) agriculture, with the Global Agricultural and Food Security Program (GAFSP) and Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA). In a recent example of collaboration, the IFC and GAFSP, together with the IDB and private firms, provided a US\$30 million package of financing to farmers for the renovation of over 5,000 hectares of coffee plantations affected by coffee rust disease in Nicaragua – in this way helping the country mitigate climate change by deploying a scalable model of climate-smart renovation that can be replicated by other countries and coffee traders.

### **Moving Forward**

Given the satisfactory pace of implementation, the priorities of the WBG program remain relevant and aligned to the Government's priorities. Over the coming period, the WBG will continue to leverage its products and services to complement IDA resources and help mobilize

other development financing related to the two pillars of the Country Partnership Framework: i) improving access to quality basic services; and ii) increasing competitiveness and productivity. In particular, it will focus on building scalable programs that can attract additional resources and closely coordinate IDA, IFC and MIGA interventions, while continuing to deepen the focus on mainstreaming gender and indigenous peoples' issues. IDA and IFC will also jointly support Nicaragua in its effort to unlock geothermal potential by mitigating risks associated with the exploration phase and helping to leverage financing for geothermal development through public private partnerships. IFC will continue its program of credit lines in the trade sector, agribusiness-finance and SME lending, while looking for opportunities in other sectors, such as higher education, where IFC can complement IDA work. MIGA will also be open to opportunities to support foreign investments in the financial sector.

### **Beneficiaries**

In Water & Sanitation:

"I used to go every day at this time to my mother's house, about 400 meters from here, to get water and use her bathroom," Jacqueline recalls. Her home is one of the 125 houses in this rural town that now has water connections. "The families are happy because they have sinks, showers and toilets" explains Angela Durand, a neighbor who coordinates the local Water & Sanitation Committee. Besides the work the Committee has done in the neighborhood, Angela is proud that the organization includes and respects local women. "Women are organized and have the capacity to manage projects and communities as well as their homes" she says.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2017/08/09/toward-more-shared-prosperity-in-nicaragua>

October 9, 2017

## Niger: Customized Job Training Promotes Youth Employment



Every year, some 350,000 young Nigeriens enter the job market, but most (90 percent) do not have the right qualifications for available positions. Niger is focused on equipping its youth with the skills they need to find work and build careers.

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Twenty-five-year-old Roumanatou Kailou lives and works in Niger's capital of Niamey where she earns her living as a hairdresser. Like many young Nigeriens, she was forced to abandon her studies after secondary school due to financial constraints. As she got older and began looking for work, Kailou realized her job options were limited. She felt like a burden on her family.

"My life was reduced to sleeping and eating. I had no job, and I could not help my family," she recalls.

It was at this time that she heard about free training courses for dropouts and out-of-school youth to learn skilled trades, such as cosmetology, carpentry, and masonry. Kailou signed up.

“I took a two-year course in women’s hair styling. We alternated between theoretical coursework and practical internships. We also received funding for transportation so that we could travel to our work placements,” Kailou explains.

Today, with a comb and hair dryer in hand, Kailou happily uses the knowledge she gained and hopes to open her own hair salon one day.

### **Skills development for growth**

Kailou is among 13,000 young Nigeriens (43 percent female) who have benefited from the World Bank’s Skills Development for Growth Project (PRODEC). Launched in 2014 with \$30 million from IDA, it is working to improve the effectiveness of formal technical and vocational training, short-term skills development, and apprenticeship programs in priority sectors, such as civil engineering and construction, food processing, hospitality, agriculture, and telecommunications.

PRODEC addresses the deficit between jobs and skills that block youth employability and development. Of the 350,000-young people entering the job market every year, 90 percent lack the necessary qualifications for available jobs.

This skills shortage is compounded by the fact many in the young workforce have not completed school beyond the primary cycle. According UNESCO, over 197,000 Nigerien children left primary school prematurely in 2013, a leap from 55,000 recorded in 1999. The National Statistical Institute put school enrollment at 76 percent in 2016 (70 percent for girls and 82 percent for boys).

### **From school to work**

In addition to supporting programs for out-of-school youth like the one Kailou attended, PRODEC also helps to improve the school-to-work transition. Some 3,500 young graduates of technical secondary education programs and higher (half of whom are female) have benefited from PRODEC-backed internship programs that connect graduates with potential employers. According to a 2017 National Employment Agency study, 70 percent of interns were able to use their experience as a springboard to full time employment.

After completing her bachelor’s degree in logistics, 25-year-old Hamsatou Idi Moussa, struggled to find work. An internship opportunity made all the difference.

“I was hired by a large food processing company because I interned there and proved myself to them,” she says.

To continue PRODEC’s momentum and expand training support to the agriculture and livestock production sectors, the Government of Niger and the World Bank signed an agreement for \$50 million in additional IDA financing in June 2018.



## Republic of Congo: Building Agribusiness - One Farmer's Journey from Mortar to Mixer



Over 360,000 Congolese farmers and livestock producers have benefitted from investments in agricultural productivity and improved market access. New IDA funding targets 500,000 more farmers, promoting agribusinesses and agricultural entrepreneurs.

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Tanzania has built a thriving tourism industry around its wildlife and other natural resources. The country is home to world-renowned reserves, such as the Serengeti, and other national parks and reserves for game, marine life, and forests. In 2015, it received nearly 1.2 million international visitors, more than double the number recorded in 2000. As a main contributor to foreign currency, tourism generated \$4.8 billion in revenue, roughly 10 percent of GDP.

But its wildlife tourism sector is concentrated around what is known as the Northern Circuit in northwest Tanzania, most notably the Serengeti and Mount Kilimanjaro national parks and the Ngorongoro conservation area. These destinations are showing signs of stress and limitations to

their carrying-capacity, placing the government's strategy of low-volume, high-value tourism in jeopardy.

### **Developing the Southern Circuit**

The government has embarked on developing tourism in the Southern Circuit to attract visitors to the area and expand its contribution to the economy. The Circuit is richly endowed with national parks, including the Ruaha National Park, the largest park in East Africa, and the Selous Game Reserve, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The area has much to offer but is challenged by limited infrastructure and underdeveloped roads, poaching, the mismanagement of water resources upstream of the Ruaha park, and few links between tourism and local livelihoods.

Like much of the country, Tanzania's southern region is seeing conflict erupt over natural resources, with an expanding population highly dependent on agriculture for its livelihood. Climate change and scarce water resources also intensify pressure on precious ecosystems.

### **A project called REGROW**

The government is addressing this through the Resilient Natural Resource Management for Tourism and Growth Project (REGROW). In June 2018, the World Bank approved \$150 million in IDA funding to support it, involving the World Bank's transport, ICT, agriculture, and urban sectors.

REGROW aims to improve the management of natural resources and tourism assets in southern Tanzania and help communities there gain access to alternative livelihoods. Some 20,000 households located near protected wildlife areas are expected to benefit. More efficient irrigation and agricultural production methods will help another 20,000 farming households in the Great Ruaha River sub-basin.

Capacity building will also support government agencies and officials working on water, agriculture, and land management, wildlife, tourism, and protected area management. Tourism operators and related businesses will benefit from increased revenue, with an emphasis on providing opportunities for women and youth.

Hamisi Kigwangalla, Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, believes REGROW will not only help make Tanzania's tourism industry more diversified and robust, it will heighten community awareness and involvement in conservation efforts.

"Iringa is one of the southern regions where we are facing many conservation challenges, including poaching and the poisoning of wild animals. Among the tasks we shall undertake under this project is to educate communities to understand the importance of conservation and the roles they must play," he explains.

## Rwanda: Working Her Way Out of Poverty Through Social Protection



Rwanda is putting its people to work to get out—and stay out—of extreme poverty through its robust public works and social protection program. It has employed 800,000 households nationwide and has plans for more.

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Gaudance Mukagasana felt completely lost when her husband left, leaving her to raise their three children alone. Young and unemployed, she moved in with her mother and desperately tried to eke out a living on the small family plot in Nduba in central Rwanda.

“He was our sole bread earner. It was like the world had crumbled right before me,” remembers the now 40-year-old Mukagasana.

A lifesaver came in 2013 when she was accepted in the Vision 2020 Umurenge Program (VUP), the Government of Rwanda’s flagship social protection program. Supported by the World Bank through the Social Protection Project, VUP aims to eradicate extreme poverty and malnutrition,

as well as strengthen household resilience and promote socio-economic transformation, by accelerating graduation from extreme poverty.

### **Public works program**

Mukagasana joined the VUP's public works program, which provides paid employment to able-bodied adults from extremely poor households. With the salary she earned participating in the construction of agricultural terraces, she was able to cover her family's basic needs and even save a little. She eventually got basic business training and a VUP micro-credit of RWF 60,000 (about \$70) to invest in vegetable farming to supplement her income.

"To me, the training is the most important asset I received," Mukagasana says. "It instilled in me a sense of confidence, opened my eyes to the many available services and opportunities, and taught me how to use them to improve my life."

That she has. Mukagasana has since led her community in launching a hybrid goat farming cooperative, a venture that is paying off. She has been able to build a comfortable house of her own and send her children to college. Mukagasana has graduated from the program with financial independence and a true sense of security.

### **Strengthening social protection system**

Since the VUP's inception in 2008, its public works component has employed more than 800,000 households and generated more than 40 million paid working days for some 2,200 projects. Expanded public works were launched in 2016 to offer flexible year-round work schedules to moderately labor-constrained households caring for children. Some 13,000 households, most headed by women, are participating across 80 sectors. The VUP's direct support (cash transfer) component now covers the entire country, with over 96,000 households as of 2017.

According to Yasser El Gammal, the World Bank's Country Manager in Rwanda, "The World Bank partnership with the Government of Rwanda has played a key role in positioning Rwanda among global leaders in building an integrated social protection system."

As the Social Protection Project ended in 2017, the World Bank reaffirmed its support with \$80 million in IDA18 financing for a new Strengthening Social Protection Project. Another \$23 million in additional financing from other sources was approved in April 2018. The project is supporting

the government in further improving the coverage, quality, and delivery of social protection. Its focus is on scaling up the VUP and introducing innovations, such as home-based childcare and direct support, to meet child and nutrition goals—particularly to help overcome childhood stunting.

## Samoa: Kids ‘Eat a Rainbow’ for Healthier Lives



Healthier diets can help ease pressure on the health system, and increased consumption of local produce will strengthen Samoa’s economy.

### Story Highlights

- The ‘Eat a Rainbow’ initiative is teaching school children the benefits of eating local produce of all the colors of the rainbow.
- Samoa has a high prevalence of non-communicable diseases with poor diet among its main causes.
- Healthier diets can help ease pressure on the health system, and increased consumption of local produce will strengthen Samoa’s economy.

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Samoa is a country of natural abundance with high rainfall, rich soil and stable seasonal conditions that are perfect for growing fruits and vegetables. However, the prevalence of non-communicable diseases such as diabetes and heart diseases – often brought on by poor diets and processed foods – is extremely high in Samoa; among the highest in the world.

The WHO estimates that 70% of deaths in Samoa is caused by non-communicable diseases. This not only threatens lives, but also puts significant strain on the Samoan health system, posing serious long term economic risks for the country.

"Samoa is so blessed to have so much great locally-grown produce, And it's not seasonal, you can have it right throughout the year, and it's also cheap and healthy."

School children learn to Eat a Rainbow for healthier lives

Considering the abundance of healthy alternatives being grown in the country, Samoa's Ministry of Health developed the Eat a Rainbow initiative, that works with schools across Samoa to teach children the benefits of eating nutritious, local produce of all the colors of the rainbow and how a varied diet promotes healthy living.

"Samoa is so blessed to have so much [great locally-grown produce], said Sharon Suhren, the Principal of Aoga Fiamalamalama School. "And it's not seasonal, you can have it right throughout the year, and it's also cheap and healthy."

She says she and teachers discuss with students the different fruit and vegetable options they have in Samoa, and their uses for making bodies stronger.

"We try and promote healthy living, healthy eating and eating the different colors of the rainbow. If they're healthy; they're also good at school."

Supporting Samoan farmers' efforts to improve local produce

The initiative is the result of a partnership between Samoa's Ministry of Health and Ministry of Agriculture & Fisheries which was fostered by the World Bank supported Samoan Agricultural Competitiveness Enhancement Program (SACEP).

SACEP works with local farmers to increase the amount and quality of local produce – aiming to increase the amount of locally grown healthy food getting from farms to plates throughout the country. This is being done through:

- The promotion of higher yielding varieties
- Encouraging the adoption of enhanced technology and production techniques,
- Supporting productivity enhancing on-farm investments, and
- Strengthening market presence to meet the demands of local for year-round supplies of fresh fruits and vegetables.



Lafaele Enoka, SACEP Coordinator from the Samoan Ministry of Agriculture and Fisheries says the project is about eating well, but also about strengthening the local market; so people eat local, and buy local.

“The primary focus of SACEP is to improve the productivity of local farmers, and take advantage of the local market situation,” he says.

The Ministry of Health’s work is a key aspect of this to ensure that children develop healthy eating habits that they take on to later life.

In addition to health benefits, healthy children are able to study harder, healthier diets will lead to a lower incidence of non-communicable diseases, easing pressure on the health system, and increased local production cuts down the amount of imported food, strengthening the Samoan economy. Considering that two out of every three Samoans work in the agricultural sector, this boost to the sector is an important part of Samoa’s continued growth.

Says Sharon Suhren, whose school has embraced the Eat a Rainbow initiative: “That’s what we’re trying to encourage to the students and their parents, making sure they have some of this in their diet each day. And when we have this we don’t even have to buy the stuff that’s imported from other countries.”

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/04/23/samoan-kids-eat-a-rainbow-for-healthier-lives>

April 23, 2018

## Senegal: Increasing Access to Water Brings a Flow of Benefits



More urban areas outside of Dakar—and soon parts of rural Senegal—are gaining access to modernized water and sanitation services. New boreholes dot the landscape, bringing fresh water and hope for better lives and livelihoods in affected communities.

Near to the entrance of Ndour-Ndour, village some 70 kilometers south of Senegal's capital of Dakar, stands a new borehole. Just opposite is the Gning family compound where Astou Gning is busy with children and chores. For her, the borehole is a welcome sight that holds the promise of reprieve.

Women and girls are the first victims of water deficits as the duty of water collection most often falls to them. According to a study by the World Bank and the French Cooperation, water is fetched with 18 to 20-liter plastic containers (some as large as 35 liters) several times a day. With an average distance of 200 meters between home and water source, a woman or girl may carry 200 kilograms daily.

Astou Gning says that women were “freed from their chains” during the borehole testing period. “We had time to do other things. We didn't have to rise before daybreak to draw water. We had water all the time. Our daughters had more time to go to school,” she explains.

## **Targeting urban and rural areas**

Astou Gning and the entire community look forward to the permanent operation of the borehole, which is being completed as part of the World Bank-financed Urban Water and Sanitation Project. It recently received additional financing of \$30 million from IDA18 to advance work on reducing the water shortage in Dakar and neighboring Petite Côte area.

Another \$130 million in IDA18 funding was approved in June 2018 for the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Project, which aims to provide 1.5 million Senegalese with access to piped water and improved sanitation facilities in the Groundnut Basin area in the center west of the country and home to one third of Senegal's rural population.

## **More than water**

For Senegal, improving water and sanitation infrastructure is key to shared prosperity as it leads to reductions in water-borne diseases and associated absenteeism from work and school as well as reductions in costs associated with medical expenses and loss of income. Keeping pace with population expansion has been a challenge for Senegal's water and sanitation services.

In the commune of Nguékhokh where water infrastructure has been expanded, the mayor Pape Songhé Diouf explains they had only one borehole built in 1984 when the population was less than 1,000 people. It has since grown to 60,000 people, with 80 percent lacking access to water until recently.

“The World Bank gave us life because water is life... the availability of this resource is impacting other sectors of the economy,” he says.

Communities east of Dakar also feel the impact of improved water access even though a drop has yet to flow. A gravel road leading to the village of Kissane ends at the newly installed borehole after crossing the neighboring villages of Birbirame and Ndiass-Palam where standpipes are now part of the landscape.

Ndiass-Palam village leader, Diama Ndoye, is looking forward to the standpipes being functional, but recognizes, “we are already benefiting from enhanced mobility among the villages.”

## Solomon Islands: Communities Build Potable Water Systems to Improve Livelihoods



### Story Highlights

- Potable water projects vastly improve the health and economic output of remote villages in the Solomon Islands.
- The infrastructure projects are part of the Solomon Islands Rural Development Program that improves access to basic services.
- Residents themselves take ownership over the projects as part of the program's emphasis on community-driven development.

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Bolava Village, Western Province, Solomon Islands – Life began early in Bolava, when the rays of the South Pacific sun illuminated the ocean waters – and the oars of the canoes piloted by Bolava community members on their way to the closest main island. Every day, they paddled more than an hour each way to haul fresh, potable water for their families. Bathing, washing, and drinking were huge daily chores.

Water security is an enormous challenge for not only these Solomon Islanders, but for more than two billion people around the world. A lack of even basic drinking water and sanitation results in thousands of deaths each year, especially among young children, to highly communicable diseases such as cholera and typhoid. And given the complexities of climate change, reliable supply of safe drinking water is set to become more uncertain on isolated islands.

Today in Bolava, however, stand 20 new water tanks, each holding up to 2,000 liters of water. A new rainwater catchment and storage system, developed and operated by the community itself, is now in place. Clean drinking water is within eyesight.

“The rain catchment systems have addressed the people’s need of clean drinking water, which will have impact on their health,” said one village leader at the groundbreaking in July of 2017. “It saves time for men and women to engage in other family household activities.”

The Bolava system was constructed as part of the second phase of the Solomon Islands Rural Development Program, improving the livelihoods of hundreds of thousands of citizens of this country in the Pacific. Jointly funded by the World Bank, the Australian Government, the European Union, the International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD), and the Solomon Islands Government, the program is unique: it supports infrastructure projects identified, designed, supported, and run by the communities themselves, assisted by the government. The implementation ensures broad inclusion in decision-making structures for a highly participatory process, leading to more equitable development.

The program has had enormous impact across the country. On Choiseul, a northern island, one mother recounted her story.

“In the early mornings, we mothers have to get up very early to first fetch water for the family usage for the day, then after that we bring food home to our families,” she said. “In most cases, we ended up in sources of water in other tribes’ land, where we ended up in conflict and argument with the owners.”

Now that her village has new tanks as part of its water catchment system, however, she explains: “Water is now close to our houses. Life is now easy for us the mothers, and everyone in the community.”

Women are now more engaged in everyday village activities and decision-making processes, and conflict can decrease since communities will not clash over this scarce resource.

In fact, management of and access to clean water not only improves a community's health – by reducing stunting in children, for example – but also ensures resiliency to natural shocks.

Should extreme weather arise in the Pacific, such as tropical storms or extended drought, community members are better equipped to deal with climate and disaster risk. Families will be better able to address disasters.

The second phase of the Solomon Islands Rural Development Program began in 2015, aiming to improve basic infrastructure and services in rural areas, as well as to better connect smallholder farming households to markets. It also advances community-driven development mechanisms to ensure ownership over projects by communities. The program seeks to expand access to services for the underserved in rural areas, while promoting accountability and inclusive economic growth. The program is the only nation-wide community level government program, reaching all 172 rural wards of the country. By early 2018, the project will directly benefit over 100,000 beneficiaries or one-sixth of the national population. Half of all projects chosen by communities are clean water supply schemes, while other projects include schools, health facilities, community halls and energy subprojects.

At another village's rain catchment system, Choiseul Province Government's Minister for Health Services, the Honorable Benjamin Harrison, stated that the Solomon Islands Rural Development Programme "is the only rural program that involves rural people to choose their own needs and manage their own projects."

"People walk[ed] long distances on land, as well as paddled their canoes long distances, to fetch water for drinking and their daily uses from streams far away," he continued. "Women and children have been struggling for so many years to fetch clean water. But today, people are happy over the completion of our rain catchment systems, and now have access to clean water at their door steps."

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/03/05/solomon-island-communities-build-potable-water-systems-to-improve-livelihoods>

March 5, 2018

## Tanzania: Expanding Sustainable Tourism to Drive Local Development and Conservation



Tanzania is one of the most popular tourist destinations for experiencing Africa's unique wildlife. It is developing its Southern Circuit to diversify its tourism sector, enhance conservation, and bring new economic growth to the area.

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Tanzania has built a thriving tourism industry around its wildlife and other natural resources. The country is home to world-renowned reserves, such as the Serengeti, and other national parks and reserves for game, marine life, and forests. In 2015, it received nearly 1.2 million international visitors, more than double the number recorded in 2000. As a main contributor to foreign currency, tourism generated \$4.8 billion in revenue, roughly 10 percent of GDP.

But its wildlife tourism sector is concentrated around what is known as the Northern Circuit in northwest Tanzania, most notably the Serengeti and Mount Kilimanjaro national parks and the Ngorongoro conservation area. These destinations are showing signs of stress and limitations to

their carrying-capacity, placing the government's strategy of low-volume, high-value tourism in jeopardy.

### **Developing the Southern Circuit**

The government has embarked on developing tourism in the Southern Circuit to attract visitors to the area and expand its contribution to the economy. The Circuit is richly endowed with national parks, including the Ruaha National Park, the largest park in East Africa, and the Selous Game Reserve, which is a UNESCO World Heritage Site.

The area has much to offer but is challenged by limited infrastructure and underdeveloped roads, poaching, the mismanagement of water resources upstream of the Ruaha park, and few links between tourism and local livelihoods.

Like much of the country, Tanzania's southern region is seeing conflict erupt over natural resources, with an expanding population highly dependent on agriculture for its livelihood. Climate change and scarce water resources also intensify pressure on precious ecosystems.

### **A project called REGROW**

The government is addressing this through the Resilient Natural Resource Management for Tourism and Growth Project (REGROW). In June 2018, the World Bank approved \$150 million in IDA funding to support it, involving the World Bank's transport, ICT, agriculture, and urban sectors.

REGROW aims to improve the management of natural resources and tourism assets in southern Tanzania and help communities there gain access to alternative livelihoods. Some 20,000 households located near protected wildlife areas are expected to benefit. More efficient irrigation and agricultural production methods will help another 20,000 farming households in the Great Ruaha River sub-basin.

Capacity building will also support government agencies and officials working on water, agriculture, and land management, wildlife, tourism, and protected area management. Tourism operators and related businesses will benefit from increased revenue, with an emphasis on providing opportunities for women and youth.



Hamisi Kigwangalla, Minister for Natural Resources and Tourism, believes REGROW will not only help make Tanzania's tourism industry more diversified and robust, it will heighten community awareness and involvement in conservation efforts.

"Iringa is one of the southern regions where we are facing many conservation challenges, including poaching and the poisoning of wild animals. Among the tasks we shall undertake under this project is to educate communities to understand the importance of conservation and the roles they must play," he explains.

## Tanzania: Investing in Water and Sanitation Reaps Benefits for Poverty Alleviation



The Water Sector Support Project supported the Government of Tanzania's Water Sector Development Program by increasing water access to urban and rural residents. Since the program inception in 2007, over 3 million urban residents and 9.2 million rural residents gained access to improved water sources. In addition, 5.15 million people were provided with improved sanitation by the project's closure in 2015.

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### Challenge

Tanzania, a country in East Africa, was challenged with unstable and insecure fresh water supplies. Water is intrinsically tied to inclusive economic growth, food security, and poverty reduction. The lack of sound water supply and sanitation services (WSS) in Tanzania was a bottleneck to sustainable development. In 2005, over 14 million rural residents and 1.8 million urban residents lived without safe water. Moreover, around 10 million people in rural areas lived in poverty.

Due to insufficient maintenance in the WSS sector, Tanzania needed to improve integrated water resources management and development. In addition, it was important to improve investments in the protection and conservation of critical water sources such as aquifers and wetlands.

## **Approach**

The design of the project was relevant to the needs of the wider water sector, economy, and society. With a focus on supporting the government's poverty alleviation strategy, the project set out to improve the governance of water resources management through measures to boost the sustainable delivery of rural and urban WSS services.

This project is part of the first phase of the government's five-year Water Sector Development Program, a 20-year program (2005-2025) that aims to improve water resources governance and management, among other goals.

With an eye towards reducing poverty and meeting the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) for sanitation and hygiene, an important component of the project was strengthening water sector institutions. Central strategies for improving WSS service delivery included the following: promoting household adoption of latrines; installing hand-washing facilities in program villages of varying sizes; and engaging in capacity building activities to improve long-term water resources governance.

## **Results**

The Water Sector Support Project (2007-2015) along with other development partners and the Tanzanian Government's funding, directly benefitted 14,461,715 people in both rural and urban areas of Tanzania. A total of over 7 million women benefitted from the program's interventions. Through measures aimed at improving water quality, reducing poverty, and increasing access to sanitation, the project served as a lever of change toward a more inclusive Tanzania. The positive project results were due to the collective contributions of multiple development partners, and the World Bank was the overall coordinator of the multi-sector program.

The following key results were observed during the life of the project:

- 3 million people in urban areas were provided with access to improved water sources;

- 6 Basin Water Offices were fully operational and implementing an approved plan for integrated basin water management, in addition to a Central Water Board;
- 9.2 million people in rural areas were provided with access to improved water sources;
- 5,150,000 people were provided with access to improved sanitation;
- 35,908 water points were developed in program areas;
- 244,270 new piped household water connections were created;
- 4,330 water user permits and 24 discharge permits were granted;
- Water supply investment and capacity building under the project benefited 23 regional centers, as well as water supply and sanitation authorities;
- Several institutional bodies (e.g. steering committee, water sector working groups, technical working groups) were established;
- 1,680 schools constructed new or upgraded their school sanitation facilities;
- 16,183 villages signed the declaration to improve household sanitation.

### **Bank Group Contribution**

The World Bank initially provided the Republic of Tanzania with credit, through the International Development Association, in the amount of US\$200 million for the project. Additionally, financing for the IDA credit of US\$44.9 million equivalent was approved in May 2014, totaling to a refinanced IDA credit of US\$244.9 million equivalent. Actual IDA financing at project closing amounted to US\$251.69 million equivalent.

### **Partners**

The Ministry of Water and Irrigation of Tanzania was responsible for project coordination. However, a number of other institutions supported the implementation and management of the project, including the following: the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare; the Ministry of Education, Science, Technology, and Vocational Training; the President Office's Regional Administration and Local Government; local government authorities; urban water supply and sanitation authorities; community-owned Water Supply Organizations; the Water Development and Management Institute; and line agencies at regional and district levels responsible for WSS service provision. The different government were directly involved in the project implementation and management – for example, the Ministry of Health and Social Welfare provided oversight for the implementation arrangements for the sanitation and hygiene subcomponent.

The U.K. Department for International Development (DFID), United States Government, the African Development Bank, the Netherlands Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the Ministry of Development Cooperation, Germany's Kreditanstalt für Wiederaufbau (KfW), German Society for International Cooperation (Deutsche Gesellschaft für Internationale Zusammenarbeit, GIZ), and the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA) provided additional project funding.

### **Moving forward**

In terms of the future of water resources management in Tanzania, six out of nine Integrated Water Resources Management and Development plans were completed and pending approval by the National Water Board. The Ministry of Water and Irrigation of Tanzania initiated a study to identify and mobilize sustainable financing sources for the Basin Water Offices (BWOs).

Additionally, the institutional strengthening and capacity building project interventions set the stage for a strong foundation for monitoring water points. In the face of a changing climate and global economy, the government will continue to invest in measures to strengthen the water and sanitation sector.

### **Beneficiaries**

**In Kidotoni village, Kilimanjaro region, Matilda Ngianaeli, 52, is enjoying access to a newly provided water scheme that is solar powered.**

“We used to draw water from a stream in Makuyuni which is a long distance from here and you needed to have the stamina to take on that journey,” Ngianaeli said. “If you didn't have it then you had to buy water from those who owned bicycles and a 20-liter jerry-can would cost you Sh500 which is a lot of money if you consider that we needed more than one jerry-can in a day. Today, if you don't have a home connection, you can still access the public water point where you pay Sh100 for three 20-liter jerry-cans.”

**Ngudu High School, with 881 students and 49 teachers, is one of the many institutions that now has access to water.**

“When the service arrived at our school it was an incredible moment,” said John Kimasa who heads the school. “Each day, two classes would lose two hours of studies as they were required to go and fetch water for the school from the nearby district prison. Teachers and students would agree on how to make up for lost time during the after-hours and this was a big problem,

but we had to ensure we covered the syllabus on time. We are happy the school now has its own permanent connection together with storage should there be any system breakdown.”

Kimasa said it wasn't just the children who suffered without access to water, but teachers too.

“Without water at your home, it is hard for anyone to concentrate on the job at hand,” said Kimasa, who noted that lack of water access made it difficult to attract qualified teachers to the high school. “But since the new connection, our teachers are more motivated. We still have a deficit of five teachers, but we expect that when the government assigns them, they will not hesitate to join now.”

Residents such as Mudo benefit from the Nyanguge-Muda piped scheme that was completed in February 2015 and is already providing relief during its current testing stage. Mayanda and Said are some of the 3,500 beneficiaries of the new piped scheme in Inonelwa, which was completed in July 2014.

“I had no bicycle, so I would leave the house at 5 a.m. to go to collect water, sometimes as far as Nyangege which is six km and I would get back after 9.00 a.m.,” said Mayanda, who is in her 40s. “That is when I would start other chores. We were happy only during the rainy season and when it ended, life became very difficult.”

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2018/04/02/tanzania-investing-in-water-and-sanitation-reaps-benefits-for-poverty-alleviation>

April 2, 2018

## West Africa: Opening Paths to Homeownership for the Underserved



In the eight francophone countries that make up the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU), housing is scarce, demand is skyrocketing, and costs are high. The World Bank is helping to expand access to housing finance for lower-income groups.

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Over the next two decades, WAEMU's population will nearly double, mostly in urban areas. This trend is aggravating a large housing deficit, which mostly affects lower-income groups in a region of widespread poverty. Some 800,000 new housing units are needed every year, yet WAEMU banks only issue about 15,000 new mortgages annually.

### **Building up regional mortgage company**

To expand housing finance in the region, the World Bank is providing a suite of services and investments to support the Caisse Régionale de Refinancement Hypothécaire (CRRH). Founded in 2012, CRRH is a majority-private regional mortgage financing company. It issues long-term bonds in capital markets and lends these funds to financial institutions that, in turn, provide long-term housing loans to consumers. Its member shareholders are 54 commercial banks, as

well as development finance institutions like the West African Development Bank (BOAD), its largest shareholder.

In 2017, IDA approved a scale-up credit of \$130 million to BOAD on-lent to CRRH, marking the first use of IDA's Scale-up Facility for a regional organization. The credit will enable CRRH to refinance mortgage loans below \$26,000 and allow banks to obtain long-term funding at below-market rates, providing incentive to serve the low-income segment.

IDA's assistance is also enabling CRRH to refinance small housing loans (of less than \$17,000) issued by micro-finance institutions that previously did not have access to CRRH funding and do not have long-term funds. Microfinance institutions serve informally employed households, who now will be able to borrow for homeownership.

Another \$25 million IDA grant will support housing policy reform to expand housing supply in WAEMU countries. IDA technical assistance will help accelerate the pace of affordable housing production and address key constraints for private developers.

The IDA intervention is coupled with investments by the World Bank's International Finance Corporation (IFC). In 2017, with the support of the IDA18 Private Sector Window, IFC invested CFAF 5 billion (\$9 million) in CRRH's CFAF 25 billion (\$45 million) local currency 12-year bond. Through it, CRRH was able to lengthen the term of its loans to financial institutions, which in turn, lengthened the maturity of mortgages and improved affordability.

IFC now plans to anchor a 15-year bond to support CRRH's efforts to progressively extend its bond maturity terms to 20 years by 2020. IFC advisory services will also support CRRH member institutions in improving mortgage lending and underwriting processes.

### **Improving housing affordability**

As of January 2018, CRRH had issued seven local currency bonds of 10- or 12-year maturity in regional capital markets and refinanced about 8,000 bank mortgages since inception. A model shows that extending housing loan tenors from the current 8 to 15 years reduces monthly mortgage payments by 46 percent; a 20-year loan tenor reduces payments by 72 percent.

The World Bank expects for every \$1 it invests in strengthening CRRH, \$5 of private financing will come through the bond market. Some 50,000 businesses and families are expected to obtain new mortgage loans, 200,000 people to get better shelter, and 250,000 housing sector jobs to be created.



## West Africa: Regional Power Trade Offers Promise of Affordable and Reliable Electricity



### Story Highlights

- Access to energy remains a challenge in West Africa where many countries are dependent on expensive fossil fuels.
- The World Bank estimates that integrated power trade in the region could lead to cost savings of US\$5-8 billion per year by enabling countries to import cheaper sources of electricity; it will increase access to affordable, reliable and modern energy, and reduce CO2 emission intensity.
- The World Bank has dedicated US\$750 million in IDA funding to support the West Africa Power Pool (WAPP) and intends to further step-up its support.

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Access to electricity in West Africa is at 52 percent, with shortages of up to 80 hours per month, and yet electricity there remains among the costliest in the world, at \$0.25 per kilowatt-hour, more than twice the global average.

Domestic demand in West African countries is often too low to attract investments in large projects that benefit from economies of scale. Instead, these countries rely on small-scale, expensive oil-fired power generation. Lack of planning has led to reliance on emergency rental plants, which further inflates costs.

Improving electricity access and reliability in West Africa requires close collaboration among neighboring countries. The West Africa Power Pool (WAPP) is a cooperation of 14 countries—Benin, Burkina Faso, Cote d'Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Guinea, Guinea-Bissau, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Togo— with 27 national electricity utilities, working towards an integrated regional power market.

### **Making the connection**

Currently WAPP is completing the physical interconnections to send power across borders. About 7 percent of the region's electricity is already traded among the 10 already connected countries. It is anticipated that by early 2020s the most critical cross-border links will be in place, making it possible for electricity to flow throughout West Africa from countries with cheaper, cleaner and more abundant energy resources to those lacking them.

The World Bank estimates the economic benefits of a regional power market in West Africa at US\$5-8 billion a year. These benefits come from lower costs of operation which, in turn, reduce generation costs.

Integration of electricity grids will improve overall reliability and make electricity more affordable simply by allowing all countries to benefit from least-costly resources available in the region. It will also make power generation more sustainable by displacing baseload oil-fired power generation with cleaner sources of electricity such as natural gas, solar, and hydropower. The power system will also become more resilient by more easily balancing unexpected energy shortages. The sizable market created by integrating these fourteen countries will be more attractive to private sector investment in power generation.

'Establishing a robust power trading system in West Africa is a historic opportunity for the region to significantly cut the average cost of power generation and improve access to cleaner and more reliable energy,' said Makhtar Diop, Vice President for the Africa Region at the World Bank. 'The World Bank very much shares West Africa's vision of a modern energy sector capable

of meeting the needs of the region's growing population and economies and we are committed to support our clients in realizing the promise of the regional market.'

The World Bank, along with several development partners, has supported WAPP in its efforts to improve the physical connectivity and integration of electricity grids. The World Bank has been a longstanding partner for the power sector in West Africa and has supported WAPP since 2005. Through the International Development Association (IDA), \$750 million of current World Bank support is directed toward completing primary interconnections. There are currently 4,000 kilometers of transmission lines under development, all coming to completion in the early 2020s.

### **Technical and payment challenges**

The complexity of the WAPP power market creates new political and technical challenges that will need to be addressed. A well-functioning regional power market requires not only the right infrastructure, but also strong collaboration among policy makers, regulators, and utilities, at the national and regional level. It also calls for simultaneous policy, regulatory, and institutional steps. Trading institutions and stronger commercial arrangements will need to be developed further.

The payment record of trading partners in the region is uneven. In 2016, arrears reached such a level that WAPP formed a Task Force on Cross-Border Payments for Power Trade to recommend solutions to this problem. To ensure that West African countries realize regional power integration to its fullest potential, the Task Force recommends a series of actions to improve confidence in the regional power market. These include improving sector creditworthiness, strengthening contracts, providing guarantees and involving regional institutions.

A key focus of future World Bank engagement will be strengthening the performance of power utilities as a foundation for improved service and growing regional exchange.

<https://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2018/04/20/regional-power-trade-west-africa-offers-promise-affordable-reliable-electricity>

April 20, 2018

## West and Central Africa: Training Africa's Scientists for Africa's Challenges



African centers of excellence are giving a boost to African economies, creating jobs, and supporting essential research by training young graduates in highly sought-after fields, such as engineering, agronomy, science, and technology.

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In spring 2018, the campus of the Institute of Water and Environmental Engineering (2iE) in Ouagadougou, the capital of Burkina Faso, hosted an event unprecedented in Africa. The very

first Higher Education Student Fair brought together academics from 22 centers of excellence—located in universities in nine West and Central African countries—to celebrate academic achievement and present their students’ research and innovations to the public.

Organized by the World Bank’s African Centers of Excellence (ACE) Project, the event was an important platform to share knowledge and inspire people, according to Stéphane Olivier Yaméogo, an electrical engineering student whose research project on solar pumping could improve water supply systems in poor areas.

“I had always thought you had to go to Europe or elsewhere for cutting-edge scientific training. But with what we are doing at the 2iE Center of Excellence, there is no need to be envious of those who go abroad,” he remarked.

### **The ACE Project**

The ACE Project was launched in 2014 with IDA funding of \$165 million to help Benin, Burkina Faso, Cameroon, Côte d’Ivoire, the Gambia, Ghana, Nigeria, Senegal, and Togo establish 22 centers of excellence to develop the skills needed to accelerate Africa’s development.

Every ACE is unique and, together, they are at the forefront of applied research to produce a critical mass of high-level specialists in scientific and technical fields as varied as genomics and infectious diseases, water and sanitation, biotechnology, reproductive health, agriculture and environmental sustainability, and engineering.

With well-established partnerships with universities and manufacturers in Africa and beyond, ACE students learn from the best professors from the continent and the diaspora, using state-of-the-art equipment. Professor Harouna Karambiri, 2iE ACE Coordinator, says students come from all over Africa.

“Upon completion of their training, our students are innovative, competitive at the national, regional and international levels, and rapidly enter the labor market,” he explains.

Eighteen programs across seven centers have undergone the rigorous process to receive international accreditation. This certifies that the programs, curricula, competence goals, and teaching methods meet international standards, including those of the German Agency for Quality Assurance through Accreditation of Study (AQAS), the Royal Society of Biology in the UK, and the Quality Assurance Agency in France (HCRES).

Since being established, centers have expanded their offerings, with 35 new programs attracting over 6,500 students pursuing master's degrees and 1,600 pursuing doctorates. Almost 17,000 national and regional students have taken specialized short courses. A dedicated effort to attract more women and girls to the sciences has resulted in over 4,000 female students enrolled in master's, doctoral, and short courses.

### **The next phase**

These results are encouraging, and the World Bank will expand its support to establish new centers of excellence and provide additional funding to particularly effective ACEs at the regional and international levels.

A new project, called ACE Impact, is under preparation and will be financed from IDA18 resources. The emphasis will be on impact and productivity. Universities will be able to strengthen their activities and envision other opportunities in the continued effort to build the human resources Africa needs to speed its development.

## Timor-Leste: A Safer Highway Means A Better Cup of Coffee



Anarela Mendoça, a coffee farmer from Timor-Leste central highlands, picking the prized *Híbrido de Timor* beans from her trees. These beans are then processed near her farm, for transport to the capital Dili, and beyond.

### Story Highlights

- The coffee industry has been a central part of Timor-Leste's economy but continues to be hampered by poor transport infrastructure.
- Over 33 kilometers of the Dili-Ainaro Road have already been rehabilitated to help improve access for farmers to markets.
- The first section between Dili and Laulara is now complete, and travel times have improved by 40%. Better roads are also helping those living in rural areas to better access public services.

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Dili, May 18, 2017 - "*Ita gosta hemu café?*" (Do you like to drink coffee?) is a standard greeting when visiting a Timorese home, given that 25% of all households in Timor-Leste grow their own coffee. And drinking fresh coffee in a Timorese home is quite an experience: always strong, black and loaded with sugar, with thick coffee grinds settling in the bottom of the cup.

Yet this experience is moving beyond Timor-Leste's shores. In upmarket cafes around the world, Timor-Leste's rare Arabica/Robusta hybrid coffee variety, *Hibrido de Timor* is now becoming much sought-after for its quality, with exporters prizing the coffee for its productivity and resistance to disease.

The coffee industry is a central part of Timor-Leste's economy, society and history having been a valuable source of employment and income for over a century, and is considered one of the key economic growth areas that will help reduce the country's reliance on oil and gas revenues.

Yet for too long, Timor-Leste's coffee industry has been hampered by poor transport infrastructure; a key example is the **Dili-Ainaro Road**. This 110-kilometer road runs right through the middle of the country, providing the main transport corridor from the North to the South of the country, connecting the districts of Dili, Aileu and Ainaro through the rugged central highlands, which jointly account for a third of the country's population and much of the country's coffee industry.

The Dili-Ainaro Road could – or should – be the road to opportunity for the thousands of families who rely on coffee to make a living. It provides the main trade route for coffee farmers to get their crop to the markets in the capital, Dili or beyond; to export overseas from Dili's bustling sea port.

Yet after decades of little maintenance the narrow, winding and potholed Dili-Ainaro road – depending on the time of year – varies from bearable to almost unpassable. During the wet season (generally December to April), heavy tropical downpours can cause mudslides, blocking sections of the road, or washing away entire sections.

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**" Coffee is really important for our family. [But] the road is so bad; it's hard for a vehicle to reach our place. If the road is bad, we are suffering because it's really hard to get the car coming to our village. If the road [was] better, then we can load our produce onto the car, and we will be very happy. "**

Anarela Mendonça, Coffee farmer

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For people like **Anarela Mendonça**, a coffee farmer and mother of four from Aileu district, the Dili-Ainaro Road is essential to her family's livelihood, and the extremely rough travel conditions affect the longevity of trucks used for transport, and the quality of the beans that they are bringing to market.

*"Coffee is really important for our family," says Mendonça. "[But] the road is so bad; it's hard for a vehicle to reach our place. If the road is bad we are suffering, because it's really hard to get the car coming to our village. If the road [was] better, then we can load our produce onto the car, and we will be very happy."*

Fortunately for farmers like Anarela, change is happening. The US\$149.1 million World Bank-led Timor-Leste Road Climate Resilience Project is one of the most significant transport projects ever undertaken in Timor-Leste. More than 33 kilometers Dili-Ainaro Road have already been rehabilitated through the project, with work now well underway on the 55 kilometers stretch between Aileu and Ainaro. The upgrades and improvements are extensive; with the road being upgraded to withstand heavy rains and better adapt to Timor-Leste's changing climate, with stabilized slope structures and improved drainage to reduce flooding and water damage. Pavement marks and road signage have been added to improve road safety for users and communities along the corridor. Construction is expected to be completed by mid-2018.

With the first section between Dili and Laulara now complete, travel times have improved by 40%. The project is already having a massive impact on the lives of those living in rural areas of central Timor-Leste, whose incomes and access to vital services are directly impacted by road conditions. Hospitals and schools are now more accessible, and farmers of vegetables, fruit – or coffee, like Anarela Mendonça – will be able to improve their incomes by having better access to local and regional markets. *"If the road is good, there will be trucks coming in," says Anarela. "We can transport the coffee, and we'll be very happy."*

The Timor-Leste Road Climate Resilience Project is funded through the International Development Association (IDA), together with the Government of Timor-Leste.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/news/feature/2017/05/18/timor-leste-a-safer-highway-means-a-better-cup-of-coffee>

May 18, 2017

## Timor-Leste: A Second Chance at Education



Immaculada De Seus, Student

Timor-Leste regained independence in 2002. After decades of struggle, many Timorese lacked basic education and more than a third of adults were illiterate. Now, those who missed out on an education have been given a second chance. This is Immaculada's story.

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### HIGHLIGHTS

As a young girl growing up in the 1980's, Immaculada had big dreams for her future; complete her studies, become a police officer, and support her local community. However, living in pre-independence Timor-Leste, Immaculada grew up in a country marred by violence, poverty and oppression.

Like many others from her country, Immaculada found it difficult to complete her schooling and eventually stopped attending. Now, with a family of school-age children, Immaculada has joined the World Bank IDA-funded Second Chance Education Project and is on track to achieve her childhood dreams.

## **Challenge**

In 2002, having regained independence, Timor-Leste had to rebuild almost all its institutions from the ground up. After decades of struggle, many Timorese lacked a basic education and more than a third of all adults were illiterate. By 2010, considerable progress toward meeting development goals had been made, however human development outcomes for Timorese—especially in health and education—remained among the weakest in the East Asia and Pacific region.

Enrolment in primary education had increased from 68 percent in 2005 to 85 percent in 2008. However, many young and adult Timorese still lacked the adequate basic education to fully participate in the economy and society. In 2009, only 33 percent of Grade 1 students continued to Grade 6, and in 2010, 25 percent of children aged 6 to 14 years were not in school.

This resulted in approximately 36 percent of the population over 15 years of age being functionally literate, 27 percent semi-literate, and a full 37 percent of the adult population was totally illiterate. It is estimated that there were over 8400 children who had never had access to, or who could not complete, primary education.

In 2010, the Government of Timor-Leste set a goal of achieving universal completion of basic education. To do this, they aimed to accelerate completion of basic education for students who had previously been left behind.

## **Approach**

The World Bank-funded Second Chance Education Project (\$4.5 million) was approved in 2010, to support the Ministry of Education in the establishment of a sustainable national equivalency program, which could increase the number of out-of-school youth and adults who completed a recognized equivalency program. The project also aimed to increase community participation in education, improve adult literacy programs, and help train staff and develop school curriculum.

The project set up nine community learning centers and prepared a curriculum, learning materials, and a teacher training process appropriate for mature students. Recognizing the special needs of mature students, the program offered a flexible delivery method, with a combination of face-to-face learning and distance learning. This enabled youth and adults to continue learning while attending to work, family, or other responsibilities.

Through the program, youth and young adults are given the opportunity to complete their primary education and junior secondary education. Though the program is designed for adult learners, they could also gain essential skills in Linguistics (Tetum literacy, Portuguese literacy) Science (Mathematics, Natural Science, Social Science) and Personal Development (Arts & Culture, Health, Physical Education, Religion). They also benefit from some vocational skills organized by the Community Learning Centers.

Successful graduates from the program are awarded a certificate which is equivalent to—and has the same legal status as—a standard junior secondary education certificate, allowing them to pursue further education or employment.

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"I heard about the Second Chance Education Program and I decided to go back to school. I feel so happy when I'm sitting in the class with my classmates because this is a good opportunity for me. I also hope that my participation will inspire other women to go back to school and for my children to do better in school"

Immaculada De Seus, Student

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## Results

The World Bank project ended in January 2017, and by that time 1670 students had participated in the adult education course, gaining essential skills in linguistics (Tetum literacy and Portuguese literacy), science (mathematics, natural science, and social science) and personal development (arts and culture, health, physical education, and religion).

Nine community learning centers, with trained staff and library facilities, continue to support community literacy and education programs.

- 197 students had graduated by 2017, with another 113 expected to graduate in 2018.
- 55% of beneficiaries are women.
- 10% of students are people living with a disability.

## **World Bank Group contribution**

The World Bank Group's International Development Association (IDA) contributed US\$4.5 million to this project.

IDA is the part of the World Bank that helps the world's poorest countries. IDA is one of the largest sources of assistance for the world's 75 poorest countries and lends money on concessional terms. This means that IDA credits have a very low or zero interest charge and repayments are stretched over 25 to 40 years, including a 5- to 10-year grace period.

## **Moving Forward**

The Second Chance Education Project is expected to be crucial for the accumulation of human capital and for building the institutions and social capital needed for long-term economic development and poverty reduction.

While the initial World Bank-supported project has completed, the Government of Timor-Leste continues to fund and support the program to address the backlog of adults without formal school qualifications.

The Ministry of Education has developed a plan to allocate funding for supporting the establishment of 11 new community learning centers over 2018.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2018/08/23/a-second-chance-at-education-in-timor-leste>

August 23, 2018

## Togo: Revolutionizing Africa's Poultry Industry



While egg and poultry meat production has experienced explosive growth worldwide over the past two decades, Africa provides just 4 percent of global poultry products and consumption rates are low. Advanced research in avian science seeks to strengthen the poultry sector.

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Africa is home to 15 percent of the world's population, yet it has some of the lowest poultry product production and consumption rates. The average African eats 45 eggs and 3 kilograms of poultry meat each year, compared to 145 eggs and 14 kilograms throughout the rest of the world. The African poultry sector suffers from inadequate financing, a lack of high-level technical expertise, and input-related issues.

The Regional Center of Excellence in Avian Sciences (CERSA, Centre d'Excellence Regional sur les Sciences Aviaires) at the University of Lomé in Togo aims to reverse that trend. Established in 2014 under the World Bank-financed African Centers of Excellence Project, CERSA seeks to strengthen and promote the poultry sector—and boost food security in West and Central

Africa—through investments in research and training and by forging partnerships with manufacturers.

### **Only research institute for avian science**

CERSA is the only institution in the region engaged in the development of high-level expertise (master's and doctoral degrees) and applied and basic research in avian sciences. As of June 2018, 25 doctoral students, including six women, and 76 master's students, including 15 women, from 11 West and Central African countries were enrolled at CERSA.

“We have a specialized program that covers the entire poultry farming value chain at the scientific, technical, and technological levels, including production, processing, biotechnology, genetics, and marketing. We plan to introduce a new sector soon to integrate the sociological aspects,” says Professor Kokou Tona, CERSA's Director.

In a bid to dispel the misconception that poultry products are a luxury in Africa, Tekando Komlan and Agblékpé Agbessi, two students from Togo, have focused their research on egg and poultry meat processing.

“We found that a micronutrient-poor diet was the cause of malnutrition among many children. We focused on processing eggs into powder to help address protein-energy deficiencies,” explains Komlan.

Poultry farmer Georges Sanvee believes this type of innovation can revolutionize the sector and that producers like him “are relying heavily on CERSA's research to improve our practices to help secure better outcomes.”

Sanvee has benefited from CERSA short-term practical training sessions that showed him how to improve his chicken feed and increase his hens' egg production.

In March 2018, CERSA's influence and quality of work were further validated when it obtained its five-year, unconditional international accreditation from the Haut conseil de l'évaluation de la recherche et de l'enseignement supérieur (HCERES), an independent body tasked with assessing higher education and research institutions.

### **Beyond academics**

CERSA is also focused on modernizing and industrializing Africa's poultry sector through strategic partnerships with major European manufacturers. Together, they aim to identify

poultry strains best suited to the region, improve feed quality, and boost production systems. CERSA is also planning collaboration with SEDIMA, a Senegalese industrial poultry processor, to promote South-South learning and knowledge sharing.

This all points to potential increases in poultry productivity, availability, and accessibility by the poor. Additional IDA18 financing of \$4 million will help CERSA enhance its impact on the sector's development across Africa.



## GOVERNANCE AND INSTITUTIONS



Building open, effective, and accountable institutions

## Ethiopia: Urban Transformation, Good Governance and Enhanced Service Delivery



The second Urban Local Government Development Project II (ULGDP II) has had a transformative effect on the 44 participating cities in Ethiopia. For the first time the cities have access to transparent, predictable funding, as long as they meet certain performance criteria. So far, nearly three million urban residents, 50% of them women, are benefiting from improved urban infrastructure services such as roads, drainage, new bridges, street lights, solid waste services and markets.

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### Challenge

Ethiopia is going through a demographic transition. The WBG's Urbanization Review (October 2015) indicates that with a 5.4% a year urbanization rate, the urban population is expected to triple by 2034. However, the urban local government institutional systems and infrastructure have not kept pace with the rapid urbanization. Despite progress over the last decade in building institutions, and providing infrastructure and services across all urban sectors, there is still much to do, even at today's level of urbanization. In order for the opportunities presented by

rapid urbanization to contribute to economic growth, service delivery needs to be improved significantly and urban infrastructure needs to be created and managed properly.

## **Approach**

While the Banks' approach in the past focused on pre-identifying cities and priority investment projects and then designing the project to finance those investments, ULDGP took an innovative step by moving from a project-approach to setting up a system to support cities. The project has introduced a fiscal transfer instrument, whereby funds are transferred from the federal government treasury directly to the local government annually. Funds are for discretionary use by the cities (only for capital investments) and are allocated in time to fit with their annual planning and budgeting process. Another innovation involves the performance nature of this fiscal instrument. In order to access funds, cities have to pass minimum conditions and have to attain certain scores on performance indicators. The score determines the level of funding they receive. Performance is assessed annually by an independent assessment team. The performance nature of the fiscal transfer has introduced a healthy level of competition among cities.

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"All these streets were previously dirt roads, dusty in the dry season and flooded in the wet season and extremely filthy, now look how clean and beautiful they are!"

Atsede Gebre Selassie

27 years old beneficiaries of the project in Adigrat

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## **Results**

### **Results related to institutional performance:**

Average score of all 44 cities on institutional performance (DLI2) and on urban infrastructure and service delivery targets (DLI 3) exceeded design targets in all three years of the program and end of program target (80%) achieved in third year of the program.

Financial accounting at the city level is improving, and all 44 cities have transitioned from manual to computerized systems. All 44 cities have timely closed statements of accounts and

audits for EFY 15. Of which, eight cities have clean (unqualified) audit opinions, and the rest were qualified. Since enrolling in the program all ULGs were found not to have audit backlog.

Revenue enhancement plans are in place in all cities, and many cities are increasing their revenues, with 34 of the 44 cities increasing revenues by more than 10% in FY 15;

Asset management plans are enabling the cities to plan for new investments and budget for operations and maintenance (O&M) needs in a more systematic and comprehensive way. Cities are now systematically implementing maintenance programs. Thirty-nine cities have executed at least 80% of their O&M budget in FY15.

All 44 cities are routinely posting information on approved capital investment plans, budget execution, project physical progress, and contract awards on notice boards at the city and ward (kebele) levels. Councils are routinely discussing internal and external audit reports and the ULGDP quarterly progress reports. This is a practice started under the first phase of ULGDP and continued with ULGDP II.

#### **Results related to local infrastructure, maintenance, and job creation activities:**

Since the program became effective in July 2014, cities have created a total of 293,397 jobs of which 44% were female with 93,913 being permanent jobs and 199,484 temporary jobs through the ULGDP II

719 kilometers of cobblestone roads were constructed in 44 cities over the last 2.5 years. These roads have led to improved access and mobility as well as an improved business/trading environment. In addition, neighborhoods are more livable. They have also created local jobs, particularly for youth and women. The roads have beautified the cities and are revitalizing neighborhoods, increasing property values and tax revenues.

Communities appreciate the cobblestone roads, bridges, and drainage systems so much that they are now contributing their own funds to construct more.

#### **Bank Group Contribution**

Since 2000, the World Bank and the international development community have been supporting the decentralized service delivery framework and urban policy of the government. The Bank has been supporting the government's efforts to build institutional capacity across the country's urban local governments (ULGs) to enable them to effectively meet their important

responsibilities. This partnership has been ongoing through a series of projects, starting with the Capacity Building for Decentralized Service Delivery project (2002), the Public-Sector Capacity Building Program Support Project (2004), and the Urban Local Government Development Program (2008) (ULGDP). The respective IDA contribution was in the amount of \$30 million for CBDS, \$100 million for PSCAP, and \$300 million for the first phase of ULGDP, respectively.

### **Partners**

The WBG has been working in partnership with German Society for International Cooperation (GIZ) to support urban development and decentralization in Ethiopia for over eight years. GIZ was also involved in the design of ULGDP I. While GIZ's was providing technical assistance (TA) focused on improving governance and building the capacity of cities to deliver services, however, the lack of funds to invest in infrastructure and service, meant that local governments had little incentive to efficiently use it. The partnership ensured that GIZ's TA would focus on the ULGDP cities and is aligned with ULGDPI's grant performance indicators. This laid the foundation for ULGDPII.

### **Moving Forward**

The program has established a system which encourages more contribution from the cities and regional governments for capital investments. It is laying the foundation for cities to fund more of their capital investments from own revenues and in the future for them to look at other private sector financing options such as borrowing and public private partnerships (PPPs). A few cities have already started on some PPPs. The program is embedded in the very high sense of ownership of the processes and these will be sustained and continue without Bank support in the future. The urban local governments and regional governments are contributing more than the minimum required matching fund in many cases, which is a good indicator of ownership and sustainability.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2016/12/19/urban-transformation-good-governance-and-enhanced-service-delivery>

December 19, 2016

## Honduras: Decentralizing Water and Sanitation Services



Drinking water in Santamaria, La Paz, Honduras

By decentralizing nine water and sanitation utilities, Honduras significantly modernized its water sector, improving water services for approximately 108,000 families and sanitation services for 3,786 families. Municipal providers now supply these services, with visible improvements in the quality of delivery. Most water service providers recover their operating costs, and a few are generating enough income to invest in additional system improvements or to finance significant repairs.

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### Challenge

A central issue and concern for the Honduran government was governance of the water supply and sanitation sector (WSS). WSS providers were locked in a vicious cycle marked by weak performance incentives, low willingness among customers to pay cost-recovery tariffs, and insufficient funding for maintenance; these conditions led to asset deterioration and squandered financial resources, which attracted further political interference and exacerbated the downward trend. This spiral began with ineffective central and local policies and lack of

transparency. Since water was a politically sensitive issue, local governments found it difficult to effectively balance the conflicting needs for affordability, expanded coverage to poorer communities, and the sector's need for financial viability. Finally, users had little leverage for holding utilities accountable to meet their needs and preferences.

Servicio Autonomo Nacional de Acueductos y Alcantarillados (SANAA, the National Water and Sewer Service) had historically managed and provided water supply services in approximately 30 urban centers. Under SANAA, water was rationed in most cities—available only twice a week or even less in the summer. The situation was no better in municipalities directly managing their own WSS.

In 2003, Honduras passed the Drinking Water and Sanitation Sector Framework Law mandating decentralization of SANAA and transfer of its assets to the municipalities by October 2008. This law, referred to as the Ley Marco, required municipalities to set up autonomous service providers.

### **Approach**

In 2004, the Honduran government, through a Public-Private Infrastructure Advisory Facility, requested World Bank technical assistance to prepare a Strategic Plan for Modernization of the Water and Sanitation Sector by designing a policy and action plan to support decentralization of local WSS services. The Bank's global experience in water- and sanitation-sector reform and poverty targeting, as well as its comprehensive analytical work and presence in Honduras, positioned it to assist the government in its efforts to improve and strengthen the WSS institutional framework and related utilities.

The Honduras Water and Sanitation Sector Modernization Project included several complex activities to support new service providers, and its straightforward, phased approach decentralized utilities through tailored, on-the-ground technical assistance. Municipalities' population size (from 40,000 to 300,000 residents), was the only eligibility requirement for entering the project, minimizing the risk that participants would be selected on a political basis. A stepped approach required municipalities to achieve certain benchmarks before receiving financing and provided specific incentives for utilities to demonstrate better results, thus promoting competition (limited funds were available) and transparency.

## Results

Through a combination of technical assistance and infrastructure investments, the project helped implement the sector framework law (Ley Marco) in nine small- to medium-sized cities, leading to the creation and/or consolidation of nine autonomous municipal service providers. The project met the targets of all six Project Development Objective (PDO) indicators, as indicated by National Regulator data. The following results were achieved at the utility level:

Eight WSS utilities reached full cost recovery, up from four in 2008. This improved financial sustainability resulted from utilities' and local authorities' combined efforts, with the support of project, to gradually increase tariffs, reduce operations costs, and improve commercial management. Improved financial management allowed providers to cover operational and management costs of new investments financed under the same project, which were not originally considered in previous tariff schemes. By the end of the project, two of the providers had become corporations operating under private law, thus enhancing their opportunities for commercial finance.

Five of the WSS utilities increased their service continuity. The project implementing unit and utilities concluded key contracts contributing to the PDO indicator service continuity. The infrastructure works helping to improve this performance on this indicator included:

- Well perforations.
- Rehabilitation of existing wells.
- Rehabilitation of water plants.
- Provision of water tanks to the utilities.
- All investments were combined with strategies to optimize water distribution in urban areas.

### Bank Group Contribution

The World Bank, through the International Development Association, provided a credit in the amount of US\$ 30 million to finance the Honduras Water and Sanitation Sector Modernization Project. Additional financing in the amount of US\$ 10 million was approved May 13, 2013. The original credit closed, simultaneously with the additional financing, on December 31, 2016.



## **Partners**

The project's comprehensive approach to supporting water and sanitation reform involved many sector actors. The Secretariat of Finance (SEFIN) led the project. Although this was a non-traditional choice for a WSS project, SEFIN had high levels of fiduciary capacity, and, since it was not a direct beneficiary of any project activities, it was well placed to function as an "honest broker" between sector institutions. A high-level ad hoc Inter-Institutional Coordination Group, including representatives from SEFIN, SANAA, the Water and Sanitation National Council, the Honduras Municipalities Association, and the Water and Sanitation National Regulator, monitored project progress and ensured institutional coordination. The Honduran government's decision to designate SEFIN as the lead implementing agency and to align the project with its Poverty Reduction Strategy signaled its high-level commitment to decentralizing the sector and to the project overall.

## **Beneficiaries**

Due to improvements made in his city's aqueduct, Juan Ángel Sandoval, a resident of the Buenos Aires neighborhood in Siguatepeque (one of the 11 municipalities benefiting from the project), now enjoys more than 20 hours daily of drinking water service in his home.

Four years ago, Sandoval said, he received water only three times a week, which was insufficient. "Before it was unpleasant not having enough water in this neighborhood. Now, especially this year, we have more than 20 hours a day of water continuity, and we feel happy because water is vital to live," he said.

In Siguatepeque, some neighborhoods now receive water continuously 24 hours a day. The continuity of the water supply has improved, although it is still not adequate to satisfy the demands for good service arising from the utility's 11,500 (and growing) clients.

## **Moving Forward**

The project closed in 2016, and the Honduran government and the Bank are exploring a potential follow-up project. The Honduras Water and Sanitation Sector Modernization Project established an effective mechanism for transferring service responsibility from SANAA to mid-size municipalities, and the federal government has committed to decentralizing the 13 WSS systems still managed by SANAA. The follow-up project would build upon the progress made in this project to assist the government in achieving its decentralization goals. Moreover, the

follow-up project would support sector institutions—key to the long-term health of the sector and the success of the decentralization effort—in carrying out their roles and responsibilities in line with the WSS Framework Law.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2017/10/30/decentralizing-water-and-sanitation-services-the-honduras-experience>

October 30, 2017

## Honduras: Improving Decentralized Land Administration Services



Beneficiary of the First Title of Community Property in favor of the Miskito people of KATAINASTA.

Land tenure security improved in Honduras between 2011 and 2017. About 90,000 urban and rural households have been registered in a parcel-based system, and more than 50,000 new land titles have been awarded, 48 percent of which went to a female head of household. The lands of 78 Miskito communities have been delimited and demarcated, and the communities benefited from receiving communal land titles; four Territorial Councils received inter-community titles. About 117 indigenous community leaders, of which 48 were women, have been trained in alternative dispute resolution processes, and 109 community leaders have been trained in land and natural resource management. Three protected areas have been delimited and demarcated. Ten municipalities have been surveyed and cadastral information generated. Six of the municipalities surveyed benefited as well from municipal territorial plans.

### Challenges

Land tenure in Honduras was often insecure due to unreliable cadastral and legal information, weak inter-institutional coordination, and inadequate conflict resolution mechanisms. Rural areas faced the most significant challenges, particularly in La Mosquitia, where indigenous

peoples have been particularly affected by land dispossession and lack of effective legal protection.

## **Approach**

The Second Land Administration Project (PATH II) was the second phase of an adaptable program loan aimed at increasing land tenure security in Honduras by improving decentralized land administrative services, including access to more accurate information on property records and transactions. During the first phase (PATH I), the Property Institute was created and attached to the Ministry of the Presidency to establish, maintain, and update the integrated property system. The project relied on consultative and participatory processes as well as conflict mitigation and resolution that benefited indigenous and nonindigenous communities in rural and urban areas.

## **Results**

The following results were achieved during the lifetime of the project, from 2011 to 2017.

### Increased tenure security and local governance of Miskito indigenous peoples by:

- Titling 78 communities of Miskito indigenous peoples, benefiting 26,740 community members.
- Training 117 indigenous community leaders, 48 of them women, on alternative conflict resolution mechanisms.
- Training 109 indigenous community leaders, 40 of them women, on managing land and natural resources.

### Increased land tenure security by:

- Recording the ownership rights of 174,239 parcels (deed system).
- Surveying 10 municipalities.
- Supporting the establishment of six municipal associated centers.
- Issuing new titles to 50,798 households in rural and urban areas, about 48 percent of which went to woman-headed households.

### Contributed to sustainable land and natural resources management by:

- Demarcating three protected areas, contributing to improved certainty about boundaries and thus clarifying management of natural resources and protected areas. The legally

recognized areas are Refugio de Vida Silvestre Mico Quemado, Zona de Reserva el Merendon, and Refugio de Vida Silvestre Colibri Esmeralda Hondureno.

Strengthened legal and institutional framework by:

- Issuing Property Institute regulations for the certification of associated municipal centers.
- Developing technology platforms for the Property Institute and for integrating the registry and cadaster.
- Maintaining a high rate of accuracy (97.6 percent) for the Integrated Registry Module (SURE) under the National Property Administration System (SINAP).
- Training, certifying, and registering 1,117 professionals from the private and public sectors to use the Integrated Registry Module (SURE).
- Training 1,088 technical surveyors.
- Strengthening local capacity in 10 municipalities, all of which now use the cadastral information generated by the project for multiple purposes.
- Supporting the design of territorial plans for six municipalities.

Strengthened public and private partnerships by:

- Supporting the design of new SURE modules, prepared to provide technical support to participating private partners. The project supported front/back office model pilots in two banks, FICOHSA and BANPROVI. (Front and back characterize interfaces and services, respectively, provided to registry users.)
- Supporting a front/back office model pilot to improve investor registration in the Chamber of Commerce of Cortes (CCC). The pilot has proven to be effective at speeding up registration and certification of private investors, which now occurs in just one day. In 2016, 1,779 registrations were issued, an accomplishment expected to contribute to an improved “Doing Business” rating for Honduras.

### **Bank Group Contribution**

The World Bank, through the International Development Association, provided a loan of US\$ 32.8 million to finance Honduras’s Second Land Administration Project.

## **Partners**

The UN Food and Agricultural Organization (FAO) was a key partner of the Bank and the Honduran government and provided technical expertise during project implementation as well as for monitoring and evaluation, economic analysis, and appraising the effectiveness of the final project.

## **Beneficiaries**

The project benefited urban and rural households. Emphasis was placed on improving outcomes for women, particularly those who are heads of their households. The Miskito indigenous people benefited from the demarcation and titling of 78 communities. At an institutional level, the National Agrarian Institute and the Institute for the Conservation and Development, Protected Areas and Wildlife, were among the government institutions benefiting from access to SURE. The capacity of selected municipalities was strengthened by the cadaster and land record system, and six were certified as associated municipal centers, which built their capacity for territorial planning and land valuation.

## **Moving Forward**

Although a follow-on project has not yet been prepared, the Property Institute has indicated its interest in a new Bank-financed operation focused on strengthening and consolidating the SINAP and the digitalization of land records at the national as well as municipal levels.

<http://www.worldbank.org/en/results/2017/10/30/setting-a-historical-precedent-for-land-rights-in-honduras-improving-decentralized-land-administration-services>

October 30, 2017

## Madagascar: Paving the Way for National Education Reform



In 2009, public spending on education fell as foreign funding plunged following a political crisis. Thousands of children were at risk of being taken out of school. Emergency support has led to scaled up funding that is overhauling basic education.

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Justin is 14 years old. He is in 5th grade, but his friends are already in lower secondary school. He had to drop out of school in 2014 when his parents could no longer afford to pay for his education. After the political crisis that shook Madagascar in 2009, his parents were unable to make ends meet.

Justin's mother explains: "My husband is a builder and work was very scarce. I'm a seamstress and it's even worse in a crisis when people don't buy clothes. I have five children and food is our priority. I had to take Justin out of school."

In 2016, his school was able to access funds, so Justin could return to class free of charge, but he had been away for two years.

“I have a lot of catching up to do. All my old friends are already in 8th grade, but that’s okay. I’m happy to be back at school. I dream of being a teacher,” smiles Justin.

### **Keeping kids in school**

Justin’s school, Ankadindambo public primary in the Analamanga region, is one of many that benefited from the Madagascar Emergency Support to Education for All Project (MESEA). Launched in 2013 by the World Bank with a Global Partnership for Education grant, it worked to shore up a crumbling education system.

With a sharp drop in foreign financing, public spending on education had fallen since 2010. This meant that nationwide, very few schools were built, teacher and student materials were not supplied, and hardly any schools received government funding.

MESEA aimed to keep as many children in primary school as possible by reducing costs borne by families, paying subsidies to teachers, and providing school kits to students. It supported student learning by providing training for teachers and principals, textbooks, classrooms, school cafeterias, and school grants.

By the end of the four-year project, MESEA was deployed in 12 Malagasy regions, reaching over 2 million direct recipients. Nearly 1.9 million children were enrolled in school, some 20,000 teachers got paid, and over 5 million school kits were distributed. In Madagascar’s three drought-stricken regions in the south, MESEA enabled over 100,000 children to have meals in school cafeterias. More than 260 classrooms were built, and over 50,000 teachers trained.

### **New funding, largest ever for education**

MESEA also paved the way for the newly launched Basic Education Support Project funded by the World Bank and the Global Partnership for Education. The \$100 million project is designed to improve learning outcomes in the first two years of basic education in Madagascar.

This funding, which includes \$55 million from IDA18, is the highest ever granted to assist education in Madagascar. It will support the implementation of reforms outlined in the country’s 2018–2022 Education Sector Plan.

The project aims to reach over 4.7 million beneficiaries. That includes enrolling 4.6 million children in primary school and 80,000 children in early learning centers, as well as training



35,000 primary school teachers, 6,500 pre-primary community educators, 4,000 community-school board members, and 20,000 principals and local supervisors.

## Mozambique: Improving Financial Management to Keep Medicines Stocked and Students Learning



Weak public financial management was hurting the medicines supply chain and school performance in Mozambique. By pioneering an IDA results-based financing approach, health and education systems improved—and financing flowed—as targets were met.

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Mozambique's medical sector was in trouble: inadequate planning, procurement, warehousing, and distribution of medicines had led to recurrent stock outs. Reports of stolen or damaged medicines were frequent. Lack of medicines at service delivery points impacted care and treatment outcomes.

The education system was also in crisis. Weak school governance, limited community participation, ineffective supervision, high absenteeism, and delays or the diversion of school funds contributed to low student retention, low completion rates, and poor learning outcomes.

In 2014, Mozambique launched its Public Financial Management for Results Program for Health and Education to bring more transparency and efficiency to spending and management in these two key sectors. It featured the World Bank's new Program for Results instrument.

Untested at the time, this IDA instrument disburses funding in a phased manner and based on the achievement of pre-agreed targets. This pioneering project paved the way for sectors to create specific incentives to drive behavior change at the sub-national level and across stakeholder groups.

### **Progress is significant**

"Medicines only have value when they reach the right patient at the right time," says João Grachane, a senior officer at Mozambique's Ministry of Health. He has seen the project shift practitioners' attention from inputs to results, decisively improving the medicines supply chain.

Key progress includes a substantial increase in the availability of essential maternal health medicines at the facility level, from 79 percent in 2013 to 86 percent in 2015, as well as a sharp decrease in the number of treatment sites with stock outs of antiretroviral drugs, from 27 percent in 2013 to 5 percent in 2015.

The education system is also faring better under the project. Matilde Xilume, primary school director at EP1.2 of 3 de Fevereiro, explains that before the project, the school's functioning was constantly disrupted by delays in grant allocations meant to procure basic learning materials and support the most vulnerable children.

"We now receive our grant allocations at the beginning of the school year, a major improvement as it allows us to plan better at the beginning of the year," says Xilume.

All 1,300 primary schools under the project are benefiting from more reliably delivered funding.

### **Working together to find solutions**

The project, which is in its final stages of implementation, has provided a unique support structure to create a network of reinforcing incentives. A capacity building window has ensured that sector stakeholders collaborate more with public financial management agencies to get the resources they need to deliver services and improve institutional know-how.

"The project adopted an innovative problem-driven and iterative approach," says Humberto Cossa, World Bank senior health specialist. "Frontline implementers focused on identifying

bottlenecks to the achievement of results in their sectors, bringing people out of their silos to craft integrated solutions.”

Building on this successful approach, Mozambique has launched a new Primary Health Care Strengthening Program for Results. It is benefiting from additional results-based grant financing of \$105 million, including \$80 million from IDA18, to improve reproductive, maternal, child, and adolescent health and nutrition services in underserved areas.

## Sierra Leone: Bringing Transparency and Trust to the Mining Sector



Sierra Leone has the mineral and potential oil reserves to underpin much higher GDP growth. New policies and regulations have brought more transparency to the mining industry, so the government can track activities and small-scale miners can build capacity.

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Ishmael Sesay leads Youth in Mining, a group of young artisanal miners in the diamond-rich district of Kono in eastern Sierra Leone. He entered the trade with friends after completing secondary school.

“Eight of us came together and started mining for diamonds. The field was crowded but we were determined to make a difference because mining was our only source of livelihood,” Sesay explains.

Like many other artisanal miners in Kono District, Sesay and his team lacked the skills needed to evaluate the true worth of their finds. In 2017, they participated in a Skills for Development

workshop organized by the World Bank, in collaboration with Sierra Leone's Ministry of Mines and Mineral Resources, to learn about sustainable mining technologies and operations.

"We learned how to value our diamonds before we sell them," Sesay says. "You can find a big stone but if you don't know its value, it is like giving your wealth to another person."

### **Building the foundation for improved governance**

The workshop was part of World Bank-financed Extractive Industries Technical Assistance Project. During the first phase of the project (2009-2016), Sierra Leone laid the foundation for improved governance in the mining sector.

The most notable achievement was the creation of the National Minerals Agency, the sector's regulatory and geological survey institution. New policies and regulatory instruments were also enacted to address issues of transfer pricing, revenue management, dispute resolution, harmonization of land policies, skills development, and improved environmental management in the sector.

The second phase of the project now is underway, with a \$20 million IDA18 grant to further strengthen legal and regulatory frameworks, increase geological knowledge, and support artisanal mining.

### **Formalizing artisanal mining**

The majority of the artisanal mining activities in Kono and other districts are still being carried out on an illegal basis, which is why organizations like the Diamond Development Initiative (DDI) Sierra Leone are coming onboard to ensure the formalization of the artisanal mining sector. It is teaching miners how to comply with international standards governing the production and marketing of diamonds.

"We want the mining sector to be regulated so that the government can receive the requisite taxes from operations to support public administration," explains Joseph S. Mboka, DDI Program Manager. "We also want the diamonds to be legally mined so that people do not use them to fuel conflicts. Once they are regulated and the government can take note of the diamonds that are being extracted, we know that these will be responsibly channeled to the external market."

The project is also supporting a baseline study on artisanal mining and miners and an airborne geophysical survey of the entire country. The goal is to develop modern geological maps of Sierra Leone to aid a more strategic approach to mineral exploration.

The people of Sierra Leone, and especially artisanal mining communities, will benefit from improved environmental management and social protection in the sector, as well as more equitable distribution of wealth from mining operations, including increased access to employment.

