

Environmental and Social Data Sheet

Overview

Project Name: CONGO DIGITAL TRANSFORMATION
Project Number: 20200039
Country: CONGO

Project Description: The project concerns the strengthening of the enabling environment for digital acceleration, which includes a broad set of initiatives to reinforce the Republic of the Congo's e-government, cybersecurity and personal data protection frameworks in line with EU and international best practices, as well as digital capacity building of public and private sector IT professionals and the population at large. The overall project will also include the development and implementation of people-centric digital services, notably related to education, health and civil registry/e-identity, as well as digital inclusion enabled by expansion of digital connectivity.

EIA required: no

Project included in Carbon Footprint Exercise¹: no

(details for projects included are provided in section: "EIB Carbon Footprint Exercise")

Environmental and Social Assessment

Environmental Assessment

The EIB/EU financing will focus on the establishment of a robust institutional framework for digitalisation in Congo, notably ensuring the effectiveness of personal data protection and cybersecurity regulations in line with international standards, as well as the development and implementation of a selected number of IT systems for the public education and health sectors. Finally, the project will also finance a broad range of digital skills training activities, specifically developed for IT professionals, both from the public and private sectors, and the general population. If located within the EU, these activities would neither fall under Annexes I nor II of the EU Directive 2011/92/EU amended by EIA Directive 2014/52/EU. Most of the project's activities are expected to be carried out in existing facilities already authorised that will not change their scope due to the project, with the possible exception of IT systems that may be hosted in public or private cloud platforms located partially in existing or new datacentre infrastructures not financed by the Bank. The project involves parallel co-financing with the infrastructure component being financed by the World Bank.

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

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The project entails digitalization of paper-based processes, automation of information access and development of on-line services, which directly enables a substantial decrease in GHG emissions by reducing paper usage, citizens' journeys to public administrations and inter-organisation travel. Therefore, the project is eligible for Climate Action-Mitigation.

The project is fully aligned with the Paris Agreement on climate change according to the Bank's definition (Annex 2 Table H of EIB's climate bank roadmap - CBR).

Social Assessment

The IT systems and capacity building initiatives financed by the Bank are expected to stimulate a broader digitalisation of the public and private sectors in the country, which will generate wide-ranging socio-economic benefits. On the other hand, inadequate management of personal data and cybersecurity threats could lead to data protection risks. To mitigate such risks, the effective implementation and operationalisation of the personal data protection commission, the national cybersecurity strategy and the computer emergency response team will be a condition for disbursements related to the implementation of the e-government applications included in the scope of the project financed by the Bank.

Women and girls particularly face a situation of economic vulnerability and systemic discrimination regarding education and skilled employment. The project will contribute to removing the constraints for more and better jobs by ensuring equal access to digital skills training which aim to improve access to the labour market, thus contributing to the priority of women's economic empowerment. The project also aims to strengthen women's access to public administrative services and ensures equal representation of women beneficiaries and their specific needs in terms of digital services throughout the project.

Conclusions and Recommendations

As it is generally the case for digital transformation initiatives in the public sector, the overall anticipated environmental and social impacts of the scope of the project financed by the Bank are deemed positive, except for the potential negative impact on personal data protection, which will be mitigated by the effective implementation of personal data protection and cybersecurity frameworks aligned with EU standards, as a condition precedent to disbursements related to the implementation of e-government applications.

Considering all of the above, the project is acceptable for EIB financing from an environmental and social point of view