GOVERNMENT OF THE REPUBLIC OF LIBERIA

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION

ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK (ESMF)

For the proposed
LIBERIA LEARNING FOUNDATION PROJECT
Project ID No: P172705

Funded by
GLOBAL PARTNERSHIP FOR EDUCATION (GPE)
MAXIMUM COUNTRY ALLOCATION ADDITIONAL FINANCING

July 2020
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<td>Ministry of Internal Affairs</td>
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<tr>
<td>WASH</td>
<td>Water, Sanitation and Hygiene</td>
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<td>West African Senior School Certificate Examination</td>
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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Background

Since the end of the civil war, the Government of Liberia (GoL) has worked to rebuild the public education system with the aim of expanding access to education for all. In 2017, building on achievements and lessons of the previous decade, the Government developed a strategy focused on improving the equity, quality, and relevance of teaching and student learning.

The education sector in Liberia is guided by the Government’s PAPD 2019-2023 and the Getting to Best Education Sector Plan (G2B-ESP) 2017-2021. The Government has made some progress in implementing the G2B-ESP agenda. The 2019 Joint Education Sector Review noted progress in a number of areas of the G2B-ESP. While enrollment has increased, access and learning remain key challenges. Between 1981 and 2015, the number of students enrolled in the education system (from early childhood education (ECE) through senior secondary school) increased from 300,000 to 1.5 million.

The education sector in Liberia is plagued by myriad governance and capacity issues. Resource allocation is a major concern in the education sector. COVID-19 is adversely impacting an education system already struggling to ensure access, equity and learning. There are limited investments in ECE and primary education including to upgrade teacher qualifications that prevent children from developing the critical foundations for learning which will be further exacerbated by COVID-19. The quality of ECE provision has not improved as access has increased. Overage enrollment at the ECE and primary levels prevents age-appropriate teaching and learning, impacting the quality of education provided to children in the classroom.

The Getting to Best in Education (G2B) Project is addressing some critical challenges at the ECE and primary levels. Investing in early learning can advance Liberia’s Pro-Poor Agenda. Many young children, especially in the poorest areas of Liberia, cannot access quality ECE, while children who do have access are not enrolled in their age-appropriate grade. Distance to schools, overcrowding and poor learning environment in schools are key contributing factors. Many children, particularly those from the lowest income quintiles, have to travel long distances to access ECE. Further, many schools do not have adequate classrooms or water and sanitation facilities. ECE teachers lack the necessary teaching and learning materials. Many ECE teachers
do not meet the basic qualifications and lack the pedagogical skills they need to effectively deliver ECE especially in a multi-age group classroom.

Despite progress toward the right direction, the education sector still faces many challenges. The most significant include (a) low learning outcomes; (b) overage enrollment at the Early Childhood Education (ECE) and primary education levels; (c) disparities in access and completion at the basic education level; (d) inadequately trained and inequitable distribution of teachers; and (e) inadequate management and accountability systems at the central and school levels. The Global Partnership for Education-Getting to Best in Education Project (GPE-G2B) aims to improve equitable access to ECE and teacher quality in ECE and primary education in targeted counties and strengthen national school accountability systems. It supports key components of Liberia’s Getting to Best Education Sector Plan (G2B-ESP, 2017-2021) and is implemented by the Ministry of Education (MOE).

The project has completed Year Two of implementation. During the project implementation, the GPE informed the Government of Liberia through the Ministry of Education of an increase in the maximum country allocation (MCA) of US$5.6 million which the Government intends to use to embark on the Liberia Learning Foundation project (LLF). The LLF is expected to complement the existing GPE-G2B Project in line with the priorities in the G2B-ESP. Specifically, the LLF will allow the MoE to revise and/or scale-up its result-based financing targets in the existing GPE-G2B project, and in consultation with the Local Education Group (LEG) developed new activities for implementation with the aim of increasing the development impact of GPE interventions in Liberia. From the perspective of GPE, the fund is purely an additional financing (AF).

**Project Development Objectives**

The PDO of the proposed project is to improve access to ECE in targeted counties with improved teacher deployment.¹

¹ The Project defines targeted counties as six counties: Bomi, Grand Kru, Maryland, Rivercess, River Gee and Sinoe, given the incidence of poverty and low access to ECE and primary education services in these counties. Following on the GPE-funded G2B project, the county-level selection was based on an index of extreme poverty, severe stunting, Net Enrollment Ratios (ECE and primary) and proportion of unqualified ECE and primary teachers using the Demographic and Health Survey (DHS, 2013) and Education Management and Information System (EMIS, 2015-16). Geographic selection was coordinated with an on-going early grade literacy project and out-of-school project funded by USAID to avoid overlap and harmonize national coverage across donor partner projects.
Project Components
The project consists of the following three components:

**Component 1: Improving access to ECE in targeted counties (US$3.0 million):** This component aims to strengthen ECE foundations in targeted disadvantaged counties, in alignment with the ESP-ECE objectives. To meet the component objective, three sub-components will be financed: (i) construction of ECE classrooms, latrines and water systems; (ii) accelerated education for overage students; and (iii) provision of ECE teaching and learning materials (TLMs).

*Sub-component 1.1: Construction of ECE classrooms, latrines and water systems (US$1.699 million)*: This sub-component will address a priority need identified in the ESP for additional ECE classrooms and Water, Sanitation and Hygiene (WASH) facilities in schools with overcrowding or which lack ECE infrastructure. The sub-component aims to reduce ECE overcrowding and improve infrastructure quality at 18 school sites each of which will receive a package of three ECE classrooms (one per ECE grade), furnishings and basic equipment, one latrine (consisting of four age-appropriate toilets) and one water system. The 18 schools are also benefiting from the placement of qualified ECE teachers under the G2B Project and have been assessed as having adequate land and topography, no land tenure issues and the necessary population density to justify additional classrooms. The Government recognizes that construction of additional classrooms and WASH facilities are required to address inequities in ECE provision and reduce overcrowding as well as complementing the COVID-19 longer term recovery phase.

*Sub-component 1.2: Provision of ECE teaching and learning materials (US$0.53 million)*
The objective of sub-component 1.2 is to increase access to ECE teaching and learning materials (TLMs) in the six targeted counties. This sub-component addresses the widespread lack of curriculum materials for play-based learning and further enhance the impact of the ECE grants, construction and teacher training TLMs, including curriculum and teachers’ guides, supplementary ECE reading books, and assorted classroom learning aid materials for pretend play, sensory play, blocks play, reading and counting, will be distributed across the same schools receiving school grants under the G2B Project.
Sub-component 1.3: Accelerated education for overage students (US$0.91 million)

This sub-component will support the MoE’s plans to expand its accelerated learning program (ALP) for overage ECE students and also complements the MoE’s COVID-19 response plan. One hundred (100) public schools in 5 districts in 3 counties will be expected to run Level 1 ALP classes for 4,600 overage ECE students during the academic year.

Component 2: Improving learning outcomes through increased equity, efficiency and accountability (US$1.77 million)

This component focuses on consolidating education system accountability to increase equity, efficiency and accountability in the education system through Performance-Based Condition (PBC). The PBCs build on those under the G2B given the GPE considers this allocation as additional financing to the G2B while World Bank requirements and procedures require that this project be processed as a stand-alone IPF with PBCs.

Component 3: Strengthening project management and sector support and coordination (US$0.7 million)

This component will provide financing to support the implementation of activities under Components 1 and 2 and help to ensure the activities are sustainable beyond the life of the Project, including M&E, training and management. The component will fund M&E activities conducted by the MOE, county and district levels, as well as operational costs. A school infrastructure audit will be conducted to identify vulnerabilities to environmental risks, in line with the World Bank’s safeguards procedures. Allocations will be made for technical assistance (TA), communications, an Independent Verification Agent (IVA), two JESR and additional activities to ensure the project is effectively implemented aligned to World Bank and GPE requirements.

The Project Delivery Team (PDT) will receive an additional US$141,436 for salary adjustments and additional short-term staff for the LLF activities. An additional US$50,000 will be allocated for communications and community mobilization concerning ECE classroom construction,
materials distribution and ALP activities. Due to high consumer inflation, an additional US$77,902 is allocated for project operational costs (fuel, maintenance, office supplies etc.). One percent of the project budget (US$56,000) is allocated for financial management costs associated with the PFMU (sub-component 3.5). Additional IVA costs are also included for verification of the PBC targets (US$60,000). To continue strengthening sector coordination and monitoring, MOE will be conducting two JESR with the additional financing (US$150,000). The Grant Agent supervision costs (US$295,000) will cover implementation support (including project monitoring and evaluation, review of IVA reports, safeguards and fiduciary oversight) and knowledge sharing by the World Bank as the designated Grant Agent.

**Project Beneficiaries**
The primary beneficiaries are ECE students targeted by the accelerated learning program (4,600 students) and ECE classroom construction (approximately 2,538 students\(^2\)). Additional beneficiaries include the 300 accelerated learning program teachers and principals trained under the project.

**Project Environmental and Social Risk Rating, Relevant E&S Standards, Justification for an ESMF**
The project activities, especially component 1 of subcomponent 1.1, will involve civil works construction of ECE classrooms, latrines and water systems in selected urban and rural areas. The constructions activities of these facilities are likely to require minor land take while the design aspects of these classrooms, latrines and water systems are likely to bring inequity concerns for those who are disadvantaged students and who are vulnerable because of their sexual orientations and physical ability, if the design of these facilities fails to incorporate universal design requirements. These social concerns coupled with the project requirement to design and construct classrooms, latrines and water systems that are equitable to all shall be assessed for its broader social risks and impacts with particular focus on subcomponent 1.1 design to make school facilities user-friendly to all. In view of this, 9 of the ESSs out of 10 ESSs are found to be relevant to this project and will be assessed through the ESS1 environmental and social assessment procedures.

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\(^2\) Calculated as 54 classrooms multiplied by mean national ECE Student Classroom Ratio (47).
The exact locations of the proposed infrastructure works have not been finalized at this stage. Therefore, the project has adopted a framework approach. Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs), Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) as well the Contractor’s Environmental and Social Management Plan (CESMP) will be prepared along with a separate workers GRM as and when required during implementation. A chance find procedure is incorporated in this ESMF and in ESS8 to satisfy the requirements of ESS1.

**Overall E&S Risk Rating:** The overall E&S risk rating of the project is moderate. The overall project impacts are expected to be positive. It is expected to improve social outcomes, particularly ECE’s outcome through increased enrollment as well as health outcome through the WASH facilities. The project will be accelerated learning outcomes for 4,600 students, will construct classrooms, latrines and water facilities for approximately 2,500 students and will train 300 teachers and principals under the accelerated learning program. The project’s education and health outcomes have the potential to improve Liberia’s HDI.

**Environment Risk Rating:** The environmental risk rating for this project is rated moderate under the World Bank ESF. While the proposed construction and rehabilitation activities have the potential to negatively impact the environment as well as expose communities and workers to construction related health and safety risks and hazards, the volume of construction under the project is minimal. General construction related concerns such as noise, air pollution, soil erosion, waste generation, water pollution, and worker’s and community health and safety will apply.

**Social Risk Rating:** The social risk rating of the project is ‘moderate”. However, the project is likely to generate inequity if access to ECEs’ school facilities are not managed properly and if accountability and transparency are weak in participating school managements. Initial screening of project’s likely impacts indicated that some of the activities will have the potential to generate unintended social risks and impacts that will likely result if: i) classrooms and school facilities cannot accommodate students with special needs, ii) lack of disaggregated latrine facilities for girls and boys, iii) discrimination in accessing schools (between poor and better-resourced children), iv) distance from the location of students’ village or household location to the
school, v) denial to enroll in school because of birth certificate requirements or other documents and, v) social stigmas related to age (overage enrollment).

To address these potential social challenges, the Ministry of Education will undertake a “Rapid Social Impact Assessment” in the six targeted counties and the outcome of the RSIA will assist the project avert the likely inequity risks flagged in this section. The RSIA will be undertaken prior to commencement of Project activities.

**Involuntary Resettlement or Restriction of Access:** The project will likely require small size land for advancing its activities. The proposed construction of 54 ECE classrooms, 18 latrines, 18 water system are expected to be within schools premises. It is also expected that construction of these structures may require some additional land to fit in some structures as per the design, usability or other technical requirements. In view of the likelihood of additional land requirement, the PDT has prepared a Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) to guide preparation of the Abbreviated Resettlement Action Plan (ARAP) / Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) or follow the Voluntary Land Donation (VLD) procedures as and when required.

**GBV Risk Rating:** The GBV risk rating is moderate. The proposed civil works in rural areas, where skilled labor is generally in short supply or not available could trigger labor influx and its attending social risks and concerns related to GBV, SEA, over-exploitation of community resources amongst others. In view of this reality, risks related to GBV and SEA and mitigation measures will be considered. A dedicated GBV staff shall be appointed in the PDT and in supervision consultant’s team. GBV action plan shall be developed, and mitigation measures will be adopted. The implementing agency will use the GBV risks screening and assessment tool developed by the Global GBV Task Force of the World Bank while identifying local grievance resolution structures and while coordinating with organizations working on women and children’s rights. The implementing agency shall incorporate GBV and CoC requirements in bidding documents and also shall evaluate the contractor’s GBV response proposal in the C-ESMP and confirm the contractor’s ability to meet the project’s GBV requirements prior to finalizing the contract.
Furthermore, the Project Delivery Team (PDT) will be required to: i) undertake and develop a GBV referral and service providers mapping exercise in the project area, ii) clearly define and include the project’s GBV requirements and Code of Conduct (CoC) into the construction contractor and supervision consultant contracts, and iii) engage women organizations, GBV-specialized agencies and partners to work, and develop a GBV action plan including accountability and response framework, as part of project’s ESMP. If the GBV risks rating is escalated, mitigation measures shall follow the GBV risk level as appropriate.

Risks rating takes into consideration, amongst other things, the type of project and nature of its activities, the sensitivity of project areas as well as safeguard implementation capacity of the project implementing entity. Initial screening of project activities indicates that the following E&S Standards will be relevant for this project: i) ESS1 Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts, ii) ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions, iii) ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management, iv) ESS4 Community Health and Safety, v) ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement, vi) ESS8 Cultural Heritage, and vii) ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure.

**Relevant National Policy and Legal Framework**

The applicable Environmental and relevant polices and laws are summarized below:

**National Environment Policy of Liberia, 2002:** whose goal is to ensure long-term economic prosperity of Liberia through sustainable social and economic development which enhances sustainable environmental quality and resource productivity;

**Land Administration Policy, 2015:** presents a framework for land administration in Liberia with a focus on the main features of good land administration and those pertaining to the identification, ownership, use, and valuation of land, as well as the identification of land and the determination of rights to the land;

**Land Rights Policy, 2013:** The Policy provides a framework for the management of land in Liberia. Covering public lands, government, customary lands;
The Constitution of Liberia, 1986: provides that, the Republic shall, consistent with the principles of individual freedom and social justice enshrined in the Constitution, manage the national economy and the natural resources of Liberia;

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Act, 2003: creates EPA as the principal authority in Liberia for the management of the environment and shall co-ordinate, monitor, supervise all activities in the protection of the environment and sustainable use of natural resources;

Environmental Protection and Management Law, 2003: forms the legal framework for the sustainable development, management and protection of the environment and natural resources by EPA in partnership with its stakeholders in Liberia; and

EPA Regulations and Procedures: these Regulations combine both the assessment and environmental management systems and prohibit commencing an undertaking/activity without prior registration and Environmental Permit (EP) by the EPA.

National Environmental and Occupational Health Policy, 2010: The main objectives of this policy to develop new guidelines/standards and strengthen existing guidelines/standards in basic sanitation, water quality control, food safety, vector control, port health, human habitat, waste management, communicable disease control for the protection and promotion of public health services in Liberia.

Guidelines for Safe School Environments in the Coronavirus (Covid-19) Outbreak in Liberia: These guidelines are for safe school environments and define the minimum requirements that must be in place in every school (Public and Private) to ensure that, from a health, water, sanitation and hygiene point of view, the school is a safe place for all students and school personnel.

WHO Guidelines on water, sanitation, hygiene, and waste management for the COVID-19 virus: This interim guidance supplements the infection prevention and control (IPC) documents by summarizing WHO guidance on water, sanitation and health-care waste relevant to viruses, including coronaviruses. It is intended for water and sanitation practitioners and providers, and health-care providers who want to know more about WASH risks and practices.

WHO advice on the use of masks in the context of COVID-19: This guidance includes updated scientific evidence relevant to the use of masks for preventing transmission of COVID-19 as well
as practical considerations. It provides guidance to decision makers, public health and IPC professionals, health care managers, and health workers on the use of medical and non-medical masks in health care (including long-term care and residential) settings, for the general public, and during home care. It will be revised as more data become available.

**The World Bank environmental, health, and safety (EHS):** The EHS general guidelines will be applied as required by their respective policies and standards. The EHS guidelines contain the performance levels and measures that are generally considered to be achievable in new facilities by existing technology at reasonable costs. Should these policies be applied during project implementation, the MOE will establish site-specific targets, with an appropriate timetable for achieving them. We do not envisage conflict in these policies relative to the Liberia’s policies. However, should such thing occur, the project will prepare a detailed justification for any presented alternatives that is needed as part of the site-specific environmental assessment.

**Biophysical and Socio-Economic Environment of Liberia**

Liberia comprises about 111,000 square kilometers (43,000 sq. miles) of which 96,300 square kilometers (37,190 sq. miles) is land and 15,000 square kilometers (5,810 sq. miles). The country is divided into 15 counties, 136 districts arrayed within counties, and numerous clans arrayed within districts.

Liberia has a small land area. The forests of Liberia account for a wide range of other forest products and services that benefit Liberia and the rest of the world. The Country is a verdant land that is heavily forested; it has an extensive and unique biodiversity.

Liberia has an estimated population of 4.81 million people with 40 to 54 percent of the population living below the poverty line based on different estimates. The population is growing rapidly with a fertility rate of 4.4 children per woman in 2020. More than two-thirds of the population are under the age of 35 and nearly one-half of the population lives in urban areas. There are acute disparities in income, health and education outcomes between rural and urban populations, exacerbated by poor infrastructure and limited domestic investments. Severe malnutrition is also prevalent with almost one-third (32 percent) of children under five years old being stunted.
The average life expectancy at birth in Liberia is 62 years (2018); infant mortality is 70 deaths per 1,000 live births (2013); and, maternal mortality rate is 770 deaths per 100,000 live births (2010). Poverty and underdevelopment are not the only challenges. Liberia emerged from its protracted civil war as a deeply divided country, its social fabric torn by ethnicity, religion, geography, and history. There are 16 ethnic groups spread across the 15 counties. The key religious groups are Christianity (85%), Islam (12%), and indigenous religions (3%).

There are acute disparities in income, health and education outcomes between rural and urban populations, exacerbated by poor infrastructure and limited domestic investments. Severe malnutrition is also prevalent with almost one-third (32 percent) of children under five years old being stunted.

Liberia COVID-19 Education Response Plan

The plan is in response to the COVID-19 emergency in Liberia and is aimed at ensuring students are safe and care for, and they continue to learn, having access to nutritional, psycho-social, health and well-being support as well as returning to safe schools when schools re-opens. It is based on four major policy priorities:

- Policy priority 1: Activation and Operationalization of the education cluster
- Policy priority 2: Protection of lives and learning continuity for all students
- Policy priority 3: Psycho-social, health and well-being, child protection and nutrition support for parents and children
- Policy priority 4: Recovery, school re-opening and system strengthening

The plan prioritizes protection of lives, continuity of learning in the face of school closure, provision of health, nutrition and child protection guidance and messaging as well as community engagement and psycho-social support to parents, caregivers, and school personnel including teachers. It is forward looking as it outlines interventions to facilitate school re-opening, recovery and system strengthening to allow access to quality education for all.

Implementation of the plan will be led by the Ministry of Education’s Senior Management Team (SMT) through the education cluster with UNICEF and Save the Children as co-lead. The Local
Education Group (LEG) will support quality assurance, coordination and accountability. Implementation of activities will take place at national and sub-national levels involving the government, development partners, Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs), Community-Based Organizations (CBOs), schools and the civil society.

**Sectorial Context**

The education sector in Liberia is guided by the Government’s PAPD 2019-2023 and the Getting to Best Education Sector Plan (G2B-ESP) 2017-2021. The G2B-ESP articulates nine priorities focused on the quality and relevance of teaching and learning. Liberia’s education system includes three years of early childhood education (ages three to five), six primary grades (grades 1-6), three junior secondary school grades (grades 7-9), three senior secondary school grades (grades 10-12) or technical and vocational training, and four years of tertiary education. Basic education, covering primary and junior secondary education, is compulsory and tuition free at government schools. Approximately 46 percent of students attend non-government, fee-paying faith-based or private schools, rising to 61 percent of senior secondary school students. The gross enrollment ratio (GER) for primary and junior secondary levels stand at around 87 and 53 percent respectively yet the GER drops to 39 percent at the senior secondary level. However, the net enrollment ratio (NER) stands at approximately 48 percent, 13 percent and 12 percent for primary, junior and senior secondary levels respectively (2015/16 Annual School Census).

The Government has made some progress in implementing the G2B-ESP agenda. Achievements include: i) removing 1,900 ghost teachers from the payroll while hiring teachers that meet qualification standards; ii) providing 373,845 students in approximately 2,500 schools with mathematics, science, social studies, and language textbooks and associated teachers’ guides; iii) advancing the National Inter-Sectoral Policy on Early Childhood Development (ECD); and iv)...

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3 The G2B-ESP’s nine programs are: (1) school quality; (2) education management and accountability; (3) early childhood education; (4) overage and out-of-school; (5) teacher education and management; (6) curriculum and assessment; (7) student well-being; (8) technical and vocational education and training; and (9) higher education. The G2B ESP is based on the Liberia Education Sector Analysis, a comprehensive review and evidence-based analysis of the education sector. The Plan includes an implementation plan outlining roles and responsibilities for central, ministerial, and decentralized education administration. The G2B-ESP was led by the Government and developed through a participatory process that included development partners (DPs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs), and civil society.
approving more resources to schools through restructuring and downsizing of the Ministry of Education (MOE). The Government has also taken steps to strengthen accountability through a school-quality assurance (SQA) tool for monitoring school efficiency and effectiveness.

The 2019 Joint Education Sector Review noted progress in a number of areas of the G2B-ESP. Progress had been made in sustaining the school feeding program, early grade literacy programs, teacher training and improving support for out-of-school children. With the support of the European Union, the MOE had begun a project to improve the quality of technical and vocational education in a number of specialized institutions. The World Bank is supporting the secondary education level through the Improving Results in Secondary Education (P164932), advancing research on early childhood education and promoting inclusive education through the implementation of the Government’s Inclusive Education Policy. However, the JESR noted many challenges including persistent problems with access and overage enrollment, poor infrastructure, unqualified teachers, weak implementation capacity, and a lack of teaching and learning materials.

While enrollment has increased, access and learning remain key challenges. Between 1981 and 2015, the number of students enrolled in the education system (from early childhood education (ECE) through senior secondary school) increased from 300,000 to 1.5 million. The teacher workforce also grew significantly, nearly doubling in size between 2010 and 2018 from 26,359 to 55,243 teachers. However, as of 2015, an estimated 15-20 percent of children aged six to fourteen were not enrolled in basic education. Forty percent of students who start first grade drop out before completing primary school. Though all groups show low completion rates, significant disparities exist across geographic, socio-economic, and gender lines. For example, children aged 6 to 11 from rural and poorer households are around 50 percent less likely to attend primary school and even less likely to complete primary education compared to their counterparts from urban and wealthier households. Most children with disabilities are not enrolled in school.

The education sector in Liberia is plagued by myriad governance and capacity issues. Liberia’s teaching workforce has more than doubled in the past ten years yet approximately 59

percent of teachers work in non-government schools. Due to severe fiscal restraints, the Government has struggled to add teachers to its payroll to meet increased student enrollments. Within the education sector there is the official payroll system and a supplemental payroll system which contributes to many system inefficiencies and governance challenges. The student to qualified teacher ratios are worse in the most disadvantaged counties.

**Resource allocation is a major concern in the education sector.** Education spending hovered at 12-14 percent between FY2012-FY2017. These figures generally put Liberia among the bottom one-third of African countries in terms of public spending on education as a proportion of the national budget. In the FY2018/19 Government budget, US$84 million, or approximately 15 percent of government expenditure, was allocated to education. ECE accounts for 14 percent of the total education expenditure while primary accounts for 29 percent.\(^5\)

**The COVID-19 pandemic is adversely impacting an education system struggling to ensure access, equity and learning.** An estimated 2,247,380 students are out of school due to the lockdown as a result of COVID-19. The MOE finalized the C-19 response plan on May 29, 2020. UNICEF is the designated Grant Agent (GA) for the GPE accelerated funding for the COVID-19 response, as agreed with the Local Education Group (LEG). Plan implementation, through GPE funding, is expected to go into effect in July 2020.

**There are limited investments in ECE and primary education including to upgrade teacher qualifications that prevent children from developing the critical foundations for learning which will be further exacerbated by COVID-19.** While progress has been made with the creation of a national inter-sectoral early childhood development (ECD) policy, an ECE curriculum, and a professional development framework for ECE, within public ECE schools, the pupil-to-qualified teacher ratio is 1:104. Schools have limited resources to invest in ECE, and fees that are charged by ECE schools (as fees can be collected for ECE) constitute a barrier to access for poor families and provide an incentive for schools to keep children from advancing to the primary level. Access to ECE and primary education services is constrained by fragile delivery

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\(^5\) Liberia national budget 2018/19.
systems caused by a lack of supplies and infrastructure challenges. In the Ministry’s draft COVID-19 plan, provisions are included to provide tips to parents to act as caregivers while ECE centers remain closed and guidance on how to engage in age-appropriate ways with young children through play-based learning.

**The quality of ECE provision has not improved as access has increased.** Child assessments have demonstrated concerning rates of learning achievement. The recently completed Early Learning Partnership Systems Research Phase 1 for Liberia conducted by Oxford Policy Management found that Learning outcomes were not correlated with family income or school type, and only marginally by gender. Overall, learning levels were concerning given that most children were above preschool age. Only 9 percent of teachers were in possession of the national ECE curriculum. Children and teachers were predominately engaged in rote-learning activities. Only 17 percent of teaching time was child-centered, and no storybook reading or free play was observed. Rote-learning accounted for 67 percent of teaching time.

**Overage enrollment at the ECE and primary levels prevents age-appropriate teaching and learning, impacting the quality of education provided to children in the classroom.** The 2016 Education Sector Analysis (ESA) notes “high rates of overage enrollment at all levels of education” and that, despite the stated effort to ensure at-age enrollment, “approximately 40 percent of primary school students are more than three years older than the appropriate age for their grade.” The overage problem emerges in the early grades and persists throughout all education levels. The proportion of students who are one or more years older than the correct grade is high across all grades (Figure 1), with ECE, grade 1 and grade 7 exhibiting the highest proportion of overage students.

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The Getting to Best in Education (G2B) Project is addressing some critical challenges at the ECE and primary levels. The G2B Project is funded by a GPE grant in the amount of US$11.07 million and aims to: (i) improve equitable access to early childhood education, teacher quality in ECE and primary education in targeted counties; and, strengthen national school accountability systems. The Project has five components focused on ECE, upgrading teacher qualifications and management, improving school-based management and resources (through school grants and training) and testing the results-based model of service delivery and targets six counties. The Project is in the second year of implementation and the ratings for progress towards achievement of the PDO and overall implementation progress are moderately satisfactory given progress on school grants and teacher training activities. ECE school grants were disbursed to approximately 500 schools for the first time in January 2020 and ECE and primary school teacher trainings have commenced towards the target of training 700 ECE and 700 primary teachers to meet the Certificate qualification by the time the project closes in June 2022.

Investing in early learning can advance Liberia’s Pro-Poor Agenda. Participation in early childhood education (ECE) improves cognitive development and increases school readiness. Low levels of school readiness lead to costly inefficiencies in the education system, as disadvantaged and under-prepared children are more likely to repeat grades and drop out of school before completing the primary cycle.

Many young children, especially in the poorest areas of Liberia, cannot access quality ECE, while children who do have access are not enrolled in their age-appropriate grade. This phenomenon is most acute in the poor rural counties targeted by the project and has resulted in a high level of inefficiency in the education sector. Children who are overage are more likely to repeat grades, drop out of school and not complete basic education. Further, overage ECE students block enrolment of correctly aged children and present pedagogical challenges in delivering an appropriate play-based curriculum. There are several supply-side and demand-side challenges contributing towards this phenomenon.

On the supply-side, distance to schools, overcrowding and poor learning environment in schools are key contributing factors. Many children, particularly those from the lowest income quintiles, have to travel long distances to access ECE. Further, many schools do not have adequate
classrooms or water and sanitation facilities. The most disadvantaged counties have high SCRs and a lower proportion of well-built disaster-resistant classrooms. The lack of clean water and decent latrines increases the risk of ill-health and absenteeism.

**ECE teachers lack the necessary teaching and learning materials.** Most ECE classrooms do not have age-appropriate early grade reading books and 83 percent of teachers do not have copies of the ECE curriculum. When combined with a high proportion of overage students, most teachers are not able to deliver quality ECE. Recent Early Learning Systems Research found that “teaching is mainly done through rote and drilling” and “the national ECE curriculum…is not used in most classrooms.”

**Many ECE teachers do not meet the basic qualifications and lack the pedagogical skills they need to effectively deliver ECE especially in a multi-age group classroom.** Further, the STRs remain high, especially in the South-East region of the country.

**The problem of overage enrollment at the ECE level is not unique to Liberia.** Over-age challenges and exploring feasible policy options is a common feature across countries that have experienced prolonged conflict, contend with large displaced populations and/or continue to navigate severe education development similar to Liberia’s education sector challenges. Liberia, nonetheless, has exceedingly high proportions of overage children compared to regional and African peers. In comparison with similar post-conflict countries (for example, Cote D’Ivoire), Liberia’s overage rates are more than four times greater at the primary level. Liberia ranks below South Sudan, a country that is still in a state of protracted instability. According to available data, Liberia has one of the highest overage rates at the primary level.

**Overview of Project Potential Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts**

It is expected that much of the civil works will be carried out on pre-existing school premises, so the impacts on the natural environment will be very limited with respect to site clearing for construction works. However, extraction of local materials such as sand, gravel, water, timber, etc., especially in rural areas, may adversely affect community resources as well degrade

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sensitive natural ecosystems if not managed properly. Proposed rehabilitation and construction of water and sanitation facilities including latrines, wells, and handwashing facilities have the potential to expose facility users and communities to unintended public health risks. Improper siting of these infrastructures can lead to pollution of groundwater resources and transmission of waterborne diseases. The project also has the potential to attract workers from outside project communities. Rural communities where some of the proposed works will be executed generally lack skilled labor. So, the potential for labor influx and its associated environmental impacts and risks will need to be managed.

**Water Contamination:** Proposed rehabilitation and construction of water and sanitation facilities including latrines, wells, and handwashing facilities have the potential to expose facility users and communities to unintended public health risks. Improper siting of these infrastructures can lead to pollution of groundwater resources and transmission of waterborne diseases.

Given the potential health risks that will likely stem from water contamminations, the project will be required to identify the locations of latrines, wells, handwashing facilities and determine how siting of these infrastructures in the proximity of these facilities can lead to pollution of groundwater resources and transmission of waterborne diseases. The identifications of these facilities, the associated risks and impact assessment shall be carried out under ESS4 before the start of the project and the result shall be used to craft mitigation measures.

**Labor Influx:** The project also has the potential to attract workers from outside project communities. Rural communities where some of the proposed works will be executed generally lack skilled labor. The influx may increase a) the prevalence of GBV, b) commercial sex workers, c) the spread of STDs and, d) pressure on and put stress on scarce community resources. Therefore, the potential for labor influx and its associated social impacts and risks will need to be mitigated and managed.

In order to address potential risks and impacts associated with labor influx, the construction constructor and the supervision consultant shall be required to: i) sensitized their workers on acceptable code of conduct and desirable interactions with local communities, ii) provide STDs prevention awareness campaign, iii) require their workers to sign a CoC before commencing work with the project, iv) clearly state to the their workers – both in their CoC and verbally – that the
The project has zero tolerance to GBV related incidents, v) have standard time for opening and close staging sites and workers camps requires every visitor to sign visitors log, vi)ensure a separate workers’ GRM and vii) identify community resources on which labor influx will likely put pressure on, if any.

**Exclusion:** Access to school facilities may pose challenges to most vulnerable students if the project design failed to follow the universal design requirements of the WB. For example, it will be difficult for a disable student or his/her parents to access classrooms, latrine and water facilities if these facilities don’t adopt disable friendly designs such as the provision of ramp access; it’ll be difficult for a female student to share latrine facilities with boys when especially most of the students are overage students; it’ll be difficult to enroll in ECE program offered by the project for a student who are from poor family and those with households living far from targeted schools; it may challenging for disadvantaged students to access schools where enrollment will likely is skewed because of the students’ family socio-economic status.

While addressing the risk of potential exclusion, the project shall be required to undertake “Rapid Social Impact Assessment” prior to project implementation. The RSA shall be focused on ‘exclusion dimension data collection” in targeted schools with main focus on disability and vulnerability risks of the project as discussed in the above paragraph. The study shall provide inclusive approach through which the project will be required integrate the need of disadvantaged/vulnerable people into the design of classrooms, latrines and water facilities in targeted schools.

**Involuntary Resettlement and Access Restriction:** Given that school facilities will be constructed within existing schools’ premises, major land acquisition is very unlikely. However, if land acquisition is required or access restriction is imposed, it is likely that Project Affected Persons (PAPs) will likely experience some degree of hardship including loss of full or partial structures, loss of means of income/livelihoods and, access to natural resources.

The project will be encouraged to avoid and minimize land take through project design considerations under subcomponent 1.1. Land shall be undertaken when the land take cannot be avoided or minimized. Once it is determined that land will be required, site specific screening exercise will be undertaken to determine the magnitude of impact of the land take, if any. The
exercise will lead to identification of assets to be likely impacted by the sub project. Upon developing and determining the list/inventory of assets to be impacted, PAPs will be consulted and shall be informed on their rights and choices. Where it become necessary to acquire land for advancing subcomponents’ 1.1 activities, PAPs will be compensated for the lost assets and loss of livelihoods at “full replacement cost.’ Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) shall be established and operationalized to handle complaints from affected parties. The RPF shall guide the preparation of the RAP(s).

The Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF)

This ESMF sets out a mechanism for the assessment of the environmental and social risks and impacts of all sub-projects; identifies the generic impacts; and proposes mitigation, and monitoring and institutional measures to be taken during implementation and operation of the project to avoid, minimize or offset adverse environmental and social impacts. It also defines the procedures for conducting Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAS) and preparing Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs).

Environmental and Social Management Procedures

Environmental and social screening will be undertaken for each activity of the project. The aims of the screening are 1) to determine the nature and the extent of the anticipated adverse environmental and social impacts; 2) to define and develop the most appropriate ESS plans and mitigation measures, depending on the nature and extent of these impacts; and 3) to implement appropriate mitigation measures.

ESMF Implementation Structure

The Ministry of Education will serve as the main implementation agency to ensure the Project achieves expected results. However, the day-to-day operations will be delegated, by MoE, to a Project Delivery Team (PDT) dedicated exclusively to the project. This team will be embedded in MoE, reporting to the Department of Planning and will liaise with entities inside and outside the Ministry to deliver project results. The Project Delivery Team will have overall responsibility for the ESMF Implementation. With the inclusion of the this project to its portfolio, the PDT intends
to hire Environmental and Social Specialists to oversee the overall implementation of the ESMF and other project ESSs including the RPF. At county level, a designated project staff will carry out the day-to-day implementation and monitoring of safeguard instruments.

**Grievance Redress Mechanism**

The Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) will provide an effective avenue for expressing concerns and achieving remedies for communities. The goal is to promote a mutually constructive relationship and enhance the achievement of project development objectives. The GRM is to ensure that complaints are directed and expeditiously addressed by the relevant agencies which is to enhance responsiveness and accountability. The GRM will operate at several levels including at community/village level, district and county level, and at the level of the Project Delivery Team. At the community, district and county levels, the GRM will strive not develop parallel structures but make use of existing and locally recognized grievance redress systems.

**ESMF Budget**

An indicative budget for ESMF implementation has been developed. The indicative budget covers several activities, including cost of environmental and social safeguard awareness and sensitization for project communities, capacity building for relevant project staff, subproject screening and preparation of subproject ESMPs, monitoring activities, and environmental audits. The total budget is two hundred and fifty thousand United States Dollars ($250,000.00).

**Consultation of Stakeholders**

The preparation of the ESMF was participatory as key relevant stakeholders were consulted (for examples EPA, LLA, MoE, MIA, MPW, affected counties Legislative Caucus, etc.) and they provided meaningful inputs to the project and ESMF design. In addition, the PDT Environmental and Social Specialists, in collaboration with other relevant MOE Staff, will visit the selected sites for the 18 ECE classrooms (3 classrooms are to be constructed per site for a total of 54 classrooms) in 18 districts to assess current condition and potential risk they (the sites) pose.

The main outcomes of the project preparation consultations were the need to involve stakeholders in project implementation and allow county authorities and community elders to be involved in the
decision making on project sites to avoid confusion with communities and claim for property. The Ministry of Education was already proactive on these as all project sites selections were driven first by data using agreed criteria which include student-classroom ratio (SCR) and student-teacher ratio (STR), and then working with the local structure and relevant authorities.

Regarding social impact, the project is likely to generate inequity if access to ECEs’ school facilities are not managed properly and if accountability and transparency are weak in participating school managements. Initial screening of project’s likely impacts indicated that some of the activities will have the potential to generate unintended social risks and impacts that will likely result as results of: i) disabled unfriendly classrooms and school facilities, ii) lack of disaggregated latrine facilities for girls and boys, iii) discrimination in accessing schools (between poor and reach children), iv) distance from the location of students village or household location to the school, v) denial to enroll in school because of birth certificate requirements or other documents and, v) social stigmas related to age (overage enrollment).

Throughout project implementation key stakeholders, including the 18 PTAs at the selected sites, will continue to be consulted to ensure that environmental and social risks are being properly monitored and to enable all those potentially benefiting from or impacted by the project to voice their concerns in addition to using the Grievance Redress Mechanism. In addition, the PDT, which will include Environmental and Social specialists as consultants, will visit the 18 selected sites throughout project implementation to ensure that the site supervisors and contractors are following the COCs and also abiding by the agreed implementation mechanisms agreed and detailed in the ESMP as well as the project’s PIM.

**ESMF Monitoring and Evaluation**

The project’s ESMF monitoring system will ensure that identified environmental and social mitigation measures are appropriate and effectively implemented for producing the anticipated results; any additional impacts not identified in the analysis of the potential environmental and social impacts of the rehabilitation and/ or construction of facilities are captured as early as possible and are modified, discontinued or replaced if they prove to be inadequate. It will include:
(i) the elements to be monitored; (ii) monitoring methods and tools; (iii) the responsibilities for monitoring and reporting; and (iv) the periodicity of monitoring.
1 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background
Since the end of the civil war, the Government has worked to rebuild the public education system with the aim of expanding access to education for all. In 2017, building on achievements and lessons of the previous decade, the Government developed a strategy focused on improving the equity, quality, and relevance of teaching and student learning. This strategy is articulated through nine priorities outlined in the Getting to Best in Education Sector Plan 2017–2021 (G2B-ESP).8

Despite these achievements, the education sector still faces many challenges. The most significant include (a) low learning outcomes; (b) overage enrollment at the ECE and primary education levels; (c) disparities in access and completion at the basic education level; (d) inadequately trained and inequitable distribution of teachers; and (e) inadequate management and accountability systems at the central and school levels.9

1.2 Project Description
The PDO of the LLFP is to improve equitable access to and enhance the quality of Early Childhood Education (ECE) and primary education services in targeted counties with system accountability improvement.

1.2 Project Beneficiaries
The primary beneficiaries are ECE students in the 6 targeted counties (approximately 40,000) as well as those targeted by the accelerated learning program (5,600 students) and ECE classroom construction (approximately 2,538 students). Additional beneficiaries include the 300 accelerated learning program teachers and principals to be trained under the project.

8 The G2B-ESP is based on the Liberia Education Sector Analysis (ESA), a comprehensive review and evidence-based analysis of the education sector from approximately 2000 till 2015. The G2B-ESP includes an implementation plan outlining roles and responsibilities for central, ministerial, and decentralized education administration.
1.3. Project Components

The project consists of the following three components: (i) improving the quality of and access to ECE services in targeted counties; (ii) improving learning outcomes through increased equity, efficiency and accountability; and (iii) strengthening project management and sector support and coordination.

1.3.1 Component 1: Improving the quality of and access to ECE in targeted counties (US$3.0 million)

This component aims to strengthen ECE foundations in targeted disadvantaged counties, in alignment with the G2B-ESP’s ECE objectives. To meet the component objective, three sub-
components will be financed: (i) construction of ECE classrooms, latrines and water systems; (ii) provision of ECE TLMs; and (iii) accelerated education for overage students at the ECE level.

**Sub-component 1.1: Construction of ECE classrooms, latrines and water systems (US$1.669 million)**

This sub-component will address a priority need identified in the ESP for additional ECE classrooms and water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) facilities in schools with overcrowding or which lack ECE infrastructure. The sub-component aims to reduce ECE overcrowding and improve infrastructure quality at 18 school sites each of which will receive a package of three ECE classrooms (one per ECE grade), furnishings and basic equipment, one latrine (consisting of four age-appropriate toilets) and one water system. The 18 schools are also benefiting from the placement of qualified ECE teachers under the G2B Project and have been assessed as having adequate land and topography, no land tenure issues and the necessary population density to justify additional classrooms.

The Government recognizes that construction of additional classrooms and WASH facilities can help to address inequities in ECE provision and reduce overcrowding as well as complement the COVID-19 response. The proposed project, through this sub-component, aims to reduce overcrowding in ECE, reduce supply-side barriers to ECE services and contribute to the achievement of national targets in the G2B-ESP including the construction of additional ECE classrooms in areas of greatest need. This sub-component complements the G2B Project which provides annual grants to ECE schools to improve access to ECE and quality of ECE, primarily through reducing ECE school fees and providing resources for minor infrastructure improvements, materials and activities to support ECE students.

This sub-component will also benefit from a National School Infrastructure Strategy (NSIS) that is being supported through the IDA-financed IRISE Project. The NSIS will include design standards, drawings and specifications for all education levels including ECE and primary schools. The NSIS will establish norms and standards for future school construction in the country. The construction under this sub-component will adhere to the NSIS and will use a centralized
procurement approach where the MOE will manage all of the procurement processes at the central level.

**Sub-component 1.2: Provision of ECE teaching and learning materials (US$0.48 million)**
The objective of sub-component 1.2 is to increase access to ECE TLMs in the six targeted counties. This sub-component addresses the widespread lack of curriculum materials for play-based learning and further enhances the impact of the ECE grants under the G2B Project. Teachers’ guides, supplementary ECE reading books, and assorted classroom learning aid materials for pretend play, sensory play, blocks play, reading and counting, will be distributed across the same schools receiving school grants under the G2B Project. The TLMs have already been developed under the leadership of the MOE through Open Society Initiative for West Africa (OSIWA)- and United States’ Agency for International Development (USAID)-funded programs. The TLMs created through these programs are available through Creative Commons as open source materials. The project will also procure and distribute student activity books, early grade readers, picture books and math manipulatives to support the implementation of the teacher planners and ensure every ECE classroom in the six counties has an adequate library of graded and contextualized reading books. Newly qualified teachers trained through the G2B project will be trained in the use of the teacher planners and reading materials.

To enable greater accessibility and penetration, a free TLM app will be adopted along with an online TLM platform to enable backend app support and maintenance. A new app will not be created as it is easier and more efficient to use one of the existing, proven apps such as Bloom Reader, Worldreader, Let’s Read etc. Bloom Reader is the most accessible as it allows audio and sign language and does not require internet while being accessible from any device (mobile phones, computers or tablets). A decision on which app to use will be made during project appraisal.

**Sub-component 1.3: Accelerated education for overage students (US$0.9 million)**
This sub-component will support the MOE’s plans to expand its accelerated learning program (ALP) for overage ECE students to promote age-appropriate enrollment. This activity is aligned with the USAID-funded Accelerated Quality Education (AQE) Program which operates in 6 other
counties, avoiding implementation in the same schools. This sub-component will strengthen the impact of the ECE school grants and ECE teacher training under the G2B Project and contribute to the achievement of national targets for reaching and addressing the learning needs of overage students.

One hundred public schools in five districts in three counties will be expected to run Level 1 ALP classes for 5,600 overage ECE students during the academic year. Schools in these districts will receive the ALP Level 1 package for 5,600 overage students. This will complement the G2B project ECE school grants to reduce the proportion of overage students in ECE. MOE expects two cohorts of approximately 2,300 overage ECE students to transition to Grade 3 in the second and third year of the proposed project’s implementation, enabling space for at-age students to enroll. Students will complete a final assessment and receive a Level 1 certificate. On passing the assessment for Level 1, overage ECE students will transition to Grade 3.

MOE will coordinate trainings for ALP Master Trainers and teachers. The MOE will conduct a five-day training-of-trainers’ session with 10 Master Trainers (two per district plus two County Alternative Education Supervisors) using the recently updated ALP materials produced by the USAID-funded AQE project. Master Trainers will be the District AE Coordinator and retired teachers and principals. Due to the age of the ECE students, the accelerated program will use ALP Level 1 (equivalent to Grades 1 and 2). Each teacher contracted under the ALP program will receive the ALP Level 1 teacher manual and each school will receive student workbooks, stationery and a mobile library box of reading books. All materials have already been developed by MOE and AQE. ALP Schools will have the flexibility to conduct classes during regular class time, after school or on weekends. The AQE TLMs will be printed in advance of in-service teacher training in each district. AQE-trained teachers will receive a monthly stipend of US$50 by mobile money for the additional workload. When schools re-open, the MOE will coordinate with the school feeding programs to ensure targeted schools receive school feeding support, if necessary, given that many children are not receiving meals at home and food insecurity remains a major concern. All targeted beneficiaries under this sub-component, estimated at 5,600 students during the life of the project, will be assessed annually. All activities under this sub-component will be coordinated with the EiETWG to ensure activities complement the COVID-19 response.
The implementation of Component 1 will be under the authority of the Minister’s Office, the Department of Planning, Research and Development and the Department of Administration. Implementation of sub-component 1.1 will be under the joint authority of the Division of Physical Environment under the Bureau of Planning, Research and Development and the Ministry of Public Works (MPW) in coordination with the Bureau of Early Childhood Education. Sub-component 1.2 will benefit from the leadership and oversight of the Bureau of Early Childhood Education in coordination with the Center of Excellence for Curriculum Development and Textbook Research. Implementation of sub-component 1.3 will be under the authority of the Division of Alternative Education (AE). Master Trainers under sub-component 1.3 will conduct at least six monitoring and support visits to their schools during the academic year and will, in turn, be supported by quarterly visits from central office staff.

1.3.2. Component 2: Improving learning outcomes through increased equity, efficiency and accountability (US$1.77 million)

Component 2 provides financing through three PBCs (formerly known as DLIs) as mandated by the GPE and known as the variable part allocation. The selected PBCs, aligned with the DLIs under the G2B Project, to incentivize improvements in equity, efficiency and learning outcomes in the education system PBCs (referred to as DLIs under the G2B Project). PBC 1 (equity) aims to increase the proportion of qualified ECE and primary teachers in the targeted counties by incentivizing the deployment of additional qualified teachers, teacher certification and replacement of unqualified or absent teachers. PBC 2 (efficiency) aims to improve the system of teacher payroll management by teachers linking teacher certification to teachers’ biometric National ID. PBC 3 (learning outcomes) aims to further the implementation of a national primary student learning assessment for Grade 3 and 6.

For the equity PBC, inequalities in teacher deployment and difficulties in adding teachers to the payroll are persistent challenges. The proposed PBC constitutes a stretch for the MOE which will require capacity improvements at the central and sub-national levels to implement. Verifying the equity PBC will require annual data on teacher numbers and qualifications, which will strengthen the requirement for regular school monitoring and the annual school census. Overall, if the MOE
achieves the scaled-up target, it will increase the proportion of qualified ECE and primary teachers from 45.77 percent (2015/16) to 70 percent (2021/22) in the six targeted counties which is above the national average (58 percent in 2015/16). This is expected to have a positive impact on teaching and learning and reduce the inequitable distribution of qualified teachers.

Under the G2B project, the efficiency PBC (formerly DLI) aimed to address inefficiencies in the teacher payroll system. DLI 2.1 under the G2B project incentivizes the annual publication of a list of teachers on the Government payroll to improve transparency and teacher payroll management. DLI 2.2 under the G2B Project targets the removal of functionally illiterate teachers from the workforce who had been identified through a national verification and testing program in an effort to reduce inefficiencies associated with employing illiterate teachers. The verification exercise also discovered widespread problems with the authenticity of teacher qualification certificates. IVA verification for years 1 and 2 for the DLIs under G2B are expected by June 30, 2020.

To further improve the quality of the teaching workforce and reduce inefficiencies associated with having falsely qualified teachers on the public payroll, the project does the following. In 2020/21 (year 1 of proposed LLF implementation), the MOE will be rewarded for establishing a secure teacher certification system (US$220,000). Activities will include a system for producing (and reprinting) unique biometric certificates. In 2021/22 (year 2 of proposed LLF implementation), the system will be implemented through biometric certification of all teacher trainees (US$350,000). These two targets represent a transformative change for the teacher management system and are appropriate for results-based financing because they require strong local ownership. The process and output targets are considered to be stretch targets due to constraints in human and organizational capacity identified in the Education Sector Analysis. Achieving the targets would represent important steps to securing previous gains in workforce reform and ensure more efficient use of limited payroll and teacher education budgets.

Disbursement under PBC 3 is contingent on piloting and implementing a national primary student learning assessment system currently financed by the under G2B Project. The LLF Project will reward the implementation and publication of an additional national Grade 3 and 6 student assessment in English and Mathematics in 2021/22 with US$500,000 disbursed for achieving the
target. This will further institutionalize the practice of conducting and publishing national student assessments.

1.3.3. Component 3: Strengthening project management and sector support and coordination (US$0.7 million)

Key project management and sector coordination activities are described as sub-components. These subcomponents will cover operational cost for managing new activities, additional IVA and PFMU cost, additional school and community communication and two further JESRs. In addition to providing targeted support to bureau teams critical to project implementation, the project will finance expert consultants, as needed, to support effective project implementation. The GA supervision costs will cover implementation support. This includes (including project M&E, review of IVA reports, safeguards and fiduciary oversight) and knowledge sharing by the World Bank as the designated GA.
2. THE ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT FRAMEWORK (ESMF)

2.1 ESMF Justification

Locations and other details of the subprojects are yet to be finalized at the time the project is being prepared for presentation to the Bank. In view of this, the Environmental and Social Framework (ESF) requires project impacts (environmental and social) to be assessed. However, given the nature of this project where site-and activity-specific impacts cannot be determined prior to the decision meeting, as required, a framework approach has become an acceptable way of meeting Environmental Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) requirements for project preparation and approval, and subsequently, Environmental and Social Impact Assessment/Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESIA/ESMP) will be prepared and implemented during project implementation. The preparation of site-specific plans (ESIA/ESMP) will be undertaken prior to the commencement of civil works. The Environmental and Social Management Framework (ESMF) sets out a mechanism for the assessment of the environmental and social impacts of all program sub-projects, and identifies in general the generic impacts, and proposes mitigation, monitoring and institutional measures to be taken during implementation and operation of the program to avoid, minimize or offset adverse environmental and social impacts. It also defines the procedures for conducting/preparing Environmental and Social Impact Assessments (ESIAs) and/or Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs) as and when required.

2.2 Purpose of the ESMF

Cognizant that specific sub-projects to be implemented using GPE-G2B project funds will only be fully identified after completion of the Project Appraisal Document (PAD), an ESMF is deemed necessary to give an overall guide on how potential environmental and social issues related to the project are to be addressed. Therefore, this ESMF is designed to ensure that:

I. Clear procedures and methodologies for the environmental and social assessment are established;
II. Expected key environmental and social risks and impacts relative to the project are flagged through subsequent preparatory studies;

III. Mitigation measures to avoid and or minimize the potential environmental and social risks/impacts, are adequately designed and implemented in line with the relevant laws of Liberia and the World Bank’s ESF

IV. Appropriate reporting procedures for managing and monitoring environmental and social concerns related to project interventions are developed and used;

V. Appropriate roles and responsibilities of Institutions relevant to the project are clearly outlined;

VI. Training, capacity building and technical assistance needed to successfully implement the provisions of the ESMF are well-known and provided.

The future implementation of GPE-G2B sub-projects to be funded will be subject to the processes defined in this ESMF. Thus, this ESMF further defines how safeguards will be taken into account and managed for all project activities that may have ESF/ESSs including feasibility studies. During project implementation, project activities with potential safeguard issues will be screened to determine the scope and types of environmental and social risks and impacts that would be required. Depending on the activities, appropriate environmental and social assessments will be undertaken in consultations with the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of Liberia, the Ministry of Gender, Children and Social Protection (MGCSP) and the World Bank (WB).

2.3 ESMF Preparation and Methodologies
As shown in figure 2 below and Annex 2 (Methodology Framework and Chance Funds Procedure), the preparation of the ESMF was participatory as key relevant stakeholders were consulted including institutions with direct regulatory oversight on civil works decisions in communities for examples EPA, LLA, MoE, MIA, MPW etc.) in addition to education officers in project targeted counties, school administrators, local authorities and civil society organizations in the targeted communities and higher level decision makers as described in the Stakeholders’ Engagement Plan (SEP). They provided meaningful inputs to the project and ESMF design. In addition, the Environmental and Social Specialists will, during the appraisal phase, visit the eighteen selected sites for construction under the project to assess current condition with potential risks and impacts.
on sight. All future consultations under the project will be guided by the Stakeholders Engagement Plan (SEP)
The development of this ESMF is squarely the doing of the MoE staff with support from the LLF Project Delivery Team. A work plan and schedule, to develop this ESMF, were presented, discussed, adjusted and agreed upon by the Ministry’s Senior Management Team (SMT). Next, the methodology, modalities and contents for carrying out the assignment including undertaking initial consultations with the client were drafted, discussed and agreed to. The SMT agreed to the roles and responsibilities of all in drafting the ESMF.

2.4 Analysis of the Data, Information and Preparation of the Report
The Ministry has gathered information to produce the ESMF document. In summary, the Ministry collected and analyzed baseline information concerning:

- LLFP components as seen in the PAD;
- Relevant existing environmental and social policies, laws, and regulations relative to the project;
- Key environmental and social risks and impacts associated with the proposed project activities;
- Environmental and social risks and impacts mitigation measures;
Key stakeholder involvement and their roles and responsibilities;
Technical studies required (project briefs for new constructions); and
Available information from field visits.

3 POLICY, LEGAL AND INSTITUTIONAL FRAMEWORKS
In Liberia, the protection of the environment constitutes a priority axis of the sustainable development policy. The GPE-G2B Project will strictly adhere to, and follow the policy, legal and regulatory frameworks established by the EPA and relevant legal institutions. In this section, the national policies, regulations, procedures and legal provisions relating to the environment and social issues in development interventions in Liberia are reviewed and presented. The revision was made against the ESF as well as applicable Liberian laws/policies as summarized below.

3.1 Policy Framework
From the review of literature and consultation with key stakeholders, the relevant national and WB policies have been identified as essential related to the proposed project include the following:

- Land Rights Policy, 2013;
- Land Rights Act, 2018;
- Land Administration Policy, 2015;
- National Environmental Policy, 2003;
- National Environmental and Occupational Health Policy, 2010
- WBG ESF
- ESSs
- Guidelines for Safe School Environments in the Coronavirus (Covid-19) Outbreak in Liberia
- WHO Guidelines on Water, sanitation, hygiene, and waste management for the COVID-19 virus
- WHO Advice on the use of masks in the context of COVID-19

I. National Environment Policy of Liberia (2003): The goal of this policy is to ensure long-term economic prosperity of Liberia through sustainable social and economic development
which enhances sustainable environmental quality and resource productivity on a long-term basis that meets the requirements of the present generation without endangering the potential of future generations to meet their own needs. The policy calls for the need to maintain ecosystems and ecological processes essential for the functioning of the biosphere; ensuring sound management of the natural resources and the environment; adequately protecting human, flora, fauna, their biological communities and habitats against harmful impacts, and to preserve biological diversity; integrate environmental considerations in sector and socio-economic planning at all levels; throughout the nation; and seeking common solutions to environmental problems at regional and international levels.

II. **National Environmental and Occupational Health Policy, 2010**: The main objectives of the National Environmental and Occupational Health Policy are: a) **Environmental Health**: To develop new guidelines/standards and strengthen existing guidelines/standards in Basic sanitation, water quality control, food safety, vector control, port health, human habitat, waste management, communicable disease control for the protection and promotion of public health services in Liberia, in collaboration with key stakeholders. b) **Occupational Health**: To assess the working conditions in major workplaces, establish data base, plan and implement workers’ wellness programs, for the purpose of protecting and promoting health in the workplace for all workers in Liberia, ii) To provide guidelines and standards for the effective implementation and rendering of occupational health services.

III. **Land Administration Policy, 2015**: This policy presents a framework for land administration in Liberia with a focus on the main features of good land administration and those pertaining to the identification, ownership, use, and valuation of land, as well as the identification of land and the determination of rights to the land.

the Government transfers such land, and how the Government acquires land, especially through the exercise of eminent domain (i.e. forced acquisition). With respect to the new category of Customary Land, there are several significant recommendations: Customary Land and Private Land are equally protected; and communities will self-define, be issued a deed, establish a legal entity, and strengthen their governance arrangements to make them fully representative and accountable. The GoL also undertakes to support communities in implementing these recommendations. Finally, several Private Land issues are detailed, which include loss of ownership, leases, easements, and adverse possession.

V. **Land Administration Policy, 2015**

The framework for Land Administration is presented in policy. The policy focuses on the main features of good land administration and those pertaining to the identification, ownership, use, and valuation of land.

I. **The World Bank environmental, health, and safety (EHS) general guidelines** will be applied as required by their respective policies and standards. The EHS guidelines contain the performance levels and measures that are generally considered to be achievable in new facilities by existing technology at reasonable costs. Should these policies be applied during project implementation, the MOE will establish site-specific targets, with an appropriate timetable for achieving them. We do not envisage conflict in these policies relative to the Liberia’s policies. However, should such thing occur, the project will prepare a detailed justification for any presented alternatives that is needed as part of the site-specific environmental assessment.

II. **Guidelines for Safe School Environments in the Coronavirus (Covid-19) Outbreak in Liberia**: These guidelines are for safe school environments and define the minimum requirements that must be in place in every school (Public and Private) to ensure that, from a health, water, sanitation and hygiene point of view, the school is a safe place for all students and school personnel.
III. **WHO Guidelines on Water, sanitation, hygiene, and waste management for the COVID-19 virus:** This interim guidance supplements the infection prevention and control (IPC) documents by summarizing WHO guidance on water, sanitation and health-care waste relevant to viruses, including coronaviruses. It is intended for water and sanitation practitioners and providers, and health-care providers who want to know more about WASH risks and practices.

IV. **WHO Advice on the use of masks in the context of COVID-19:** This guidance includes updated scientific evidence relevant to the use of masks for preventing transmission of COVID-19 as well as practical considerations. It provides guidance to decision makers, public health and IPC professionals, health care managers, and health workers on the use of medical and non-medical masks in health care (including long-term care and residential) settings, for the general public, and during home care. It will be revised and updated as more information and data become available.

3.2 Legal Framework
The following legal instruments are relevant to guide the implementation and monitoring of the GPE-G2B Project:

The Constitution of the Republic of Liberia, 1986. This is the organic law of the nation and it affects everyone with no exception. Therefore, the project will be covered under the constitution.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Act, 2002. This is the national body responsible for environmental issues. As the project deals with the environment, this national body will be critical for implementation. From time to time construction firms hired under the project will be guided by EPA regulations.

Environment Protection and Management Law, 2003. The project will be required to comply with the Environment and Management Law of Liberia. This law has environmental management provisions that the project will be guided by.

Land Commission Act, 2010. This commission will assist the project in the discussion and resolution of issues that may arise regarding land ownership and dispute.
Education Reform Act of 2011. The education law will be used as a guiding tool in setting up the different provisions of the project to ensure compliance. The education law makes provision for setting up class size, category of schools and teacher qualification. All these are part of the project activities.

I. The Constitution of Liberia 1986: provides that, the Republic shall, consistent with the principles of individual freedom and social justice enshrined in the Constitution, manage the national economy and the natural resources of Liberia; Specifically, Article 7 of Chapter 11 states “The Republic shall, consistent with the principles of individual freedom and social justice enshrined in the constitution, manage the natural economy and natural resources of Liberia in such manner as shall ensure maximum possible participation of Liberian citizens under conditions of equality as to advance the general welfare of the Liberian people and the economic development of Liberia”. Therefore, it calls for natural resources protection and gives the right to every Liberian to fully participate in management of these resources. There are no specific requirements to be fulfilled by the project in terms of instruments to be prepared or permit to be obtained.

II. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Act, 2003: The EPA Act creates the Agency and gives it the authority for the management of the environment to co-ordinate, monitor, and supervise all activities in the protection of the environment and sustainable use of natural resources. The functions of the Agency include to:

- Review project documents for donor-sponsored environment-related projects to ensure and/or recommend to the negotiating ministry or agency, the inclusion of strategies and activities for capacity building of nationals;
- Identify projects, activities, policies, and programs for which environmental impact assessment must be conducted under this Act;
- Build the capacity of line Ministries, authorities and organizations through the exchange of data and information, and to render advice, technical support and training in environment and national resource management so as to enable them to carry out their responsibilities effectively;
- Ensure the preservation and promotion of important historic, cultural and spiritual values of natural resources heritage and, in consultation with
indigenous authority, enhance indigenous methods for effective natural resource management;
Promote public awareness through public participation in decision making and formal and non-formal education about the protection and sustainable management of the environment, and to allow at minimal or no costs, access to environmental information and records made in connection with this Act;
Establish environmental criteria, guidelines, specifications and standards for production processes and the sustainable use of natural resources for the health and welfare of the present generation, and in order to prevent environmental degradation for the welfare of the future generations; and
Review and approve environmental impact statements and environmental impact assessment submitted in accordance with this Act.

Section 37 of the EPA Act requires project proponent or developer to conduct environmental impact assessment and obtain permit from the EPA before undertaking activities that require environmental impact assessment as defined by the EPA in its policies, guidelines, and regulations. The project will undertake new construction as well as rehabilitation activities. Therefore, this project falls under the mandatory list of projects or activities requiring an environmental impact assessment under Annex I of the Environmental Protection and Management Law of Liberia. The level of impact assessment required is not established at this stage. An EPA permit will be required prior to the commencement of proposed civil works.

III. *Environmental Protection and Management Law (EPML), 2003*: The EMPL forms the legal framework for the sustainable development, management and protection of the environment and natural resources by the EPA in partnership with relevant institutions and individuals. It guides on the management and provides information on the state of the environment of Liberia. It is the framework for formulation, reviewing, updating and harmonizing all environment-related sectoral laws.
The EPML also addresses a wide range of environmental issues including Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA), Environmental auditing and monitoring; environmental quality standards; pollution control and licensing; guidelines and standards for the management of the environment and natural resources; protection of biodiversity,
national heritage and the ozone layer amongst many others. Specifically, part III of the 2003 Law establishes a comprehensive framework for EIA, including procedures and substantive standards for the approval and rejection of projects. It also provides for public participation and procedures for appeals against EPA decisions. This project falls under the mandatory list of projects and activities requiring environmental impact assessment under Annex I EPML. Specifically, the proposed civil works fall under Building and Civil Engineering Industries subsection of Annex I. The project will therefore be subjected to the EIA process as defined by the EPA, and an EPA permit will need to be obtained prior to the commencement of the civil work activities.

IV. Land Commission Act, 2010: The Act established the Land Commission with a five-year mandate to propose, advocate and coordinate reforms of land policy, laws and programs in Liberia. The Land Commission has no adjudicatory or implementation powers. The mandate of the Land Commission extends to all land and land based natural resources, including both urban and rural land, private and public land and land devoted to residential, agricultural, industrial, commercial, forestry, conservation and any other purposes. The following were objectives to be accomplished within the five-year life span of the Commission:

- Equitable and productive access to the nation’s land, both public and private;
- Security of tenure in land and the rule of law with respect to landholdings and dealings in land;
- Effective land administration and management; and
- Investment in and development of the nation’s land resources.

There are no specific requirements to the project or permits the project will need to obtain under this Act.

3.3 Institutional Framework

Liberia has few institutions of Government whose mandate include education management and administration. These institutions are involved in the implementation of the project through
various entry points. These key government institutions are presented in table 2 along with the roles and responsibilities:

Table 3: Key Government Stakeholders and their Mandate under the Project

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Institutions</th>
<th>Mandate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Education (MoE)</td>
<td>The MoE is the implementation agency of the Developing Country Partner (DCP) and implements the project. The project will use existing structures and personnel of the MOE supported by the PDT or delegated to the PDT. Subcomponent implementation will be led by the appropriate Assistant Minister reporting to their respective Deputy Minister. The overall project will be overseen by the Senior Management Team headed by the Minister of Education. The Project Coordinator will report overall project progress at least monthly to the Senior Management Team (SMT). The SMT includes the Minister of Education (chairperson), the Deputy Ministers for Administration; Instruction; and Planning, Research and Development, all Assistant Ministers. The MOE will sign all contracts with service providers under the project and manage contracts through the Project Delivery Team established. At the local level, the project will be supported by County Education Officers (CEOs) and DEOs. DEOs and school principals are expected to play a key role in supervision and monitoring of project implementation.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Public Works (MPW)</td>
<td>The MPW will approve all drawings for civil works and issue construction licenses to works contractors under the project. The MPW is responsible for infrastructure development (road, bridges, buildings, rail way etc.) and zoning regulation in Liberia. The near lack of zoning regulation is responsible for some of the critical environmental issues such reclaiming of urban mangroves, unplanned settlements, urban flooding etc. Very few urban centers in the country is plan consistent with zoning regulations in the whole country.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ministry of Finance and Development Planning (MFDP)</td>
<td>The MFDP will sign off on Grant Agreement and oversee financial management services through its Project Financial Management Unit (PFMU). The MFDP will lead on project negotiation between the Government of Liberia and the World Bank. The MFDP leads the implementation of the National Development programs and coordinates multilateral funding support to the GoL. The ministry is the principal authority on fiscal and development planning and executing agency of GoL development programs from the fiscal stand point. The MFDP housed the Project Fund Management Unit (PFMU) which is responsible for fiduciary management of the Bank supported projects. It supports the project to prepare a consolidated work plan and budget for the project on an annual basis. The work plans and budgets will include the planned project expenditures under each component. MoE’s project management will be expected to coordinate and monitor the implementation progress against the work plan/budget.</td>
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<tr>
<td>---</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of Liberia</td>
<td>The EPA oversees the implementation of international environment related conventions.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberia Land Authority (LLA)</td>
<td>The LLA will responsible for issuing tribal certificate for construction land, land probate and deeds. The LLA will lead on dispute settlement that may arise from land acquisition. The LLA will ensure full compliance with the Liberia Land Right Act. The LLA transitioned from the Land Commission (LC) which was created in 2010 with a five-year mandate to propose, advocate, and coordinate reforms of land policy, laws, and programs in Liberia. The LLA is responsible for land management in the country. This entity is among the newest institutions created under the governance reform program of the GoL to ensure accountable leadership of the state as defines by the 1986 Constitution. The Land Right Act classified land in four categories: Public land, community land, state land and private land. Land management is among the many issues that has resulted into unsustainable resource and environmental management.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Liberia Institute for Statistics and Geo-Information Services (LISGIS)  
The LISGIS will assist in the gathering of essential population data for the project area. Creation of maps and preparation of other Geo-Information Services will be facilitated by the LISGIS under the project.

The LISGIS became an autonomous agency of the government by an act of the NTLA 70 on July 22, 2004. The LISGIS, commonly called “the Statistics House” is responsible for compilation, analysis, publication, and dissemination of all data from individuals, establishments, and geo-spatial information in the country.

Legislative Caucus  
‘The county legislative caucus will be key for political buy-in. Key decisions on land and stakeholders’ engagement will require approval of Law Makers in the counties in some instances.

3.4 Project Management/ Implementation Diagram

3.5 World Bank Environmental and Social Standards
This project is prepared under the ESF. The Environmental and Social Risk Rating of this project is moderate because its potential adverse effects on the population and on the environment are limited, site-specific, and likely reversible, and mitigation measures can be more easily designed/implemented. The project Concept-Stage Environmental and Social Review Summary (C-ESRS) was consulted during the preparation of this ESMF. The C-ESRS identified several Environmental and Social Standards (ESSs) that are relevant to this project. As summary of the relevant ESSs are provided in Table 2 below:
Table 4: Relevant E&S Standards, Explanation, and Borrower’s Requirements

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Relevant WB’s ESS</th>
<th>Explanation for relevancy</th>
<th>Borrower’s requirements</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESS1</strong> Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts</td>
<td>ESS1 is relevant because component 1 of the project includes civil works, which has the potential to generate negative impacts on the environment as well as expose workers and communities to construction related health and safety risks and hazards.</td>
<td>To satisfy the requirements of ESS1, the MOE has developed this ESMF as project activities and locations are yet to be finalized. ESMPs will be developed as and when required during project implementation and when project activities and sites are finalized.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESS2 Labor and Working Conditions</strong></td>
<td>This is relevant because the construction companies to be contracted to carry out component 1 will employ several skilled and casual laborers.</td>
<td>The project will develop a Labor Management Plan (LMP) to satisfy the requirements of ESS1.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESS3 Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention and Management</strong></td>
<td>There is a potential for air pollution from earth moving activities during construction phase. Construction related wastes, and extraction of raw materials, such as sand, aggregates, timber and water can have significant effect on the environment and local communities if not managed properly.</td>
<td>The MOE will be required to develop site-specific plans (ESIA/ESMP) to mitigate these potential impacts prior to the commencement of civil works and any other activities that could generate these potential impacts.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESS4 Community Health and Safety</strong></td>
<td>Community health and safety risks and impacts of this project are expected to be minimal. Large-scale civil works are not intended. There exists a potential for contamination of surface and groundwater supplies with infectious organisms from</td>
<td>The MOE will be required to assess project community health and safety risks during ESIA process and provide mitigation measures.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESS5 Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement</strong></td>
<td>Land Acquisition, Restrictions on Land Use and Involuntary Resettlement are not expected under this project. All civil works proposed under this project will be carried out within the premises of existing schools and on government owned land.</td>
<td>For precautionary reason, the MOE will develop a Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) that spells out overall principles and objectives of ESS 5.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESS8 Cultural Heritage</strong></td>
<td>Project activities under Component 1 will involve excavations and other changes in the physical environment. Therefore, the potential for Chance Finds exists notwithstanding the small-scale nature of the civil works.</td>
<td>Chance Finds Procedure will be incorporated in the project ESIA/ESMP.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>ESS10 Stakeholder Engagement and Information Disclosure</strong></td>
<td>The project activities will directly and indirectly affect wide range of stakeholders during pre-construction, construction and operation phases. Identification and consultation of the affected and interested parties in the early stage of project preparation and during project implementation is key to achieving project objectives.</td>
<td>The MOE will be required to develop and implement a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
4 BIOPHYSICAL AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC ENVIRONMENTS OF LIBERIA

4.1 Biophysical Environment

4.1.1 Physiography

The Republic of Liberia is located at latitudes 4°21’ N and 8°33’ N of the equator and longitudes 11°28’W and 7°32’W. As shown on figure 3 below, Liberia is bordered on the West by the Republic of Sierra Leone (299km), on the North by the Republic of Guinea (590km), on the East by the Republic of Cote d’Ivoire (778km) and on the South by the Atlantic Ocean. The Country comprises 110,000 square kilometers (43,000 sq. miles) of which 96,300 square kilometers (37,190 sq. miles) is land and 15,000 square kilometers (5,810 sq. miles). Liberia is divided into 15 counties, 136 districts arrayed within counties, and numerous clans arrayed within districts. Individual counties comprise from 4-18 districts and varying numbers of clans. The six largest counties (7,770 km²) are: Nimba County-11,551 km²; Lofa County, 9,982 km²; Gbarpolu County9,953 km²; Sinoe County 9,764 km²; Bong County-8,754.0 km²; and Grand Bassa County-7,813.7 km². Other counties range in surface area from 1,880 km² (Montserrado County) to 5,663 km² (Rivercess County).
Liberia is dominated by flat to rolling coastal plains that contain mangroves and swamps. There are six (6) major rivers in Liberia including the Mano River in the Northwest and the Cavalla in the southeast. The others are Lofa, St. Paul, St. John and Cestos River. The Cavalla River is the longest among these rivers (320 miles 515km). All of these rivers flow and empty into the Atlantic Ocean. Liberia also has several mountains with the highest being the Mount Wuteve at 4,724 ft. (1,440 m) located in Lofa County. However, Mount Nimba which peaks at 5,748 ft. (1,752 m) is shared with the Republics of Guinea and Côte d'Ivoire. The lowest point of the country is the Atlantic Ocean.

4.1.2 Climate
Liberia's climate consists of two separate climate regimes: the equatorial climate regime restricted to the southernmost part of Liberia, where rainfall occurs throughout the year, and the tropical regime dominated by the interaction of the Inter-Tropical Convergence Zone (ITCZ) and the West African Monsoon. The tropical climate of Liberia is hot and humid throughout the year with little variation in temperature (mean daytime temperatures 27°-32° C; mean nighttime temperatures 21°-24° C). In Liberia, there are distinct wet and dry seasons with most of the rainfall occurring
between late April and mid-November. Annual rainfall amounts are 4000-5000 mm along the coastal belt, declining to 1300 mm at the forest-savanna boundary in the north. The seasonal variation in rainfall has a critical influence on the vegetation. Liberia exhibits a fairly high average relative humidity throughout most of the year ranging from above 80% along the coastal belt with lower humidity in the interior portion of the country.

4.1.3 Soils
Large areas of Liberia (75%) are Ferralsols that are highly weathered soils with low fertility and low capacity to retain nutrients. They are suitable for surface farming techniques and provide valuable materials for road construction. They are well-drained with good physical structure; their deep rooting depth makes up for their relatively low water-holding capacity. Acrisols are less weathered than Ferralsols but still low in mineral nutrient reserves. The presence of a subsurface layer of clay accumulation may impede internal drainage and makes them more susceptible to erosion. These soils have high humus content and suitable for cultivation of swamp rice, with proper water management.

4.1.4 Hydrology
Liberia possesses abundant surface water and six principal watersheds: Cavalla, Cestos, Lofa, Mano, Saint John and Saint Paul rivers. Together, these basins drain approximately 65.5% of the country. The Mano and Cavalla are shared basins between Sierra Leone and Côte d’Ivoire respectively, while the Lofa, Saint John and Saint Paul drain part of Guinea. Numerous micro watersheds or sub-watersheds also exist. The internally produced renewable water resource is estimated at 200km².

4.1.5 Land Cover and Vegetation
Situated within the tropical rainforest belt of West Africa with a total land area of 9.58 million hectares, Liberia’s forests covered about 4.30 million hectares or 45 percent of the land area. Hence, 42% of West Africa’s remaining Upper Guinean tropical forest is found in Liberia.

Liberia has a small land area. The forests of Liberia account for a wide range of other environmental products and services that benefit Liberia and the rest of the world. The Country is a verdant land that is heavily forested; it has an extensive and unique biodiversity and is considered one of the 14 centers of global plant endemism which contains over 2,900 different vascular plants species (including 225 tree species), 600 bird species, 150 mammal species; and 67 reptile species.
4.2 Socio-economic Environment
4.2.1 Population

Liberia has an estimated population of 4.81 million people with between 40 to 54 percent of the population living below the poverty line. The population is growing rapidly with a fertility rate of 4.4 children per woman in 2020. More than two-thirds of the population are under the age of 35 and nearly one-half of the population live in urban areas. There are acute disparities in income, health and education outcomes between rural and urban populations, exacerbated by poor infrastructure and limited domestic investments. Severe malnutrition is also prevalent with almost one-third (32 percent) of children under five years old being stunted.

The composition of the population in the six targeted counties is presented in the table below:

Table 3: Population Distribution (including by Gender)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Targeted County</th>
<th>Total Population</th>
<th>Male</th>
<th>Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Population</td>
<td>%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Bomi</td>
<td>102,674</td>
<td>51,078</td>
<td>49.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Grand Kru,</td>
<td>70,687</td>
<td>35,070</td>
<td>49.6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Maryland,</td>
<td>165,923</td>
<td>79,915</td>
<td>48.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Rivercess</td>
<td>87,282</td>
<td>45,318</td>
<td>51.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>River Gee</td>
<td>81,522</td>
<td>41,367</td>
<td>50.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Sinoe</td>
<td>124,976</td>
<td>61,731</td>
<td>49.4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>633,064</td>
<td>314,479</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Household Income and Expenditure Survey 2016

4.2.2 Employment

Of the total 633,064 population residing in the six counties, the employment status of residents of each targeted county are classified as shown in the table below:

---

### Table 4: Employment Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Employment type</th>
<th>Bomi</th>
<th>Grand Kru</th>
<th>Maryland</th>
<th>Rivercess</th>
<th>River Gee</th>
<th>Sinoe</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Formal</td>
<td>14.2%</td>
<td>18%</td>
<td>25.2%</td>
<td>8.4%</td>
<td>13%</td>
<td>25.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Informal</td>
<td>85.8%</td>
<td>82%</td>
<td>74.8%</td>
<td>91.6%</td>
<td>87%</td>
<td>74.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Vulnerable 11</td>
<td>86.2%</td>
<td>82.6%</td>
<td>75.4%</td>
<td>92.7%</td>
<td>88.9%</td>
<td>75.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Household Income and Expenditure Survey, 2016

### 4.2.3 Education

Of the total of 183,213 students enrolled in school in the six targeted counties, school enrollment by grade level in each county is shown in the table below:

- a) early childhood,
- b) primary,
- c) junior high,
- d) senior high.

#### Table 5: Education Level

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Grade Level</th>
<th>Bomi</th>
<th>Grand Kru</th>
<th>Maryland</th>
<th>Rivercess</th>
<th>River Gee</th>
<th>Sinoe</th>
<th>Total</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Early Childhood</td>
<td>15,672</td>
<td>10,286</td>
<td>17,180</td>
<td>8,440</td>
<td>7,309</td>
<td>12,942</td>
<td>71,829</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Primary</td>
<td>15,144</td>
<td>13,631</td>
<td>24,146</td>
<td>8,969</td>
<td>11,525</td>
<td>15,299</td>
<td>88,714</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Junior High</td>
<td>3,148</td>
<td>1,544</td>
<td>5,148</td>
<td>853</td>
<td>1,999</td>
<td>2,451</td>
<td>15,143</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Senior High</td>
<td>1,821</td>
<td>401</td>
<td>3,392</td>
<td>185</td>
<td>663</td>
<td>1,065</td>
<td>7,527</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Total</td>
<td>35,785</td>
<td>25,862</td>
<td>49,866</td>
<td>18,447</td>
<td>21,496</td>
<td>31,757</td>
<td>183,213</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Source: Ministry of Education EMIS 2016/2017 School Data

### 4.2.4 Population Density

According to USAID 2013, the highest concentration of population occurs in and around coastally located Monrovia, the capital of the country, including Montserrado and nearby counties. In terms of population density, Montserrado County has 595 individuals/km², and nearby Margibi County has 78-individuals/ km², Bomi County, 44 individuals/ km², Bong County, 38 individuals/ km².

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11 According to LISGIS, vulnerable employment is related but not equal to informal employment. It captures the risk that an employee faces of running into (financial) trouble despite the fact that he or she is employed.
and Grand Bassa County, 28-individuals/ km\(^2\), which includes the seaport Buchanan. Other counties with moderate to high relative population densities include: Maryland County (59 individuals/km\(^2\)) which includes the coastal city of Harper in the extreme southeast, bordering Côte d’Ivoire; north central Nimba County (40 individuals/km\(^2\)), bordering Guinea and Côte d’Ivoire; Lofa County (72 individuals/km\(^2\)) in the west, bordering Sierra Leone; and Grand Cape Mount County (27 individuals/km\(^2\)) in the northwest, which includes the coastal city of Robertsport and borders Sierra Leone and Guinea. The remaining 6 counties have densities ≤15 individuals/km\(^2\).

4.2.5 Life Expectancy
According to the World Bank Human Capital Index (HCI) 2018, the average life expectancy at birth in Liberian is 62 years. Infant mortality is 54 deaths per 1,000 live births and, maternal mortality rate is 994 deaths per 100,000 live births (LHDS, 2013). Also, literacy rates averaged 64% nationally (HIES 2016) while 1.9% of the Liberian population age 15-49 are living with HIV (LHDS, 2013). Poverty and underdevelopment are not the only challenges. Liberia emerged from its protracted civil war as a deeply divided country, its social fabric torn by ethnicity, religion, geography, and history. There are 16 ethnic groups, and Christianity (85%), Islam (12%), and indigenous religions (3%) are practiced.

4.2.6 Size of Household Population
On average, household size is 5.6 persons, with the proportion of female-headed households varying from 5% in Bomi County to 21% in Lofa County, the area most heavily and continually affected by violence during the conflict (USAID, 2014). The effects of the conflict are evident as well in the spatial distribution of disabled people as a percentage of the population.
5.0 OVERVIEW OF PROJECT ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL RISKS AND POTENTIAL IMPACTS AND MITIGATION MEASURES

5.1 Topology of the Project Activities
Under Component 1, the project aims to (a) construct 54 ECE classrooms at 18 sites in vulnerable districts to increase access to early childhood education. The project will also construct a total of 72 toilets and 18 water facilities in these districts.

The sites on which the construction is to take place have not yet been confirmed. However, the main work that will likely be undertaken under the project as follows:
- Construction of new classrooms and other facilities at sites either owned by the Government of Liberia, or designated for MoE use by the community or local entity;
- Extension of current buildings and facilities at existing school sites; and
- Rehabilitation of old buildings and facilities, including repair of recent buildings that do not meet current standards.

5.2 Generic Positive Environmental and Social Impacts
The project will have many positive effects, which should be sustained over the long term. In general, it will help fight poverty and boost shared prosperity, as well as encourage investment in knowledge and skills in all sub-sectors of education. Promising investments will be made in regional infrastructure and economic integration, with a focus on initiatives to produce highly qualified human resources for priority growth sectors. More specifically, the project will promote awareness among all national stakeholders about the environmental and social issues of project activities and respect for the environment and key principles of sustainable development.

Potential Environmental and Social Risks

Some activities under this project, mainly sub component 1.1 may have adverse environmental and social impacts during implementation.
Since target sites will only be identified during project implementation, the Government is required to develop and disseminate an ESMF as well as Resettlement Policy Framework (RPF) to spell out distinct arrangements for addressing environmental and social issues associated with the implementation of this project, as well as arrangement for resettlement of person if required.

5.2.1. General environmental and social risks and impacts

Overall, in relation to these activities work, all the negative or harmful environmental impacts that are likely to be generated by the Project will be \textit{limited in time and space}.

➔ The activities planned under the project \textit{exclude any form of land or property acquisition or resettlement or physical displacement of populations} (works will be done in land belonging to the Government or rightfully donated (with relevant documentation presented).

Table 6: Construction of new infrastructures such as classrooms, toilets, and water systems

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components</th>
<th>Activities with potential Environmental and Social Concerns</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Component 1: Improving access to early childhood education in targeted counties</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Subcomponent 1.1:</strong> Construction of ECE classrooms</td>
<td>1. Construct a total of 54 classrooms on 18 sites in the 18 most disadvantaged districts when it comes to access to early childhood education, 2. Construct 72 gender-friendly latrines and 18 water facilities at all 18 sites</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

5.2.2 Risks or negative impacts during the pre-construction phase

During the pre-construction phase (preparation of the bidding documents), the main risk is neglect of the environmental and social aspects and their low consideration during the technical studies and / or the preparation of unsatisfactory environmental studies. This risk can be compounded if the information aspects and public participation are not taken into account.
Furthermore, site selection could include some potential environmental and social concerns and impacts: for example, in the siting of works on sections of campuses where they could conflict with adjoining land use outside the campus land, or on areas prone to soil erosion or damage. Inclusion of safeguard specifications and requirements, including project ESMF and RPF, are included in the tender package, and subsequently include environmental and social responsibilities and commitments in contracts.

Key mitigation measures for these risks will be: (i) public and stakeholder consultation during site selection and preparation and validation of studies; (ii) quality control and implementation of validation procedures for environmental studies and their dissemination; and (iii) regular supervision of the building sites by environmental experts (in addition to the control of the relevant national institutions in relation to contractual specifications.

- The effects of **climate change** will be taken into account in the choice of materials, the overall design of buildings and the technological options for construction (e.g., energy efficiency). The building will be in consonance with local climatic, environmental, and meteorological conditions and will incorporate proper ventilation and provision of sunshine, air movement, and maximum usage of daylight.

- **Location and design of the ECE classrooms** will take into account site-specific risks (such as location near gullies which are prone to flooding and erosion; near water bodies and designated forests etc.).

- **Sourcing of construction materials** will be considered, especially given the risk of contractors using non-registered quarries, illegal sand-mining or creating new quarries through illegal extractions.

- The design of the sites and latrines under project will take into account **the gender dimension**, especially in relation to the provision of a sufficient number of separate male and female washrooms (with the installation of lavatories, washbasins and urinals, etc.).

- All facilities, whether to be built or rehabilitated, will be properly designed in strict compliance with national standards for the protection and promotion of **persons with disabilities**, by removing barriers for their inclusion and improving their accessibility to physical infrastructure.
Stakeholder consultation is important. The project should ensure that all key stakeholders are identified and consulted throughout the life of the project.

5.2.3 Construction or Expansion Phase

General environmental and social impacts

Overall, in relation to these activities work, all the negative or harmful environmental impacts that are likely to be generated by the project will be limited in time and space.

➔ The activities planned under the Project exclude any form of land or property acquisition or resettlement or physical displacement of populations (works will be done in land belonging to the Government or rightfully donated (with relevant documentation presented).

Construction phase risks and impacts at the construction phase will be site-specific. Despite the fact that they are manageable and small, this phase will have low to moderate impacts and could be a source of inconvenience for workers and all those living or working near the site. Of these impacts, the most important are:

Air quality, noise, water and sanitation, waste

- Pollution and nuisance (noise, dust) due to the construction of facilities
- Occasional forms of pollution generated in construction sites by waste
- Solid and liquid waste from construction sites
- Impact of some works on sources of drinking water
- Damage to some underground networks and even temporary suspension of certain services (water, electricity, etc)
- Emissions of greenhouse gas (GHG) related to the exhaust gases of construction vehicles, as well as of factory nuisances, health risks and pollution.

Vegetation and soils

- Uprooting of trees and cutting of shrubs made necessary by certain activities, with reduction of green spaces.
- Risks of localized soil degradation, even though washout works will be limited in depth.
- Certain forms of soil erosion due to the construction activities
- Risk of soil erosion or landslides due to possible excavation work
- Risks of floods, without the adoption of soil waterproofing techniques

Hygiene, health and safety of workers, residents and users

- Accidents caused by construction machinery traffic and possible non-compliance with safety instructions.
• Risk of accidents around unreported excavations and open trenches, unmarked and poorly marked
• Safety of school staff and students due to poor organization of work sites and work areas
• Accidents of workers (scaffolding falls, misuse of equipment, electrocutions, etc.

Natural risks
• Some of the proposed developments could be affected by the risks associated with the effects of climate change (in particular, the risks associated with floods caused by heavy rains)

Risks of conflicts between the workers and local populations
• The works may have impacts on staff and students, with the likely restriction of vehicle and pedestrian traffic in the vicinity of construction sites, noise and dust related inconvenience, space congestion caused by building materials, construction and construction waste, not to mention negative impacts due to the transformation of the landscape.
• To avoid social tension, it is desirable to recruit a local workforce.
• Although it is expected that selected contractors would recruit a local workforce, it can be expected that skilled and unskilled workers may be brought in for temporary periods from outside the community. This would potentially increase risks of sexual harassment, prostitution, sexual exploitation and underage sex on vulnerable sections of the local population, in particular women and minors.

Physical cultural resources
• Some historic buildings may be affected by the work and some excavations may reveal archaeological and cultural remains.

5.2.4 Maintenance Phase
During the occupancy and maintenance phase, project activities should not pose any particular environmental or social problems. Potential negative impacts might generally be due to: inadequate design; lack of a system for the collection and transfer of waste, in particular domestic waste; a possible lack of an effective, regulatory and adapted sanitation system; lack of regular maintenance procedures; insufficient enforcement of security measures; and lack of appropriate measures for people with disabilities.
Appropriate measures of the *National Building Regulations* will be strictly respected, mainly in terms of fires or explosions, with the installation of smoke detectors, extinguishers, and alarm devices.

In compliance with national regulations, building companies working under the project will be required to *regularly monitor compliance* with safety and health standards, ensure a separate workers GRM is enforced and to periodically carry out measurements, analyses and assessments of environmental conditions and, where appropriate, undertake collective or individual protection measures to prevent damage to the safety and health of workers.

Different measures (identified in this report) will be planned to reduce the potential impacts during implementation of the various activities planned under the GPE-funded Liberia Learning Foundations Project).

Table 7: Generic Environmental and Social impacts and risks and proposed mitigation measures

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Type of Risk</th>
<th>Assessment</th>
<th>Level of risks</th>
<th>Mitigation measures</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Tendering process</td>
<td>Neglecting environmental and social issues</td>
<td>Low to moderate</td>
<td>Preparation of appropriate Terms of Reference, which will be validated by EPA and approved by the WB. All mitigation measures must be included into the contractor bid documents, and subsequently include safeguard responsibilities and commitments in contracts</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Construction</td>
<td>• Risks related to excavations; opening of trenches for laying extension and densification pipes. • Construction related health and safety risks</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td>Selection of specialized companies Conduct of prior technical studies. Preparation of detailed technical specifications for contractors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>and hazards including community health and safety (including COVID19).</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Construction wastes (pollution of water resources, air, and soil; handling and disposal of hazardous materials and wastes such as asbestos)</td>
<td>Moderate</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Prepare and implement OHS Plan as part of ESMP including COVID-19 related measures.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Contractor staff to be trained, provided with the right tools and equipment, provided with the right PPEs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Contractor to ensure the use of PPEs</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Restriction of construction site to avoid risks to community residents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Contractor to ensure proper disposal of construction wastes</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>- Contractor to ensure that hazardous materials are disposed of through EPA certified waste service providers, or at sites approved by the EPA</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

3. Demolitions or extensions of building

<p>| Safety of workers, residents and users |
| Compliance with the rules in the use of large machines for demolition of buildings |
| Preparation of detailed technical specifications for contractors during indoor demolition activities, debris much be kept in a controlled areas. Water must be sprayed to reduce dust from debris. |
| Eliminate dust during pneumatic drilling and destruction of walls by continuous vaporization of water and/or installation of dust screens on the site. |
| Maintain the surrounding environment (sidewalks, roads) free of debris, in order to minimize the amount of dust. |
| No open fire of construction/waste materials can be carried out on the site. |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>4. Soils</th>
<th>Pollution risks or accidental soil erosion (at the site and neighborhood level)</th>
<th>Low</th>
<th>Conducting preliminary geotechnical studies. Anti-erosion measures.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 5. Waters | Potential groundwater pollution and groundwater contamination (accidental spills of hydrocarbons and lubricating oils) | Low to moderate | Use of small structures allowing the flow of rainwater  
Wastewater management: Sanitary sewage disposal (or sealed and fenced pit)  
Quality control of drinking water  
Implementation of appropriate erosion and sediment control measures, such as hay bales and/or silt barriers to prevent the movement of sediments from the site and the generation of excessive turbidity in the yards, water and nearby rivers. |
| 6. Debris | Construction debris | Moderate | Correct management of debris, according to the standards established in the contractors’ ESMP-W. |
| 7. Waste | Construction site waste (during construction)  
Domestic waste (during maintenance) | Low to moderate | Adequate storage of products and waste (waterproof storage); Disposal of waste to authorized public landfills.  
Hygiene practices reinforced at construction sites and prohibition of waste in open air.  
Roadways and sites for waste collection and disposal will be identified for the main types of waste typically generated by demolition and construction activities.  
Mineral construction and demolition waste will be segregated from general waste, organic, liquid and chemical waste through on-site sorting and placed in appropriate containers. |
8. Hazardous toxic waste (including medical waste) | Management of hazardous toxic waste | Low

Construction waste will be collected and disposed of appropriately by licensed collectors.

Temporary on-site storage of any hazardous or toxic substance will be conducted in secure containers that provide compositional data, properties and handling information for those substances. Containers of hazardous substances must be placed in a leakproof container to prevent spillage and leakage.

The waste is transported by specially authorized carriers and is disposed of at a site authorized for this purpose.

Paints containing toxic ingredients or solvents or lead-based paints will not be used.

In accordance with national regulations the contractor will ensure that newly construction and/or rehabilitated facilities have sufficient infrastructure for the management and disposal of medical waste; this includes and is not limited to (i) Special facilities for separate health care waste (including “sharps instruments” for soiled instruments and human residues or liquids) from other waste disposal systems, clinical waste: yellow bags and containers; special boxes resistant to perforation; household waste (no-organic): black bags and containers (ii) appropriate storage facilities for medical waste are in place and (iii) if the activity includes institutional treatment, appropriate elimination options should be in place.
<p>| 9. Asbestos | Management of asbestos | Low | If asbestos is detected at the project site (demolition work), it must be clearly marked as hazardous substance. If possible, asbestos will be suitably contained and sealed to minimized exposure. Before removal (if such removal is necessary), asbestos will be treated with a wetting agent to minimize the amount of asbestos dust. Asbestos will be treated and eliminated by qualified and experienced professionals. If asbestos-containing materials are to be stored temporarily, waste must be safely placed in closed containers and reported in an appropriate manner. Asbestos removed will not be reused. |
| 10. GHG emissions | Exhaust gas | Low to moderate | Regular maintenance of construction machinery and vehicles |
| 11. Vegetation | Some works involved the cutting or removal or vegetation (trees, shrubs) and the reduction or destruction of green spaces. This will be minimal as construction works will be carried out mainly at pre- | Low | Establishment of a green zone Search for alternative solutions (to avoid cutting trees) Tree planting to compensate for the possible destruction of green spaces and the shortfall I terms of CO2 sequestration capacities |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>12. Air quality</th>
<th>existing facilities</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
<th>Air pollution control system (compliance with standards for exhaust emissions from construction equipment (work phase). Watering of construction sites Systematic removal of unused embankments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Negative potential impact of heavy machinery on construction sites and vehicles</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13. Atmospheric pollution</td>
<td>The sites could contribute to increase air pollution and dust generate. Increased pollution and improper storage of materials and displacement and use of materials</td>
<td>Low to moderate</td>
<td>Adoption of strict safety standards in areas close to construction sites. Use of techniques to mitigate this risk in construction sites. Organization of public awareness and information campaigns. Watering the building sites</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14. Noise Pollution</td>
<td>Increase noise and vibration (rolling stock, jackhammers, air compressors)</td>
<td>Low to moderate</td>
<td>Establishment of regular control measures of the intensity of noise and pollution Sound measurements according to NT 48.04 (ISO.1996/1) in case of complaints or perception of exceedance by controllers. Respect of working hours on construction sites Noise from constructed activities will be restricted to the schedule agreed in the permit.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
During operation, the engine covers of generators, air compressors and other mechanical equipment shall be closed and the equipment will be placed as far as possible from the residential areas.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>15. Health and safety of workers</th>
<th>Accidents in construction sites</th>
<th>Moderate</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Workers falling from scaffolding (the most common of accidents)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16. Building safety</td>
<td>Risk of fires and explosions</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17. Traffic and pedestrian safety</td>
<td>Direct of indirect hazards to public traffic and pedestrians through construction activities</td>
<td>Low to moderate</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Establishment of safety rules and application of instructions and rules of hygiene.

- Staff management Helmets worn by workers
- Warning signs for places at risk
- Workers’ GRM

In accordance with the National Building Regulations LI 1630 (building safety and prevention of fire and explosion risks)

- Installation of smoke detectors, fire extinguishers and alarm devices

In accordance with national regulations, the contractor must ensure that the construction site is properly secured, and that traffic related to the construction is regulated. This includes, but is not limited to, signage, warning signs, gates and diversions: the site will be clearly visible, and the public warned of all potential dangers.

- Traffic management system and staff training, particularly for site access and dense traffic near the site. Provide safe crossings and passages for pedestrians when construction traffic interferes.
Adjustment of working hours to local traffic patterns.
Active management of traffic by trained and visible staff on the site, if necessary for a safe passage and convenient for the public.

Provide safe and continuous access to offices, stores and residences during renovation activities, if the buildings remain open to the public.

| 18. Child Labor | Use by contractors of child labor | Low | Strict compliance with national regulations on child labor by works contractors |
| 19. Disabled people | Neglecting disabled people in building plans and rehabilitation of building | Low to moderate | Accessibility mechanisms for persons with disabilities in public buildings (access ramps, sanitary blocks, etc.) |
| 20. Restoration of historic buildings | Neglecting the historic value of buildings | Low to moderate | Notify the local competent authorities and obtain the authorizations / permits. Full compliance with heritage management regulations regarding buildings of historical value. |
| 21. Archaeological, cultural and historical heritage | Neglecting historic heritage | Low | Ensure that arrangements are in place to ensure that artifacts or other "finds" encountered during excavation or construction are noted, that officials are contacted, and that work is delayed or altered to accommodate these discoveries. |
Compliance with national regulations for the protection of historical and cultural property. Possible involvement of the National Heritage Department and specialized centers. See Annex 2 for ‘Chance Find’ procedures.

6. ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES

6.1 Screening of sub-projects
Under the Project, all the activities (sub-projects) will be subjected to an environmental and social screening, a procedure aimed to:

i) Determine the nature and the extent of their anticipated adverse environmental and social impacts;

ii) Define and develop the most appropriate safeguard instrument, depending on the nature and extent of these impacts; and

iii) Establish and implement appropriate mitigation measures.

A screening of each proposed intervention or project will be undertaken. The MoE with assistance from the EPA will:

a. Screen the intervention in accordance with the ESS depending on type, location, and scale of the interventions, and the nature and extent of its potential environment impacts. This will give particular attention to any activities that are likely to have potential to result in non-compliance with ESS and will consider the mitigation measures identified through the Environmental Assessment process;

b. Ensure compliance with the national EIA screening process with both the EPA and World Bank ESF requirements, and Environmental, Health and Safety Guidelines (EHSGs);

To facilitate this process, the MoE will develop a standard screening checklist form that incorporates:
a. The Liberian National EIA Screening Form;
b. Criteria that reflects the World Bank’s ESSs, including whether the site and proposed intervention presents risks to natural habitats, water quality and water resource availability and use, natural hazards, cultural property, involuntary resettlement;
c. Process for checking whether the mitigation measures identified through the ESMF process apply; and
d. Identification of stakeholders, including groups that may be affected by the project (to be appended to the checklist).

The EPA regulations prohibit commencing an undertaking/activity without prior registration and Environmental Permit (EP). Undertakings are grouped into schedules for ease of screening and registration and for the EP. The schedules include undertakings requiring registration and EP (Schedule 1), EIA mandatory undertakings (Schedule 2), as well as Schedule 5 - relevant undertakings (located in Environmentally Sensitive Areas). The EIA procedure is presented in Figure 4 below:
6.2 Preparation of the ESMF and Approval Procedures

The implementation of this framework will involve preparation of an Environmental Impact Assessment Report (EIA), Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) and Environmental Management Plan for the project.
The ESMF is a public document. Public disclosure is a required by the World Bank and therefore the report will be available to project affected groups, local NGOs, and the public at large. The MoE will make copies of the ESMF available in selected public places as required for information and comments as well as in the media. The ESMF will be announced and published on an official Government website.

7. PROJECT IMPLEMENTATION ARRANGEMENTS

7.1 Overall Project Implementation Arrangements

The Ministry of Education will serve as the main implementation agency to ensure the project achieves expected results. In that regard, it will ensure contributions required of its own bureaus, the CSA, and the MFDP are timely and of quality. Through Component 3, accommodations have been implemented to help build MoE’s capacity to effectively oversee the project.

Day-to-day operations will be delegated, by MoE, to a Project Delivery Team dedicated exclusively to the Project. This team will be embedded in the MoE, reporting to the Senior Management Team and will liaise with entities inside and outside the Ministry to deliver project intermediate results and execute the IPF component of the project. It is envisioned that this team will comprise of project coordinator, M&E specialist, program specialist, program assistant, plus additional consultancies to meet the ESF, financial and procurement needs of the project. During appraisal, the Project Delivery Team and relevant roles will be finalized with TORs included in the Project Implementation Manual.

At the national level, the Ministry of Finance and Development Planning will manage project funds through its Project Financial Management Unit. Guidance on works, environmental and health policies implementation will be driven by the Ministries of Public Works and Health, and Social Welfare. Legal matters will be handled by the Ministry of Justice.

The office of the President of Liberia will be updated on a quarterly basis through the President Delivery Unit (PDU).
7.2 ESMF Implementation Arrangements
The Project Delivery Team will have overall responsibility for the ESMF Implementation. A focal person to oversee the overall implementation of the ESMF and other project safeguard instruments, including the RPF, will be appointed. Similar arrangements will also be established at the county level. At county level, a designated project staff will carry out the day-to-day implementation and monitoring of safeguard instruments. The construction contractors will also have ESMF implementation responsibilities. The contractors, depending on the nature of their undertakings, will be required to develop appropriate contractor’s environmental and social management plans to manage the environmental and social risks and impacts of their activities. The project implementation manual will further clarify these roles and responsibilities.
Table 8. Role and responsibilities (focus on the PDT)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Steps/Activities</th>
<th>Responsible entity</th>
<th>Collaboration</th>
<th>Service Provider/Technical Assistant</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1.</td>
<td>Identification and/or siting of the sub-project</td>
<td>MoE</td>
<td>Community Elders • County Authority • MIA • MPW • EPA</td>
<td>To be identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2.</td>
<td>Screening, categorization and identification of the required instrument</td>
<td>Environmental Safeguards Specialist (ESS), Social Safeguards Specialist hired under PDT</td>
<td>beneficiaries; • local authority • (SSS) on the PDT • MoE’s Department of Physical Environment</td>
<td>To be identified</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3.</td>
<td>Approval of the classification and the selected instrument</td>
<td>MoE</td>
<td>ESS-PDT • SSS-PDT</td>
<td>The World Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4.</td>
<td>Preparation of E&amp;S document/instrument (ESIA, Environmental Audit, simple ESMP, etc.) in accordance with the national legislation/procedure (taking into account the Government and Bank policies requirements)</td>
<td>MOE ESS-PDT EPA</td>
<td>The World Bank • Procurement specialist (PST-PDT) • SSS-PDT • Local authority Consultant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
| 5. | (i) Integrating the construction phase mitigation measures and E&S clauses in the bidding document before they are advertised; (ii) ensuring that the constructor prepares his ESMP (C-ESMP), gets it approved and integrates the relevant measures in the Works Breakdown Structure (WBS) or execution plan. | Works Contract Management Specialist in the PDT and other Technical staff in charge of the sub-project (TS-PDT) | • Procurement specialist (PS-PDT)  
• Local authority | • Public EA Agency (PEA)  
• The World Bank | Project Coordinator | • Media  
• The World Bank | Works Contract Management Specialist in the PDT and other Technical staff in charge of the sub-project (TS-PDT) | • Procurement specialist (PS-PDT)  
• Local authority | • Public EA Agency (PEA)  
• The World Bank | Project Coordinator | • Media  
• The World Bank |
| 6. | Implementation of the other safeguards measures, including environmental monitoring (when relevant) and sensitization activities | ESS-PDT | • SSS-PIE  
• PS-PIE  
• TS-PIE  
• Financial Management Officer (FMO-PDT)  
• Local authority | • Consultant  
• National specialized laboratories  
• NGOs | • SSS-PIE  
• PS-PIE  
• TS-PIE  
• Financial Management Officer (FMO-PDT)  
• Local authority | • Consultant  
• National specialized laboratories  
• NGOs |
<p>| 7. | Oversight of safeguards | ESS | • Monitoring and Evaluation | • Control Firm (Supervisor) | ESS | • Monitoring and Evaluation | • Control Firm (Supervisor) |</p>
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Implementation (internal)</th>
<th>Reporting on project safeguards performance and disclosure</th>
<th>External oversight of the project safeguards compliance</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>FS-PDT</td>
<td>Project Coordinator (PDT)</td>
<td>PEAD</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>M&amp;E-PDT</td>
<td>M&amp;E-PDT, ESS-PDT, SSS-PDT</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Local authority</td>
<td></td>
<td>World Bank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other Independent Verification Agents</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Building stakeholders capacity in safeguards management</th>
<th>Independent evaluation of safeguards performance (Audit)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ESS-PDT</td>
<td>ESS-PIE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>SSS-PDT, PS-PDT</td>
<td>SSS-PDT, PS-PDT, PFMU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Consultant, Other qualified public institutions (EPA, etc)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Independent Verification Agent /Consultant</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
8. ESMF MONITORING AND EVALUATION

8.1 Objectives of Environmental and Social Monitoring and Control

Environmental and Social monitoring & control is a crucial component of the ESMF during project implementation. The Project’s Environmental and Social Management Monitoring System aims to describe: (i) the elements to be monitored; (ii) monitoring methods and tools; (iii) the responsibilities for monitoring and reporting; and (iv) the periodicity of monitoring. The system aims to ensure that: identified mitigation measures are appropriate and affectively implemented and produce the anticipated results; any additional impacts not identified in the analysis of the potential environmental and social impacts of the rehabilitation and/or construction of facilities are captured as early as possible and are modified, discontinued or replaced if they prove to be inadequate.

Moreover, regular monitoring assessment will be carried out, as necessary, to check compliance with the environmental and social parameters set for the project to ensure adherence to the findings of the RSIA along with the ESMP, RAP and the GBV Action Plan.

The monitoring assessments will:

1. Confirm that the project’s ESMP is adhered to;
2. Verify the adequacy of the ESMP in mitigating the impacts of the project; and
3. Ensure that the criteria used for the assessment is based ESF best practice.

8.2 Monitoring procedure

While the monitoring indicators and responsibilities have been included in the Environmental and social risks and proposed mitigation measures matrix table (see table 7 above for each phase of project implementation), site-specific ESMP will also contain a detailed monitoring program. A checklist will be used to ascertain compliance to environmental and social requirements of the sub-projects throughout project implementation. A sample checklist that can be used by the E&S consultant is depicted in annex 3.
9. CONSULTATION OF STAKEHOLDERS

The preparation of the ESMF was participatory as key relevant stakeholders were consulted including institutions with direct regulatory oversight on civil works decisions in communities for examples EPA, LLA, MoE, MIA, MPW etc.) in addition to education officers in project targeted counties, school administrators, local authorities and civil society organizations in the targeted communities and higher level decision makers as described in the Stakeholders’ Engagement Plan (SEP). They provided meaningful inputs to the project and ESMF design and report. In addition, the safeguards team will visit the 18 ECE construction sites selected across the selected districts to assess current condition and expansion possibilities with potential risks and impacts on sites. During these visits, discussions with the PTAs at the schools should be possible and will be facilitated with the assistance of the Environmental and Social Specialists hired to the team.

The main outcomes of these consultations were the need to involve stakeholders in project implementation and allow county authorities and community elders to make decision on project sites to avoid confusion with communities and claim for property. The Ministry was already proactive on these as all project sites selections were driven first by data using agreed criteria, and then working with the local structure and relevant authorities. It is from this background we can almost be certain that the works component of the project has no negative environmental impact.

10. ESTIMATED COSTS FOR ESMF IMPLEMENTATION

An indicative budget for ESMF implementation is given below in Table 9. The budget will be revised once the subproject locations and activities are clearly defined. The estimate cost provided does not include cost of mitigation activities, including provision of personal protective equipment and proper disposal of construction wastes, that will be carried out by the contractor.

Table 9: Indicative ESMF Budget

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>No</th>
<th>Activity</th>
<th>Cost (US Dollars)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Environmental and Social Safeguard awareness and sensitization sessions for project communities</td>
<td>40,000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Capacity building for safeguard implementation for safeguard focal persons and other relevant project staff</td>
<td>35,000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
3. E&S screening activities at subproject level and preparation of subproject ESMPs as and when required  75,000

4. Environmental & social safeguard monitoring including annual environmental audit  100,000

Total Cost  250,000

(1) Project Briefs will vary in individual costs and will be expected to be absorbed into construction costs.

11. PROJECT GRIEVANCE REDRESS MECHANISM (GRM)

The Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) will provide a way to provide an effective avenue for expressing concerns and achieving remedies for communities. The goal is to promote a mutually constructive relationship and enhance the achievement of project development objectives. The GRM is to ensure that complaints are directed and expeditiously addressed by the relevant agencies which is to enhance responsiveness and accountability.

11.1 Typical Grievances

Likely common grievances that may arise during implementation areas may be related to:

a) Concerns about environmental pollution (noise, air, water, and soil);
b) Construction related accidents;
c) Non-payment of work done;
d) Workers’ working conditions and rights;
e) Obstruction of community access routes;
f) Non-payments of infrastructure construction materials;
g) Extraction of local materials for construction works;
h) Employment opportunities offered by the project activities; and
i) Land acquisition or encroachment on private or community lands

It is therefore important to have structures at the community level where grievances can be processed and resolved if possible. In order to be effective, the GRM should adhere to the following principles:

a) it should be scaled to address the risks and impacts on affected communities;
b) be culturally appropriate;
c) be clear and accessible for any individual or group at no cost (vulnerable groups); and
d) be transparent and including regular reporting, and preventive of retribution and should not impede access to other remedies.

11.2 GRM Structure
The project GRM will ensure that grievances are tracked and resolved at all levels of the project including workers’ grievances. Local Grievance Redress Committees (LGRC) will be initiated at the village level, to record grievances and also help in mediation. This committee will comprise the area local chief or a trusted village elder, a religious representative, and specific vulnerable group representatives of relevance to the village i.e. women and the disabled. Disputes will be resolved at the village level as far as possible. The GRC at the district and county levels will be resolved under a County/District GRM constituted by the Project. At the County Level, the Grievance Redress Committee will be established to deal with any grievances unsettled at the village level. Serious grievances, including assault, rape cases, and gender-based violence, that cannot be handled at the project level will be referred to the relevant authority.
ANNEXES

Annex 1: General Outline for Project Brief

Section 8 of the Environmental Protection Management Law of Liberia prescribes the outline of the project brief as follow:

a) The nature of the project in accordance with the categories specified in the annex I of this Law;

b) The location of the project and the county under whose jurisdiction it is situated and reasons for proposing the project in the area;

c) The activities that shall be undertaken during and after the development of the project;

d) The design of the project;

e) The materials to be used in the project, including during construction;

f) The possible products or by-products anticipated and their environmental consequences including the potential mitigation methods and measures;

g) The number of people the project shall employ;

h) The projected areas of land, air and water that may be affected;

i) Findings of the scooping activities; and

j) Any other pertinent evidence and analysis which the Agency may require for decision-making.

Annex 2 Chance Finds Procedure

Project-supported civil works could impact sites of social, sacred, religious, or heritage value. "Chance finds" procedures would apply when those sites are identified during the actual construction period.

1. Cultural property includes monuments, structures, works of art, or sites of significant points of view, and are defined as sites and structures having archaeological, historical, architectural, or religious significance, and natural sites with cultural values. This includes cemeteries, graveyards and graves.

2. The list of negative subproject attributes which would make a subproject ineligible for support includes any activity that would adversely impact cultural property.
3. In the event of finding of properties of cultural value during construction, the following procedures for identification, protection from theft, and treatment of discovered artefacts should be followed and included in standard bidding documents;
   a. Stop the construction activities in the area of the chance find;
   b. Delineate the discovered site or area;
   c. Secure the site to prevent any damage or loss of removable objects;
   d. Notify the Supervising Engineer who in turn will notify the responsible authorities;
   e. The Ministry of Information, Cultural Affairs, and Tourism, in collaboration with responsible local authorities (where applicable), would be in charge of protecting and preserving the site before deciding on subsequent appropriate procedures;
   f. Decisions on how to handle the finding shall be taken by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs or other responsible authorities. This could include changes in the layout (such as when finding an irremovable remain of cultural or archaeological importance), conservation, restoration and salvage;
   g. Implementation of the authority decision concerning the management of the finding shall be communicated in writing by the Ministry of Cultural Affairs; and
   h. Construction work could resume only after permission is given from Ministry of Cultural Affairs or other responsible authorities concerned with safeguarding the cultural heritage. These procedures must be referred to as standard provisions in construction contracts. During project supervision, the Supervising Engineer shall monitor the above regulations relating to the treatment of any chance find encountered. Relevant findings will be recorded in World Bank Supervision Reports and Implementation Completion Reports will assess the overall effectiveness of the project's cultural property mitigation, management, and activities, as appropriate.
Annex 3: Environmental and Social Screening Form

Project Information

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Project Information</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. <strong>Project Title</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. <strong>Project Number</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. <strong>Project Location</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4. <strong>Implementation Timeline</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5. <strong>Project Development Objective</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6. <strong>Project Components</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Part A. Integrating Overarching Principles to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability

Do the activities have an impact on areas for which the World Bank Environmental and Social Standards have not been applied? Yes or No. In particular:

- Disrespect for human dignity, human rights, economic systems and cultures of indigenous peoples (under ESS7: Indigenous Peoples)?
- Impact on forest health and quality?
- Involve construction of dams?
- Serious consequences resulting in malfunctioning or stopping a dam?
- Effects on waters of two or more states (under OP 7.50 International waterways)?
- Is the project highly contentious and likely to attract the attention of NGOs or civil society nationally or internationally?

**QUESTION 1:** How Does the Project Integrate the Overarching Principles in order to Strengthen Social and Environmental Sustainability?
Part B. Identifying and Managing Social and Environmental Risks

Will the activities involved include those below. If yes, to what extent and what is the proposed mitigation measure:

Risk Checklist:

1. Include clearing of forests?
2. Include removal and/or cutting of a considerable number of trees?
3. Involve reclamation of wetland, land?
4. Potentially affect the ecology of a protected area (e.g., interference on mammalian or bird migration routes)?
5. Potentially affect geological or soil instability (e.g., erosion, landslides and subsidence)?
6. Be located in an area threatened by silting?
7. Be located in any flood protection area?
8. Be located in any flood prone area?
9. Be located 60 meters from the bank of a public stream
10. Lead to increase in waste generation
11. Be located in an area where there is no household waste management system?
12. Generate non-hazardous waste that will be stored on the project site?
13. Use of hazardous or toxic materials and generation of hazardous wastes?
14. Involve the use of an already over-exploited groundwater?
15. Contribute to reducing the amount of water available to other local users?
16. Be located in an area where there is no sanitation network?
17. Occur in old establishments that may contain asbestos cement?
18. Include large deep excavations?
19. Soil excavation during subproject’s construction so as to cause soil erosion?
20. Have important protentional accidental soil erosion, groundwater pollution and contamination?
21. Greatly increase air pollution and dust generation?
22. Long-term impacts on air quality
23. Greatly increase noise pollution and dust generation?
24. Long-term impacts on air quality
25. Greatly increase noise pollution and vibrations?
26. Finance any pesticides or procurement of pesticide equipment
27. Minimum land area required for the proposed development (ha)
28. Available total land area within the identified location (ha)
29. Expected construction period
30. Source of fresh surface water?
31. Surface Water Agriculture (Domestic, Animal, other)?
32. Change of surface water quality or water flows (eg. Increase water turbidity due to run-off, waste water from camp sites and erosion and construction waste) of long term.
33. Separation or fragmentation of habitats of flora and fauna?
34. Are there any environmentally and culturally sensitive areas within 250m? Protected Areas/Migratory Pathways/Archeological sites/Wetlands/Mangroves sands
35. Any historic, archaeological reserve, ancient or protected monument, graveyards, temples.
36. Need to open new, temporary or permanent, access roads?
37. Acquisition (temporarily or permanently) of land (public or private) for its development.
38. Is there any potential for land dispute, assets and livelihoods displacement? If yes, refer to Resettlement Policy Framework.
39. Involuntary restriction of access by people to legally designated parks and protected areas.
40. Risk of disease dissemination from construction workers to the local peoples (and vice versa)?
41. Are children in the project area likely to be used for child labor?
QUESTION 2: What are the Potential Social and Environmental Risks?
Note: Describe briefly potential social and environmental risks identified in Attachment 1 – Risk Screening Checklist (based on any “Yes” responses). If no risks have been identified in Attachment 1 then note “No Risks Identified” and skip to Question 4 and Select “Low Risk”. Questions 5 and 6 not required for Low Risk Projects.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Risk Description</th>
<th>Impact and Probability (1-5)</th>
<th>Significance (Low, Moderate, High)</th>
<th>Comments</th>
<th>Description of assessment and management measures as reflected in the Project design. If ESIA is required note that the assessment should consider all potential impacts and risks.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Risk 1: Include clearing of forests?</td>
<td>I =</td>
<td>P =</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Risk 2: Include removal and/or cutting of a</td>
<td>I =</td>
<td>P =</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

QUESTION 3: What is the level of significance of the potential social and environmental risks?
Note: Respond to Questions 4 and 5 below before proceeding to Question 6

QUESTION 6: What social and environmental assessment and management measures have been conducted and/or are required to address potential risks (for Risks with Moderate and High Significance)?
considerable number of trees?

Risk 3: Involve reclamation of wetland, land?

Risk 4: Potentially affect the ecology of a protected area (e.g., interference on mammalian or bird migration routes)?

[add additional rows as needed]

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION 4: What is the overall Project risk categorization?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Select one (see ESMP for guidance)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>-----------------------------------</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low Risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Moderate Risk</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>High Risk</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Final Sign Off

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Annex 4: Outline for Environmental and Social Management Plan

Executive Summary
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Annex 5: Terms of Reference for Environmental and Social Specialists (2 consultancies)

The Ministry of Education has received an additional allocation from the Global Partnership for Education (GPE). The proposed GPE-funded Liberia Learning Foundations Project (LLF) aims to improve access to ECE services in targeted disadvantaged countries of Bomi, Grand Kru, Maryland, Rivercess, River Gee and Sino, furthering the Government’s overage program detailed in the G2B-ESP. With high poverty rates and low education outcomes within these six counties, the need for multiple and sustained interventions is clear. To ensure that young people can learn, thrive and succeed, the LLF complements the G2B activities of school grants, teacher training and certification, principal training, school monitoring and accountability with a focus on building ECE classrooms, WASH facilities, providing teaching and learning materials, and expanding an overage learning program. Together these two Projects will enable a robust ECE response to give children, families and communities access to quality ECE services through a comprehensive ECE approach envisioned in and detailed through the G2B-ESP.

The GPE notified the Government on June 27, 2018 that Liberia was eligible for a Maximum Country Allocation (MCA) to provide further support to the implementation of the G2B-ESP. The proposed Project is well aligned with the GPE focus areas - quality, equity and efficiency of education outcomes. The grant amount is US$5.9 million under the Maximum Country Allocation (MCA) from the GPE to provide further support to the implementation of the G2B-ESP. In line with the GPE focus areas, the Project will support investments in quality ECE services and primary education (primary education through the variable part), while furthering equity and efficiency within the education system. The Local Education Group (LEG) has been involved in supporting the design and Project development.

The Project consists of three components: (i) improving access to ECE services in targeted counties; (ii) improving learning outcomes through increased equity, efficiency and accountability; and (iii) strengthening project management and sector support and coordination.

Objective

The objective of the assignment is to ensure compliance with environmental and social safeguard requirements in finalizing project design and launch project implementation.
Scope of Services

Facilitate implementation of activities towards compliance with the legal requirements of Liberian legislation and the World Bank policies (safeguards) on environmental and social aspects during implementation of the Project.

Duties and responsibilities of Environmental and Social Specialist (ESS)

The ESS is responsible for implementing the environmental/social related activities as outlined in the Environmental and Social Management Framework and Plan (ESMF/P) of the project.

2 consultants will be hired (1 for Environment and 1 for Social) for the following duties:

*Develop environmental management documents through:*

- Involvement in updating relevant environmental sections of the Project Implementation Manual when necessary;
- Ensuring including necessary activities related to the environmental and social safeguards, such as trainings, studies, etc. in the project procurement plan if relevant;
- Arrangement and conduction of environmental assessment, monitoring of compliance with site-specific Environmental and Social Management Plans (ESMPs);

*Ensure inclusion of environmental requirements in construction contracts through:*

- During pre-bid meeting, informing bidders about the full list of environmental requirements to be followed by the Contractors, and ensuring including the environmental requirements in the bidding package;
- Review of the work plans provided by a Contractor and identification of bottlenecks not included in the proposed mitigation measures and environmental and social activities and/or budget;
- Prepare environmental and social requirements to be included in the construction contracts;
Verify that sub-contractors have relevant valid licenses and environmental and Health & safety certification compliant with the national environmental requirements (in particular, regarding to construction materials, equipment etc.).

**Supervision and monitoring of compliance with environmental activities through:**

- Supervise both, individually and in conjunction with supervising engineers, the compliance with mitigation measures envisaged in the site-specific Environmental and Social Management Plan for each objective included in the project;
- Ensure fulfillment of monitoring plan for each objective included in the project, including baseline data, regular field check and the efficiency of mitigation measures;
- Develop requirements to Contractor’s reports and monitor the implementation of planned mitigation measures and environmental activities; review the Contractor's reports provided regularly.
- During the project implementation assess the need of relevant environmental trainings for the project partners, and provide the necessary arrangements if required;

**Ensure compliance with other social requirements through:**

- Carry out screening of potential social impacts; findings of the screening will determine the need for development of further mitigation measures for each objective included in the project;
- Review and give acceptance of including relevant chapters on social protection in the detailed design, technical specifications, and Bills of Quantities;

**Other duties:**

- Prepare guidelines and recommendations for monitoring and reporting on safeguards during project implementation.
• Prepare training materials related to environmental and social safeguards (assessment, management and implementation tools) and deliver training to selected staff from relevant agencies, and contractors.

V. Qualification requirements:

The Consultants should be an individual, having the following required qualifications:

Qualifications and skills:

• University degree in relevant area (environmental management, social sciences, constructions engineer, geology, environment, etc.);

• Knowledge of the Liberia’s legislation for environmental protection and the World Bank environmental/social policies;

• Excellent writing skills, ability to prepare clear and attainable reports;

• Strong facilitation skills, ability to conduct discussions and to respond to various feedback/questions.

• Good command of English language

• Computer literate in Microsoft Office (Word and Excel).

General Professional experience:

• at least five (5) years of professional experience in assignments for environmental and social assessment and environmental management in wide range of activities;

• Demonstrated experience for supporting, advising and/or collaborating with public institutions on environmental and social safeguards / sustainable development etc.;

• Practical experience in the field of monitoring and evaluation.