

Enhancing Sustainable Land Management and Climate-Resilient Agri-food Systems in Côte d'Ivoire (LARACI) Funding Proposal

Annex 6: Environmental and Social Action Plan

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Table of contents

1	Project description	3
1.1	Rice	4
1.2	Cassava	5
1.3	Yam	6
2	Environmental and social overview	7
2.1	Geographic context.....	7
2.2	Social context.....	8
2.3	Salient environmental and social characteristics.....	9
3	Executing entities' institutional capacity.....	9
4	Exclusion criteria	11
4.1	Associated facilities.....	11
4.2	Transboundary impacts	11
4.3	Working conditions, health and safety, and vulnerable workers.....	11
4.4	Generation of hazardous waste and land contamination	11
4.5	Construction of critical infrastructure	12
4.6	Land acquisition, resettlement, and economic displacement.....	12
4.7	Proximity to protected areas and critical habitats.....	12
4.8	Impact on indigenous peoples.....	12
4.9	Impact on cultural heritage	13
5	Environmental and social risk classification (ESRC).....	13
6	Potential environmental and social risks and impacts.....	14
6.1	Positive environmental, social and climate impacts.....	14
6.1.1	Positive environmental impacts.....	14
6.1.2	Positive social impacts	15
6.2	Negative environmental and social risks/impacts	15
7	Stakeholder engagement	17
8	Detailed environmental and social action plan (ESAP)	20
	Appendix 1: Environmental and Social Screening.....	29
	Appendix 2: Land conflict screening checklist tool	52
	Appendix 3: Child labor screening questions for beneficiary assessments	56
	Appendix 4: Code of conduct on the prevention of child labor.....	59
	Appendix 5: Chance find procedures	62

Project/Programme Title:	Enhancing Sustainable Land Management and Climate-Resilient Agri-food Systems in Côte d'Ivoire (LARACI)
Country:	Côte d'Ivoire
National Designated Authority (NDA):	Ministry of Environment and Ecological Transition (MINETE)
Accredited Entity (AE):	CGIAR System Organization

1 Project description

The “Enhancing Sustainable Land Management and Climate-Resilient Agri-food Systems in Côte d'Ivoire (LARACI)” project aims to enhance climate resilience in agricultural systems by improving climate-related risk management, reducing greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, and promoting climate-smart agricultural (CSA) practices focusing on three key crops: yam, rice and cassava. The project’s key targets include:

- Strengthening national agrometeorological systems to provide timely climate information.
- Enhancing the capacity of extension services to support CSA implementation.
- Increasing capacity to access financial services to manage climate-related risk.
- Developing integrated systems for sustainable land management and agroforestry.
- Scaling CSA practices to support resilient agri-food systems particularly in key value chains such as rice, cassava and yam.

The project is designed to be implemented over a five-year period. The goal of this project is to initiate a paradigm shift towards climate-smart agriculture (CSA) for improved food and nutrition security and income generation for farming communities under existing and projected climate change scenarios, and for a reduced GHG footprint. The project has been designed with this in consideration and is comprised of three components. Component 1 will (a) put in place an actionable national agrometeorological advisory system, (b) put in place an efficient CSA extension system, and (c) increase capacity to access CSA finance services and products. This national-level component will provide the crucial information, institutional capacity, and enabling environment needed to support Components 2 and 3 in scaling out context-specific measures to directly address climate risks impacting rural communities in the central regions (Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé, and Gbêkê) while shifting to a low emission development pathway.

The LARACI project focuses on three value chains: rice, yam and cassava. For each value chain, different climate adaptation and mitigation technologies are feasible in Côte d'Ivoire.

1.1 Rice

Various climate-smart rice production technologies can be supported in Côte d'Ivoire to enhance productivity, mitigate climate risks, and ensure sustainable agricultural practices. The following technologies have been identified, each addressing key climate-related challenges:

- **RiceAdvice:** A digital application offering location-specific recommendations on rice varieties, crop calendars, and fertilizer application. It helps farmers adapt to changes in growing season patterns, select suitable varieties, and optimize fertilizer use, improving productivity and sustainability.
- **Smart-valleys:** A low-cost, farmer-led, and participatory approach designed to sustainably develop inland valley bottoms for rice-based agriculture. By leveraging farmers' local knowledge and simple, locally available materials, the approach focuses on constructing basic water-control structures, such as canals and bunds, to improve water management. This process emphasizes careful site selection based on both socio-economic and biophysical factors, followed by the design, layout, and construction of infrastructure. Farmers report key benefits including better water retention, reduced fertilizer loss from flooding, and increased rice yields, all achieved with minimal external input and greater resilience to climate change.
- **GEM parboiling technique:** An energy-efficient rice processing technology that uses rice husk fuel to improve grain quality, reduce emissions, and enhance working conditions for women.
- **Alternate wetting and drying:** A water-saving rice irrigation technique where fields are allowed to dry intermittently rather than being continuously flooded. After the field is initially flooded, irrigation is withheld until the water level in the soil drops to a certain threshold (often measured with a field water tube), then re-flooded. This cycle repeats throughout the growing season, except during critical growth stages like flowering. The technology reduces water use and methane emissions, while maintaining or improving yields.
- **System of Rice Intensification (SRI):** A package of technologies that integrates younger seedlings, organic matter, intermittent irrigation, and optimized plant spacing. It enhances drought tolerance, improves soil fertility, and mitigates water scarcity while reducing reliance on inputs such as seeds, water, and fertilizer.
- **Combined Application of Biochar and Nitrogen Fertilizers:** This approach improves soil health, optimizes nutrient management, and enhances crop resistance. It directly addresses drought, water scarcity, and soil fertility degradation, leading to higher productivity and increased farmer income despite climate variability.
- **Mid-Season Drainage:** A water management technology that removes surface water from rice fields between the mid- and late-tillering stages, allowing the soil to dry and re-aerate before being reflooded. This reduces iron toxicity, improves rice yield, and enhances water productivity.
- **Dissemination of Climate Information Services and Early Warning Systems:** This system provides forecasts on growing season onset and cessation, dry spells, and potential climate hazards such as drought, flooding, pests, and disease outbreaks. By enabling

climate-informed decision-making, it strengthens the resilience of rice farmers and the entire value chain.

If implemented on the foreseen area of agricultural land, these climate-resilient rice technologies are expected to benefit 80,000 farmers directly and 240,000 individuals in farming communities indirectly, while playing a crucial role in enhancing climate adaptation and resilience in the rice sector to ensure food security and sustainable livelihoods for farmers in Côte d'Ivoire.

1.2 Cassava

Several climate-smart cassava production technologies could be supported in Côte d'Ivoire to enhance productivity, mitigate climate risks, and promote sustainable agricultural practices. The following technologies have been identified, each addressing key climate-related challenges to cassava cultivation:

- **Cassava legume intercropping:** Intercropping of cassava and legumes allows for more efficient use of the land cleared or prepared for the cultivation of cassava. In addition, the cassava plants may use some of the nitrogen fixed by the legume crop. Although cassava yields are often reduced in intercropping systems, the land equivalent ratio (LER) is often larger than 1 and the legume intercrop also contributes to reduction in soil erosion (Delaquis et al., 2018). The spatial arrangement of cassava and legumes can be modified to make the management of the companion crop more convenient or to allow for two subsequent companion crops (Pypers et al., 2011). Whether a second intercrop is possible depends on the vigor, growth habit and size of the cassava crop during the period of the second legume crop (Kreye et al., 2020).
- **AKILIMO tailored agronomic advisory service – optimum planting and harvesting time:** AKILIMO tailored agronomic advisory service – optimum planting and harvesting time: AKILIMO (<https://akilimo.org>) offers agronomic recommendations tailored to Côte d'Ivoire's agro-ecological zones and considers the ENSO phenomenon. Using the CGIAR's AgWise framework, it provides site-specific advice on timing, planting practices, and harvest schedules. The models incorporate digital soil maps and ENSO phase information, to improve the accuracy and relevance of recommendations.
- **AKILIMO tailored agronomic and site- specific advisory service:** Site-specific tailored and appropriate quantity levels of fertilizer recommendations based on crop model simulations for cassava support in sustainable intensification.
- **Cassava seed systems:** The ability of cassava to withstand difficult growing conditions and long-term storability of roots underground makes it an ideal candidate crop to address food insecurity and economic vulnerability that many countries in sub-Saharan Africa face due to climate change. Cassava production can only be raised sustainably if farmers are empowered to increase their productivity, have access to climate-smart/resilient improved varieties, production technologies are made available, and the planting material supply system is strengthened and sustained.

The implementation of these climate-resilient cassava technologies is expected to benefit 30,000 farmers directly and 90,000 individuals in farming communities indirectly. These interventions will strengthen climate adaptation, improve food security, and enhance the livelihoods of cassava farmers in Côte d'Ivoire.

1.3 Yam

In Côte d'Ivoire, several climate-smart yam production technologies can enhance productivity, improve resilience, and reduce environmental impacts. The following technologies have been identified as potentially adequate to address key climate-related challenges and promote sustainable agricultural practices:

- **Efficient plant arrangements for improved use of resources.** Replacing mounds by ridges makes crop management more efficient and allows for the use of appropriate planting densities, i.e. an increase of 10,000 to 10,416 plants ha⁻¹ on ridges from 4,000 to 6,000 plants ha⁻¹ on mounds (Osei et al., 2015; Owusu Danquah et al., 2018a; Frimpong et al., 2020 as cited in Danquah et al., 2022). Yam tubers harvested from ridges tend to be smaller than those harvested from mounds, but this may be an advantage for the export market (Owusu Danquah et al., 2018b as cited in Danquah et al., 2022). The direct benefit for farmers is harvesting a higher number of yam tubers from the same area.
- **Climate smart staking- climate smart soil health and fertility improvement** Yam requires fertile soil and performs best when staked to support climbing. While tree-based systems for annual cropping failed to be adopted, the introduction of *Gliricidia sepium* as fallow species in yam systems has potential to furnish improved soil properties and stakes during the fallow phase. *Gliricidia* is easily established from stem cuttings, it grows fast, fixes N₂ and is easy to manage (Elevitch and Francis, 2006). Its growth habit of forming long, unbranched shoots, yet allowing for light to reach the soil surface (Carsky et al., 2010), makes it the perfect species to produce yam stakes. Two similar systems will be available for farmer adoption: *Gliricidia* live stakes and *Gliricidia* stakes to cut and carry (Otu and Agboola, 1994). The *Gliricidia* live stake system is based on a high density of *Gliricidia* stakes being planted as fallow. These stakes grow into a bush and are retained for 3 to 4 years. The fallow is then cleared such that 2 to 3 *Gliricidia* stakes are retained but stripped of their leaves. Excess shoots are cut off and either used as stakes in other fields (cut and carry) used as fuel wood or simply left to rot along with the foliage. The yam is planted around the *Gliricidia* and trailed to the shoots to be used as climbing support. After the yam harvest, the site is left to regrow the *Gliricidia*.
- **Nutrient uptake and/or nutrient use efficient varieties:** Incorporating yam genotypes with high nutrient uptake efficiency maximizes the use of existing soil nutrients, reducing the need for external fertilizers. This makes yam cultivation more sustainable and cost-effective under climate stress. It also enhances yield stability, supporting food security in changing environmental conditions.
- **Seed systems – yam:** Work on yam seed systems will support the adoption of technologies of high ratio propagation of quality seeds and the establishment of a formal system to get genetic gains faster to farmers. There are no specialized seed yam

producers in the traditional yam production systems. The techniques to be considered for rapid multiplication include the Semi Autotrophic Hydroponics (SAH), minisetts and leaf bud cuttings (LBC). LBCs of disease-free mother plants are used by seed entrepreneurs to produce seeds, increasing the multiplication rate of yam from 1:3 to 1:300. This will make planting materials more readily available. Nutrient uptake and nutrient use efficient yam varieties: IITA has some responsive genotypes that could be further evaluated under the conditions of Côte d'Ivoire. Varieties/genotypes will be assessed through gender integrated participatory citizen science-based variety selection methods such as tricot to facilitate and enhance uptake of improved varieties and accelerate taking effect of climate change adaptation and mitigation potential of improved varieties.

The adoption of these climate-resilient yam production technologies is expected to directly benefit 100,000 farmers and indirectly support 300,000 individuals in farming communities. These interventions will strengthen climate adaptation efforts, improve food security, and promote sustainable livelihoods for yam farmers in Côte d'Ivoire.

Overall, LARACI is expected to reach 147,000 direct beneficiaries in Côte d'Ivoire broken down by value chain as per Table 1 below.

TABLE 1: LARACI BENEFICIARY BREAKDOWN BY VALUE CHAIN

VALUE CHAIN	DIRECT BENEFICIARIES	INDIRECT BENEFICIARIES
Rice	80,000	240,000
Cassava	30,000	90,000
Yam	100,000	300,000
Grand Total – after adjustment for double-counting¹	147,000	441,000

2 Environmental and social overview

The *Land Restoration and Climate-Smart Agriculture for Climate Resilient Inclusive Growth in Côte d'Ivoire (LARACI)* project will be implemented in five central administrative regions of Côte d'Ivoire: Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé and Gbêkê. These regions were selected based on their high vulnerability to climate change, significant land degradation, and agricultural potential.

2.1 Geographic context

The project area is located in central Côte d'Ivoire, characterized by a transitional agro-ecological zone between the rainforest and savannah regions. The topography includes a mix of

¹ As outlined in Annex 23, it is assumed that 30% of beneficiaries will adopt multiple technologies in combination (within, or across crops in mixed cropping systems).

low hills, plateaus, inland valleys, and river catchments that are key to local water management. The climate is tropical, with a distinct rainy season and dry season, and increasing climate change is affecting agricultural productivity.

2.2 Social context

The targeted regions are predominantly rural with high dependence on agriculture for livelihoods, especially smallholder farming. Communities are engaged in food and cash crop production (notably rice, cassava, yam, and cocoa). Social vulnerabilities include youth unemployment, gender disparities in land access, and limited access to finance and extension services. These areas have a high concentration of poor and climate-vulnerable households and include a diversity of ethnic groups with customary land tenure systems. The assessment confirms that while seasonal transhumant pastoralist groups primarily Fulani (Peulh) herders may be present within the broader landscape of the project areas. However, these groups do not demonstrate collective attachment to the specific project intervention sites where activities will be implemented. Their presence in the project area is seasonal and transitory, and they are not permanently settled within the intervention zones. Furthermore, project activities do not involve land acquisition, restrictions on access, or any interference with transhumance routes, grazing areas, or water points.

These groups maintain characteristics consistent with those described under Section IV of the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy, including distinct socio-cultural systems and livelihood patterns linked to pastoralism. They also maintain forms of collective attachment to territories and natural resources across wider transhumance corridors.

In this context, while the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy remains applicable due to the presence of such groups within the broader project landscape, the absence of impacts on areas of collective attachment within the project intervention footprint implies that requirements should be applied proportionately.

Consistent with a precautionary and inclusive approach aligned with the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy, the project will:

- Include pastoralist groups in stakeholder mapping and consultations where seasonally present;
- Ensure that activities do not interfere with transhumance routes or access to shared natural resources;
- Provide accessible grievance mechanisms for mobile populations;
- Integrate conflict-sensitive land-use planning measures in the ESAP and SEP.

The project promotes inclusive development with targeted benefits for women, youth, and marginalized farmers, and incorporates participatory planning approaches to address historical inequalities.

2.3 Salient environmental and social characteristics

- **Land Degradation:** The regions face severe soil fertility decline due to unsustainable farming practices, deforestation, and erosion, leading to increased vulnerability to climate change, which the project seeks to reverse through climate-smart agriculture and agroforestry.
- **Water Stress:** Inland valleys and water catchments are under pressure from irregular rainfall and poor watershed management. The project will introduce efficient irrigation and smart water management practices.
- **Biodiversity:** The project areas are already modified and are not located in or near protected areas, key biodiversity zones, or critical habitats. The project does not involve land conversion nor introduction of invasive species.
- **Cultural Heritage:** No cultural heritage sites or properties of archaeological or spiritual significance have been identified in the project areas. Chance find procedures will be included in the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP).
- **Community Dynamics:** Social cohesion is generally strong but can be affected by youth marginalization, land tenure disputes, and gender-based exclusion. The project integrates grievance redress mechanisms (GRM) and a gender-sensitive stakeholder engagement process.

In summary, the project is situated in environmentally degraded but agriculturally strategic zones, where the primary risks are low and manageable, and the anticipated environmental and social impacts are overwhelmingly positive — centered on resilience, equity, and sustainability.

3 Executing entities' institutional capacity

The Accredited Entity (AE) for the LARACI project is the CGIAR System Organization. CGIAR (formerly Consultative Group on International Agricultural Research) was established as a global partnership in 1971 for a food-secure future. CGIAR's science is dedicated to transforming food, land and water systems in a climate crisis, in order to reduce poverty and inequity, enhance food and nutrition security, and improve natural resources and ecosystem services. As of date, the partnership consists of 15 CGIAR Centers (CGIAR Centers) and the CGIAR System Organization.

The AE will implement the project through the following two Executing Entities:

- **Africa Rice Center (AfricaRice):** AfricaRice is an international organization established on 4 September 1970 with its headquarters in Côte d'Ivoire and with privileges and immunities under its host country agreement with the Government of Côte d'Ivoire (Accord de siège entre le Centre du Riz pour l'Afrique et le Gouvernement de la République de Côte d'Ivoire), dated 14 November 2014. Today, its membership comprises 28 countries. AfricaRice assists its member states to achieve operational cooperation in the field of rice production, including increasing quality and quantity, researching production methods adapted to the local conditions, promoting and implementing effective phytosanitary controls and improving storage and processing facilities. It

contributes to reducing poverty, achieving food and nutrition security and improving livelihoods of farmers and other rice value-chain actors in Africa by increasing the productivity and profitability of rice-based agri-food systems, while ensuring the sustainability of natural resources. AfricaRice has developed strong institutional capacity in systematically identifying, assessing, and mitigating potential environmental and social risks, while ensuring compliance with donor and national safeguard requirements. This has been demonstrated through its successful implementation of projects such as AICCRA (funded by the World Bank) and REWARD (funded by the African Development Bank). In the context of these initiatives, AfricaRice has prepared and operationalized key environmental and social management instruments including pest management plan, e-waste management plan, security plan, environmental and social management plan (ESMP), environmental and social risk management guide, SEA/SH mitigation and response plan, and labor management procedures.

- **Fonds Interprofessionnel pour la Recherche et le Conseil Agricoles (FIRCA):** FIRCA is a public-interest organization established in 2002 by Presidential Decree No. 2002-520, dated December 11, 2002, and titled “*Creating and organization of the Interprofessional Fund for Agricultural Research and Advice (FIRCA)*” (“**Establishing Decree**”). As set out in Article 2 of the Establishing Decree “*FIRCA is an agricultural development fund. It is a legal person of private law of a particular type recognized as being of public utility. The FIRCA has an establishment fund. Its assets are exclusively assigned to the exercise of its mission of agricultural development, as provided for by its purpose.*” FIRCA supports the development of Côte d’Ivoire’s plant, forestry, animal production, and fisheries sectors through the financing of programs of technical and economic research, knowledge dissemination, and capacity building. FIRCA became a GCF Accredited Entity in 2024 and signed its AMA with GCF in 2025. From an environmental and social perspective, FIRCA has established an Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) system and has demonstrated a strong institutional capacity to support the implementation of the LARACI project. As demonstrated through its recent GCF accreditation assessment, FIRCA’s capacity to monitor environmental and social risks in real-time and to ensure timely responses to grievances aligns with the LARACI project’s requirement for active stakeholder engagement and risk management under a Category B (medium risk) classification².

While AfricaRice and FIRCA have in place the core implementation and coordination capabilities, the LARACI project includes structured investments in institutional strengthening and safeguards governance to ensure effective environmental and social risk management in alignment with international standards.

² <https://www.greenclimate.fund/sites/default/files/document/11-consideration-accreditation-proposals-addendum-iv-apl135-gcf-b39-03-add04.pdf>

4 Exclusion criteria

Using the Guidance Environmental and Social Screening Checklist (Part A) of the Green Climate Fund (GCF), all activities of the LARACI project have been screened to ensure compliance with environmental and social exclusion criteria. The evaluation confirmed that the project activities do not trigger any significant risks that would require additional assessments or elevate its environmental and social risk categorization. Below is a thematic analysis addressing each potential risk factor.

4.1 Associated facilities

The LARACI project activities are fully self-contained within the project scope and geographical boundaries, specifically targeting communities in the regions of Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé, and Gbêkê. The project focuses on direct interventions such as soil restoration, sustainable water use, agroforestry, and extension services without reliance on external infrastructure or services that could be classified as associated facilities. Any infrastructure developed—such as small-scale irrigation systems, demonstration plots or small-scale storage facilities—is managed internally and does not depend on third-party infrastructure. Therefore, no further due diligence regarding associated facilities is required.

4.2 Transboundary impacts

The project is implemented entirely within the national borders of Côte d'Ivoire and is localized to smallholder farms and community sites. There are no activities involving shared natural resources, international rivers, or border zones that would generate transboundary environmental or social impacts. The localized, small-scale nature of interventions, such as the installation small-scale irrigation systems and climate information platforms, ensures that no international notification or cross-border environmental management is necessary.

4.3 Working conditions, health and safety, and vulnerable workers

The LARACI project strengthens safe working conditions and explicitly promotes inclusive participation for women and youth. Project activities are community-based, voluntary, and small-scale, reducing any risks associated with occupational health and safety. No hazardous activities or exploitative labor practices are involved. Instead, the project offers skill-building opportunities and improved livelihoods through climate-smart agriculture interventions, in full alignment with national labor laws and international best practices.

4.4 Generation of hazardous waste and land contamination

The project's design promotes the reduction of chemical inputs in agriculture by encouraging practices such as organic fertilization, agroforestry, and sustainable soil management. It does not introduce industrial farming practices or hazardous agrochemicals. Consequently, the project is not expected to generate hazardous waste or cause soil and water contamination.

The activities are geared towards restoring soil health and improving environmental quality, eliminating the need for additional waste management studies.

4.5 Construction of critical infrastructure

The project does not involve the construction, rehabilitation, or maintenance of critical infrastructure such as dams, large reservoirs, or flood defense systems. Interventions related to water management, such as minor irrigation improvements, are small in scale, decentralized, and implemented through nature-based solutions. These activities do not present technical or safety risks that would warrant specialized engineering assessments or dam safety studies.

4.6 Land acquisition, resettlement, and economic displacement

The LARACI project operates on existing agricultural lands already occupied and used by smallholder farmers. It does not require land acquisition or the resettlement of populations. All interventions are voluntary, community-driven, and designed to enhance existing livelihoods rather than disrupt them. There is therefore no risk of physical or economic displacement, and no further studies on resettlement are necessary.

4.7 Proximity to protected areas and critical habitats

All project activities are located in rural, previously cultivated areas affected by prior agricultural expansion and do not overlap with protected areas, key biodiversity areas, or critical habitats. The project focuses on rehabilitating degraded agricultural lands through climate-smart techniques, without causing adverse impacts on sensitive ecosystems or biodiversity hotspots.

4.8 Impact on indigenous peoples

While the absence of formal recognition under national legislation alone is not sufficient to determine the absence of Indigenous Peoples, it is noted that no Indigenous Peoples are officially recognized within the LARACI project areas.

To ensure compliance with the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy, a screening was undertaken to assess whether any groups present in the project areas exhibit the key characteristics described in the GCF Policy, such as self-identification as a distinct cultural group, collective attachment to specific territories, distinct customary institutions, and social or economic vulnerability.

This assessment identified the seasonal presence of transhumant pastoralist groups, primarily Fulani (Peulh) herders, in parts of the broader project landscape, including the Gbêkê region. These groups are highly mobile and do not maintain permanent settlements within the specific project intervention sites. Project activities are confined to existing cultivated lands and do not involve land acquisition, restrictions on access to grazing areas, or interference with established transhumance routes.

To ensure continued alignment with the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy and to maintain a low-risk profile, the project establishes the following exclusion criteria:

The project will not finance or support any activity that would:

- a) Result in impacts on lands, territories, or natural resources subject to traditional ownership, customary use, or collective attachment of Indigenous Peoples;
- b) Cause physical or economic displacement of Indigenous Peoples, including restriction of access to grazing routes, water points, or seasonal resource areas;
- c) Interfere with or alter transhumance corridors or mobility patterns of pastoralist groups;
- d) Affect cultural heritage, including sacred sites, ritual spaces, or culturally significant landscapes;
- e) Involve commercial use or development of natural resources traditionally used by Indigenous Peoples without their consent;
- f) Introduce land-use changes in areas used seasonally by pastoralist groups where such use may constitute collective attachment;

Any activity identified during implementation that may give rise to such risks or impacts will be screened out and deemed ineligible for financing under the project. Accordingly, the project does not trigger conditions requiring Free, Prior and Informed Consent (FPIC), and the preparation of a standalone Indigenous Peoples Plan (IPP) is not required.

Nonetheless, consistent with a precautionary and inclusive approach, the project will explicitly include seasonal pastoralist groups in stakeholder engagement processes where relevant, ensure that project activities do not restrict access to shared natural resources, and provide communication and grievance redress mechanisms that are accessible to mobile populations.

4.9 Impact on cultural heritage

The project sites do not intersect with officially recognized cultural heritage, archaeological, paleontological, historical, or religious sites. Activities focus on improving existing farmland without large-scale construction or excavation that could threaten cultural heritage.

Environmental and social screening has confirmed the absence of heritage risks; however, a chance find procedure will be included to manage any unforeseen discoveries in compliance with national regulations and international good practice.

To sum up, based on this thematic exclusion analysis, the LARACI project does not trigger any of the identified environmental or social risk factors that would require additional due diligence, detailed assessments, or specialized management plans. The project remains fully aligned with the GCF's environmental and social safeguards and national regulatory frameworks.

5 Environmental and social risk classification (ESRC)

The Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC) for the LARACI project is assessed as Low Risk (GCF E&S Category C). This classification is based on the project's small-scale, community-based nature, focused on climate-smart agriculture, sustainable land management, and localized infrastructure improvements in already cultivated rural areas. The activities are

not expected to generate significant environmental or social impacts and do not involve land acquisition, resettlement, or work in ecologically or culturally sensitive areas. Risks related to pollution, labor, community health and safety, and biodiversity are minimal and manageable through standard mitigation measures included in the project's Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP), which aligns with IFC Environmental and Social Performance Standards. Furthermore, the project includes robust stakeholder engagement processes and an accessible grievance redress mechanism. The executing entities, including FIRCA and AfricaRice, have demonstrated adequate institutional capacity to manage environmental and social risks effectively. Given these factors, the overall environmental and social risk profile of the project is low.

6 Potential environmental and social risks and impacts

6.1 Positive environmental, social and climate impacts

The “Enhancing Sustainable Land Management and Climate-Resilient Agri-food Systems Project in Côte d'Ivoire (LARACI)” is expected to generate numerous positive environmental and social impacts across targeted regions (Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé, and Gbêkê), contributing significantly to climate resilience, sustainable development, and community empowerment.

6.1.1 Positive environmental impacts

a) **Land restoration and improved soil health**

The project promotes climate-smart agricultural practices such as agroforestry, integrated soil fertility management, organic fertilization (e.g., use of biochar and organic manure), and conservation agriculture. These practices will restore degraded lands, enhance soil fertility, reduce erosion, and increase soil carbon sequestration, helping to reverse decades of soil degradation linked to unsustainable farming.

b) **Reduction of GHG emissions**

Through sustainable rice intensification, agroforestry, biochar application, and improved water management techniques (e.g., intermittent rice irrigation), LARACI will enhance carbon sequestration, and reduce GHG emissions, contributing to national mitigation targets.

c) **Biodiversity protection**

By focusing interventions on already degraded agricultural lands and avoiding expansion into forests or critical habitats, the project will protect biodiversity and preserve natural ecosystems.

d) **Improving water management**

By promoting efficient water use through the installation of small-scale irrigation systems and the adoption of Smart-Valleys water management techniques, the project increases water availability for agriculture without placing pressure on shared water resources.

e) **Pollution reduction**

The project minimizes chemical inputs by encouraging targeted application of fertilizers and organic alternatives, thus reducing risks of soil, air, and water contamination and contributing to a cleaner, healthier environment.

6.1.2 Positive social impacts

a) **Strengthening livelihoods and economic resilience**

By increasing agricultural productivity and building climate-resilient value chains (especially for cassava, yam, and rice), LARACI will enhance food security, raise incomes, and improve economic stability for smallholder farmers. The project emphasizes inclusive rural development, creating new income opportunities, particularly for women and youth.

b) **Empowerment of women and youth**

LARACI actively supports gender equity and youth inclusion, by enhancing access to skills training, financial services, and climate-smart technologies. Value chains like cassava processing (e.g., production of *attiéké* and *gari*) are expected to benefit rural women, strengthening their economic and social roles.

c) **Strengthening community capacity and climate resilience**

Through participatory planning, capacity-building programs, and farmer-led initiatives, the project will empower local communities to better adapt to climate change, manage natural resources sustainably, and improve governance at the local level.

d) **Employment generation**

Implementation of climate-smart agriculture and small-scale infrastructure (e.g., demonstration plots, storage structures, decentralized irrigation systems) will generate local employment opportunities not only directly through project activities, but also indirectly as a co-benefit, particularly in the post-harvest phase. These opportunities will arise during the construction, operation, and maintenance of infrastructure, as well as through increased demand for labor in value addition, processing, and market-related activities stimulated by improved productivity.

e) **Improving food security and nutrition**

Enhancing the productivity and value chains of key staples (rice, cassava, yam) through CSA practices will secure food supplies, diversify diets, and reduce vulnerability to market and climate shocks, improving the overall nutritional status of rural communities.

6.2 Negative environmental and social risks/impacts

The project presents several potential low-significance environmental and social risks/impacts, as detailed below:

- a) **Inconsistent ESAP implementation (ESS 1):** There is a risk of delays or uneven application of environmental and social safeguard measures across decentralized project areas. This

may be attributed to limited technical capacity at the local level, which could hinder consistent implementation of the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP).

- b) **Informal labor and occupational health and safety (OHS) risks (ESS 2):** During infrastructure development or field-level interventions, there is a low risk of unsafe working conditions, informal labor arrangements, and the possible involvement of child labor. These risks arise particularly where labor standards and occupational health and safety protocols are not strictly enforced.
- c) **Minor emissions and runoff (ESS 3):** Agricultural activities, particularly rice cultivation and compost or fertilizer application, may lead to minor greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and localized nutrient runoff. These environmental impacts are expected to be limited in scope and can be managed with appropriate practices.
- d) **Social tension or inequity perception (ESS 4):** The project may inadvertently trigger community grievances if certain groups perceive an inequitable distribution of benefits, particularly regarding access to climate-smart agriculture (CSA) services or financial resources. This risk is low but requires attention to transparency and inclusivity.
- e) **Biodiversity or ecosystem disturbance (ESS 6):** If CSA intensification is not well-managed, there is a low risk of putting additional pressure on land and ecosystems, potentially leading to soil degradation or the disturbance of local biodiversity.

Cultural heritage chance finds (ESS 8): Fieldwork and infrastructure activities may result in the chance discovery of undocumented archaeological or cultural heritage sites. Although this risk is low, procedures must be in place to address such findings appropriately.

- f) **Limited inclusion of marginalized groups (ESS 7):** The project faces a low risk of failing to adequately involve women, youth, and minority groups in decision-making processes and in the equitable sharing of project benefits. Proactive engagement and inclusion strategies will be necessary.
- g) **Farmer exposure to experimental uncertainty:** Farmers participating in validation trials may experience additional labor and time burdens due to strict protocols. There is also a possibility of opportunity costs, stress, or lower-than-expected yields, which could affect their overall planning and productivity.
- h) **Collection of sensitive personal data:** Farmers may be asked to provide personal data, such as phone numbers and photos, which raises privacy and data security concerns. Clear communication and data protection measures will be essential to mitigate this low-level risk.
- i) **Consent and understanding of consent process:** There is a low risk that participants, including farmers and enumerators, may not fully understand the project's objectives or may feel coerced into participation. Ensuring informed, voluntary, and well-understood consent is critical to maintaining ethical standards.

7 Stakeholder engagement

As part of the formulation process for the “Enhancing Sustainable Land Management and Climate-Resilient Agri-food Systems in Côte d’Ivoire (LARACI)” project, a robust and inclusive stakeholder consultation process was carried out between September 2022 and January 2025. These consultations were led by the Ministry of Environment and Ecological Transition (MINETE), in collaboration with CGIAR, FIRCA, and the Global Green Growth Institute (GGGI), with support from local authorities, service providers and the Gates Foundation.

The objective of the consultations was to ensure that the project responds to national development priorities and community needs while aligning with the adaptation objectives under Côte d’Ivoire’s Nationally Determined Contributions (NDCs). Stakeholders consulted included national and local authorities, decentralized technical services, producer organizations, youth and women’s groups, small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs), research institutions, civil society, and development partners.

The consultations helped validate the project’s theory of change, identify climate-resilience priorities, clarify roles and responsibilities for implementation, and integrate community-driven innovations and concerns. The feedback received during this process was essential for improving project design and increasing ownership, inclusiveness, and sustainability.

Tables 2, 3 and 4 below summarize the key stages, participants, issues raised, and outcomes of the consultation process.

TABLE 2: MAIN STAKEHOLDER CONSULTATION ROUNDS

LOCATION & DATE	PARTICIPANTS	FOCUS	KEY SUGGESTIONS / OUTCOMES
Abidjan – Cocody (20–21 Sep 2022)	>50 stakeholders (ministries, private sector, CSOs)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Presentation of project rationale and components - Breakout sessions on soil systems, CIS, CSA finance, extension, value chains 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Digital soil mapping - Expanded agromet stations - Involve Women’s Ministry - Build CSA capacity - Add components on environmental education and M&E
Grand-Bassam (22 Sep 2022)	38 SMEs and cooperatives	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climate impact on agricultural productivity - Presentation of CSA and survey findings 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Demand for CSA financing - Capacity building for SMEs - Strengthen cooperatives - Focus on crops: cassava, yam, rice
Bocanda (23 Sep 2022)	Local authorities, women & youth reps, technical staff	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Grassroots feedback on local priorities and project alignment 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Support for irrigated rice valleys - Add yam (Kponan), vegetables - Address bushfires, promote biochar species - Build youth/women capacity and access to land & finance

Abidjan (29 May- 2 June 2023)	NDA/MINETE CGIAR, and GGGI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Joint review of project components - Project implementation arrangements and governance structure 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Request for integration of a forestry/agroforestry component - Suggestions to amplify county ownership and the role of national institutions
Bocanda (June 2024)	CGIAR, community reps	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Local authority and feedback from potential beneficiaries to confirm and validate project alignment with local needs and priorities 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Identified priority issues: soil degradation, erratic rainfall, pest pressure - Confirmation of project design alignment with local needs and priorities
Stakeholder visit to IITA campus Ibadan, Nigeria (16-18 June 2025)	FIRCA, MINADER PV, ANADER, CNRA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Exchange on LARACI components and implementation arrangements - Showcase and exchange on IITA CSA technologies 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Deepened collaboration with FIRCA in LARACI funding proposal co-design - Exchange on IITA CSA technologies their scaling through LARACI

TABLE 3: HIGH-LEVEL ENGAGEMENT

DATE & LOCATION	PARTICIPANTS	OBJECTIVES / FOCUS	KEY OUTCOMES
June 2024 – Abidjan &	MINETE, MINADER PV, FIRCA, CGIAR, GGGI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Share revised concept note - Review implementation arrangements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreement on overall implementation arrangement and Executing Entities (CGIAR & FIRCA) - Extend project to Gbêkê - Identified priority issues: soil degradation, erratic rainfall, pest pressure
December 2024 – Abidjan	CGIAR, MINETE, FIRCA, Project Design Committee members	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Finalize project governance framework 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Defined coordination model: CGIAR System Organization = Accredited Entity FIRCA = Co-Executing Entity (Outputs 1.1,1.2 & 3.1) CGIAR Center = Co-Executing Entity (Outputs 1.3 & 2.1) MINEDDTE = strategic oversight and PSC chair
January 2025 – Virtual	CGIAR (IITA, AfricaRice) MINETE, FIRCA	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Confirm readiness for GCF Concept Note resubmission 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Agreement on roles & responsibilities - Timeline confirmed for resubmission of CN to GCF

			- Technical team set up for funding proposal co-development
Aug 2025	MINETE, FIRCA, CGIAR (CGIAR System Organization, AfricaRice, IITA, Alliance of Bioversity International and CIAT)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Validate the Funding Proposal package for submission - Signature of joint commitment of partners 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Validation of Funding Proposal package for submission and Signature of NDA no-objection letter - Timeline for submission and target approval confirmed

TABLE 4: KEY THEMES EMERGING FROM CONSULTATIONS

THEME	DETAILS
Inclusion	Systematic engagement of women, youth, SMEs, and vulnerable communities through workshops, focus groups, and community-based forums
Challenges Identified	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climate change (drought, floods) - Soil degradation - Poor irrigation infrastructure - Limited access to finance and post-harvest services
CSA Innovations Prioritized	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Climate-resilient and early-maturing varieties - Water harvesting and inland valley development - Agroforestry and biopesticides - Farmer field schools
Governance	Multi-level governance model agreed with clear execution roles, annual reviews, and inclusive oversight via the Project Steering Committee.

8 Detailed environmental and social action plan (ESAP)

Following the Environmental and Social (E&S) screening, the present Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP) was developed as Annex 6 of the GCF funding proposal for *Land Restoration and Climate-Smart Agriculture for Climate Resilient Inclusive Growth in Côte d'Ivoire (LARACI)*. The ESAP outlines targeted mitigation measures for all identified environmental and social risks, clearly defines roles and responsibilities for implementation, and includes a timeline for executing each measure. The ESAP prioritizes risks based on their potential significance, establishes expected outcomes, and provides indicative budgeting to ensure effective implementation. The plan will ensure full compliance with applicable GCF ESS standards and IFC Environmental and Social Performance Standards and national environmental and social regulations and will serve as a central tool for environmental and social risk management throughout the project lifecycle.

TABLE 5: ENVIRONMENTAL AND SOCIAL ACTION PLAN OF THE LARACI PROJECT

RISK	DETAILED DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION MEASURES	RISK SIGNIFICANCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY/PERSON	SCHEDULE	EXPECTED RESULTS	COST/ BUDGET (USD)
Inconsistent ESAP Implementation (ESS 1)	Potential delays or uneven application of environmental and social safeguards in decentralized project areas due to limited technical capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Develop and disseminate ESAP - EE ESS focal points to train EE staff on ESAP implementation 	Low	FIRCA, AfricaRice	Before and during implementation (project start ongoing throughout implementation)	Harmonized and consistent safeguard application across regions	5,000
Informal Labor and OHS Risks (ESS 2)	Risk of unsafe working conditions, informal employment arrangements, and child labor during infrastructure or field activities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Enforce labor code clauses in contracts Conduct awareness-raising on labor rights Provide PPE and safety training Establish a labor grievance mechanism 	Low	FIRCA, AfricaRice	Continuous (from project start onward)	Safe, regulated, and equitable working conditions	10,000

RISK	DETAILED DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION MEASURES	RISK SIGNIFICANCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY/PERSON	SCHEDULE	EXPECTED RESULTS	COST/ BUDGET (USD)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Screening and Monitoring Mechanisms: To operationalize the distinction between child labor and supporting parents/family, the project developed child labor screening questions (Appendix 3 Child labor screening questions for beneficiary assessments) in beneficiary assessments and a Code of Conduct (Appendix 4: Code of Conduct on the Prevention of Child Labor). It requires beneficiaries to sign a Code of Conduct committing to compliance with child labor standards. 					
Minor Emissions and Runoff (ESS 3)	Localized GHG emissions associated with the technologies if not properly managed and minor	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Promote intermittent irrigation and water-saving practices 	Low	AfricaRice, FIRCA	Start of agricultural seasons (project start onward)	Improved resource efficiency and reduced pollution risk	Project implementation cost

RISK	DETAILED DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION MEASURES	RISK SIGNIFICANCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY/PERSON	SCHEDULE	EXPECTED RESULTS	COST/ BUDGET (USD)
	nutrient runoff from compost and fertilizer use	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use biochar and mulching • Promote targeted fertilizer application within an integrated soil management framework • Train farmers in compost handling • Monitor runoff risks 					
Social Tension or Inequity Perception (ESS 4)	Risk of community grievances related to perceived inequity in access to CSA services or finance	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement transparent beneficiary targeting • Conduct regular inclusive consultations • Operationalize GRM at local level 	Low	FIRCA, AfricaRice	Before beneficiary selection and ongoing throughout implementation	Strengthened community trust and grievance resolution	10,000
Biodiversity or Ecosystem Disturbance (ESS 6)	Risk of unintended land use pressure or soil degradation if CSA intensification is poorly managed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Screen all project sites • Promote agroforestry, and integrated soil fertility management approaches • Conduct periodic field audits 	Low	FIRCA, AfricaRice, MINETE (NDA)	Screening before activity validation	Ecosystem integrity maintained; no encroachment	20,000
Cultural Heritage Chance Finds (ESS 8)	Possible disturbance of undocumented archaeological or cultural sites during	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Include chance find procedure (See Appendix 5: Chance Find Procedures 	Low	FIRCA, AfricaRice, Contractors	Before and during infrastructure activities	Cultural resources protected; legal	5,000

RISK	DETAILED DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION MEASURES	RISK SIGNIFICANCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY/PERSON	SCHEDULE	EXPECTED RESULTS	COST/ BUDGET (USD)
	field or infrastructure work	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Train staff and contractors • Halt activities and notify authorities if finds occur 				compliance ensured	
Limited Inclusion of Marginalized Groups (ESS 7)	Potential underrepresentation of women, youth, or minority groups in planning and benefit sharing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Apply inclusive consultation methods • Monitor participation disaggregated by gender and age • Adapt communication tools 	Low	FIRCA, AfricaRice	Start of stakeholder engagement and continuous throughout implementation	Equitable participation and benefit distribution	Project implementation cost
Farmer exposure to experimental uncertainty, labor/time burden, and potential economic loss	Farmers participating in validation trials must follow specific protocols that may lead to additional labor, opportunity cost, stress, or lower-than-expected yields. Participation may also affect their farm planning and workload.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Implement a two-step informed consent process using standardized forms (ODK and written) • Clearly explain voluntary participation, risks, and benefits • Emphasize the right to withdraw at any time • Provide project contacts for grievances 	Low	AfricaRice, Enumerator, FIRCA	At recruitment and prior to data collection (Q1 of project)	Fully informed participation; ethical compliance; risk mitigation through clarity and voluntary decision	Project implementation cost

RISK	DETAILED DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION MEASURES	RISK SIGNIFICANCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY/PERSON	SCHEDULE	EXPECTED RESULTS	COST/ BUDGET (USD)
Collection of sensitive personal data (photos, phone numbers) and optional follow-up	Farmers are asked to share private data (phone numbers, photos), which may raise privacy and data security concerns.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use opt-in consent for each element (photos, contact info, follow-ups) • Explain data storage, usage, and privacy protection • Apply anonymization and statistical disclosure controls (SDC) • Train enumerators on ethical data handling • Maintain secure digital storage and limited access (ONA system) 	Low	FIRCA, AfricaRice	At the point of consent; ongoing during data collection	Privacy protected; participants retain control over personal data; data security compliance achieved	Project implementation cost
Consent and understanding of consent process	Risk that participants (farmers or enumerators) may not fully understand the project objectives and activities or feel pressured to participate.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verbal explanation of consent in local language • Allow time for questions and decision-making • Encourage presence of household member if needed • Provide a physical copy of a consent form with contact information 	Low	Enumerator, Supervisors, Local Facilitators	At recruitment and first engagement	Consent is truly informed and voluntary; reputational and ethical risks avoided	Project implementation cost

RISK	DETAILED DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION MEASURES	RISK SIGNIFICANCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY/PERSON	SCHEDULE	EXPECTED RESULTS	COST/ BUDGET (USD)
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Train enumerators to obtain and document consent respectfully 					
Customary Land Verification and Potential Land Conflict	A significant proportion of LARACI beneficiaries operate under customary land tenure systems without formal land titles. If land verification is not handled transparently and inclusively, this may create or exacerbate local tensions, including overlapping claims, elite capture, exclusion of vulnerable households, or disputes over land legitimacy. Although the project does not involve land acquisition, inadequate screening of land use rights could generate perceptions of unfairness or conflict at community level.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project will not require land acquisition, expropriation, or formal land titling as a condition for participation. Interventions will be limited to land already under active and uncontested use by beneficiary households or land voluntarily made available for community-based activities. Prior to site approval, participatory land validation meetings will be conducted involving village chiefs, customary land authorities, local land committees, and neighboring land users to confirm socially recognized land use rights. A 	Low	FIRCA; AfricaRice); Local Administrative Authorities; Customary Land Committees	Prior to beneficiary selection and site validation; continuous monitoring throughout implementation	Transparent, conflict-sensitive land verification process; reduced risk of land-related disputes; strengthened community trust; full compliance with IFC PS5 and GCF ESS requirements	8,000

RISK	DETAILED DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION MEASURES	RISK SIGNIFICANCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY/PERSON	SCHEDULE	EXPECTED RESULTS	COST/ BUDGET (USD)
		<p>standardized land conflict screening checklist, integrated into the ESAP (Appendix 2: Land Conflict Screening Checklist Tool), will be applied to verify the absence of ongoing disputes. Plots subject to unresolved or contested claims will be excluded until resolved through established local mediation mechanisms. The project will coordinate with decentralized land services and relevant ministries to ensure alignment with national land governance frameworks. An accessible Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) will be operational to receive and address land-related</p>					

RISK	DETAILED DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION MEASURES	RISK SIGNIFICANCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY/PERSON	SCHEDULE	EXPECTED RESULTS	COST/ BUDGET (USD)
		complaints promptly and transparently.					
Nutrient Runoff and Potential Cumulative Impacts from Intermittent Rice Irrigation (ESS 3 – Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention)	Intermittent rice irrigation systems, particularly in inland valley ecosystems, may generate localized nutrient runoff where fertilizers are applied. There is a potential risk of cumulative impacts on downstream water quality and ecosystem health if runoff is not properly managed.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project will implement a combination of preventive and adaptive measures to minimize nutrient runoff and avoid cumulative impacts. These include: promoting climate-smart agriculture and integrated soil fertility management practices, such as optimized fertilizer application (appropriate dosage and timing), use of organic amendments, and targeted nutrient management; applying water-efficient irrigation techniques such as alternate wetting and drying (AWD) to reduce runoff and nutrient leaching; establishing vegetative buffer 	Low	AfricaRice; FIRCA; Extension Services	During agricultural seasons and continuous throughout implementation (from project start and onward)	Reduced nutrient losses and prevention of water pollution; no significant cumulative impacts at watershed level; improved resource efficiency and sustainable water management	Project implementation cost

RISK	DETAILED DESCRIPTION	MITIGATION MEASURES	RISK SIGNIFICANCE	RESPONSIBLE PARTY/PERSON	SCHEDULE	EXPECTED RESULTS	COST/ BUDGET (USD)
		<p>zones and promoting agroforestry systems to enhance nutrient retention; providing continuous training and technical support to farmers on sustainable irrigation and fertilizer practices; and monitoring water management practices and potential environmental impacts. Where localized runoff issues are identified, adaptive management measures will be applied to adjust practices accordingly.</p>					

Appendix 1: Environmental and Social Screening

Part A: Risk Factors

Please indicate your answers to the questions below and provide an explanation on the response selected. In cases when the TBD response has been selected, please explain briefly why you are not able to determine now and when in the project cycle the question will be addressed.

If the criterion is not applicable to the project, you may write N/A in the justification box.

Risk Factors	YES	NO
Will the activities involve associated facilities and require further due diligence of such associated facilities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>All activities under LARACI project are self-contained within the defined project scope and geographical boundaries, targeting climate-smart agriculture (CSA) in specific communities in the Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé, and Gbêkê regions. The project focuses on on-site enhancements such as soil restoration, sustainable water use, CSA extension services, and agroforestry — all of which are implemented without reliance on external infrastructure or services that would meet the criteria of associated facilities.</p> <p>Furthermore, any physical infrastructure supported by the project, such as small-scale irrigation or demonstration plots or small-scale storage, is developed and managed internally and does not require the construction or use of off-site roads, energy supply systems, or processing facilities that are necessary for the viability of the project. There is no reliance on contemporaneous third-party infrastructure outside the project footprint that would trigger the need for additional environmental and social due diligence.</p> <p>The project is thus operationally self-sufficient, and its implementation does not give rise to any facilities that would be considered “associated” under the GCF and IFC standards. As such, no further due diligence is required for associated facilities.</p>		
Will the activities involve trans-boundary impacts including those that would require further due diligence and notification to affected states?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>The LARACI project is designed as a national initiative with site-specific interventions confined entirely within the territorial boundaries of Côte d'Ivoire. The activities focus on enhancing CSA, improving agrometeorological services, and strengthening rural livelihoods within the central regions of the Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé, and Gbêkê. These interventions are localized in nature, targeting smallholder farms and community-based infrastructure such as small-scale irrigation systems and climate information platforms.</p> <p>The project does not involve large-scale infrastructure, water diversion from shared international rivers, extractive activities, or hazardous waste management that could have environmental or social spillover effects beyond national borders. Additionally, no activities will be undertaken near</p>		

<p>or along international borders or transboundary ecosystems, and there is no reliance on shared natural resources whose management would necessitate engagement with neighboring countries.</p> <p>Given the internal scope, small-scale, and non-polluting nature of the project, there are no expected transboundary environmental or social impacts. Therefore, in accordance with international good practice and relevant provisions under the Espoo Convention and other applicable frameworks, the project does not trigger the need for transboundary notification or additional due diligence related to impacts on other states.</p>		
<p>Will the activities adversely affect working conditions and health and safety of workers or potentially employ vulnerable categories of workers including women and children?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>No, the project activities will not adversely affect working conditions and health and safety of workers, nor will they potentially employ children, nor exploit vulnerable categories of workers, including women.</p> <p>The LARACI project is designed with a strong emphasis on empowerment, capacity building, and inclusive participation in CSA. The project specifically targets rural communities in the central regions of Côte d'Ivoire and aims to build resilience among smallholder farmers through the adoption of sustainable and locally appropriate agricultural practices. All interventions are community-based, small-scale, and non-extractive, reducing the likelihood of hazardous working conditions.</p> <p>The project design highlights the importance of gender and youth inclusion, particularly in value chains such as cassava, yam, and rice. Women are expected to benefit from increased income opportunities, especially in the processing and marketing of cassava products like <i>attiéké</i> and <i>gari</i>, which are already significant employment sectors for rural women. However, their involvement is structured through voluntary, skill-enhancing activities rather than through unregulated or exploitative labor</p> <p>Furthermore, the project does not involve any large-scale construction or industrial activity that would pose significant occupational health and safety risks. Instead, it focuses on climate-smart infrastructure such as small-scale irrigation and small-scale post-harvest improvements, which are implemented with technical guidance and in compliance with national labor standards.</p> <p>The LARACI project also recognizes the vulnerability of certain groups, including women and youth, to climate impacts and economic exclusion. As such, the project includes targeted support mechanisms—such as training, improved access to agricultural inputs, and financial services—to reduce vulnerability and promote dignified, safe work opportunities.</p> <p>The project's approach reinforces social protection and responsible employment, aligned with national laws and international best practices.</p>		
<p>Will the activities potentially generate hazardous waste and pollutants, including pesticides, and contaminate lands that would require further studies on management, minimization</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

and control and compliance with the country and applicable international environmental quality standards?		
<p>The LARACI project is centered on promoting climate-smart, environmentally sustainable agricultural practices, including agroforestry, integrated soil fertility management, and organic fertilization. It explicitly supports the reduction of chemical inputs such as pesticides and tailored, integrated use of fertilizers with focus on agro-ecology by promoting alternatives like biochar, organic manure, slash-and-mulch, and climate-smart crop varieties.</p> <p>The project does not involve industrial-scale agriculture or introduce hazardous agrochemicals that would result in the generation of dangerous waste. Instead, it emphasizes improved land and water management practices aimed at restoring soil health and increasing resilience to climate impacts. All planned activities align with Côte d'Ivoire's national environmental regulation and applicable international best practices, ensuring minimal environmental risk.</p> <p>Given this context, no further studies are required for hazardous waste management or contamination risks, as the project is designed to enhance—not degrade—environmental quality.</p>		
Will the activities involve the construction, maintenance, and rehabilitation of critical infrastructure (like dams, water impoundments, coastal and riverbank infrastructure) that require further technical assessment and safety studies?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>No. The project will not involve the construction, maintenance, or rehabilitation of critical infrastructure such as dams, water impoundments, or coastal and riverbank protection works that would require further technical assessment and safety studies. While the project includes the installation of minor irrigation systems and improvements to inland valley water management (e.g., through Smart-Valleys approaches), these interventions are low-risk and small in scale, designed primarily for improving local agricultural productivity.</p> <p>There is no involvement of high-risk infrastructure like large dams, reservoirs, or flood defense structures that would typically trigger the need for detailed engineering assessments or dam safety plans. The water management practices promoted by the project are nature-based, decentralized, and implemented with community participation, aligning with national standards and best practices in CSA.</p> <p>As such, the activities do not pose significant technical or safety risks that would warrant further specialized studies.</p>		
Will the proposed activities potentially involve resettlement and dispossession, land acquisition, and economic displacement of persons and communities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>No. The proposed activities will not involve resettlement, dispossession, land acquisition, or economic displacement of persons and communities. The LARACI project is designed to operate within existing agricultural lands and rural community settings where smallholder farmers are already engaged in crop production. The interventions — such as the adoption of CSA practices,</p>		

<p>improved extension services, and access to climate finance — are voluntary, inclusive, and based on community-led planning.</p> <p>The project does not require the acquisition of new land, nor does it involve infrastructure or activities that would result in the physical or economic displacement of individuals or groups. Instead, it aims to enhance the resilience and productivity of existing livelihoods, with a strong emphasis on social inclusion, particularly for women and youth.</p> <p>Furthermore, community engagement and stakeholder consultations have been integral to project preparation, ensuring that all activities are aligned with local priorities and social safeguards. Therefore, no resettlement or land-related impacts are expected, and no further studies are required on this matter.</p>		
<p>Will the activities be located in or in the vicinity of protected areas and areas of ecological significance including critical habitats, key biodiversity areas and internationally recognized conservation sites?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>The LARACI project is focused on agricultural transformation within already cultivated and inhabited rural zones, specifically the central regions of the Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé, and Gbêkê. These areas have been heavily impacted by agricultural expansion — particularly cocoa farming — and are not designated as protected or conservation areas.</p> <p>The project targets degraded agricultural lands for climate-smart interventions, such as agroforestry, soil fertility improvement, and sustainable water management. These interventions are intended to restore ecosystems and improve land productivity, not convert or disturb natural habitats.</p> <p>Moreover, no new agricultural expansion into forests or ecologically sensitive zones is planned, and environmental screening has confirmed that all project sites are outside of internationally or nationally protected areas. As such, the project poses no risk to biodiversity or ecologically significant habitats, and no further environmental assessment is needed in this regard.</p>		
<p>Will the activities affect indigenous peoples that would require further due diligence, free, prior and informed consent (FPIC) and documentation of development plans?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
<p>No. The activities will not affect indigenous peoples in a manner that would require further due diligence, Free, Prior, and Informed Consent (FPIC), or the documentation of development plans.</p> <p>While the absence of formal recognition under national legislation alone is not sufficient to determine the absence of Indigenous Peoples, it is noted that no Indigenous Peoples are officially recognized within the LARACI project areas. To ensure compliance with the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy, a screening was undertaken to assess whether any groups present in the project areas exhibit the key characteristics described in the GCF Policy, such as self-identification as a distinct cultural group, collective attachment to specific territories, distinct customary institutions, and social or economic vulnerability.</p>		

This assessment identified the seasonal presence of transhumant pastoralist groups, primarily Fulani (Peulh) herders, in parts of the broader project landscape, including the Gbêkê region. These groups are highly mobile and do not maintain permanent settlements within the specific project intervention sites. Project activities are confined to existing cultivated lands and do not involve land acquisition, restrictions on access to grazing areas, or interference with established transhumance routes.

Nonetheless, consistent with a precautionary and inclusive approach, the project will explicitly include seasonal pastoralist groups in stakeholder engagement processes where relevant, ensure that project activities do not restrict access to shared natural resources, and provide culturally appropriate communication and grievance redress mechanisms that are accessible to mobile populations.

The project activities are community-based, participatory, and focused on voluntary adoption of CSA practices. They are designed to enhance local livelihoods, food security, and climate resilience without infringing upon traditional lands, cultural heritage, or collective rights.

Nevertheless, the project ensures that inclusive stakeholder engagement and culturally appropriate consultation processes are carried out with all community members, including vulnerable and marginalized groups. This participatory approach guarantees that the voices and concerns of all beneficiaries are integrated into project design and implementation.

Given this context, the project does not trigger FPIC requirements, nor does it necessitate the preparation of Indigenous Peoples Development Plans. However, if indigenous identities or claims are identified during implementation, the project will adopt appropriate safeguards in alignment with national policies, the interim Environmental and Social Safeguards of the GCF (International Finance Corporation's Environmental and Social Performance Standards), and the GCF Indigenous People Policy.

Will the activities be located in areas that are considered to have archaeological (prehistoric), paleontological, historical, cultural, artistic, and religious values or contain features considered as critical cultural heritage?

☐
☒

The LARACI project targets agricultural lands and rural communities in the central regions of Côte d'Ivoire (the Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé, and Gbêkê), which have long been used for farming and do not overlap with officially recognized cultural heritage sites or areas of historical, archaeological, or religious significance.

The project focuses on enhancing existing agricultural systems through sustainable land management, climate-smart agronomic practices, and improved infrastructure at the local level. All activities are designed to be low-impact and localized, without the need for excavation, large-scale construction, or land conversion that might risk disturbing cultural or heritage features.

In addition, environmental and social screening conducted during project preparation did not identify any known cultural heritage sites within or near the project implementation zones. As a precautionary measure, the project will include chance find procedures in its environmental and

social management processes to ensure any unforeseen cultural artifacts are managed in accordance with national laws and international best practices.

Therefore, the project does not require further assessments related to cultural heritage.

Part B: Specific environmental and social risks and impacts

Assessment and Management of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts	YES	NO	TBD
Will the activities involve transboundary impacts on air, water or other natural resources?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	
<p>No. The activities will not involve transboundary impacts on air, water, or other natural resources.</p> <p>There are no planned interventions involving large-scale water extraction from shared river basins, emissions into transboundary air sheds, or use of natural resources that extend beyond Côte d'Ivoire's borders. Activities such as small-scale irrigation, agroforestry, and CSA practices are designed to be environmentally sustainable and contained within project sites.</p> <p>As such, the project does not pose any risk of cross-border environmental or social impacts, and no further assessment related to transboundary resource management is required.</p>			
Are the activities likely to contribute to cumulative impacts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>No. The activities are not likely to contribute to cumulative impacts.</p> <p>The LARACI project is composed of small-scale, site-specific interventions focused on improving agricultural resilience through sustainable practices such as climate-smart agronomy, agroforestry, and water-efficient irrigation in targeted rural communities. These interventions are designed to restore degraded land, improve soil health, and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, thereby having positive localized environmental effects.</p> <p>The project does not involve large infrastructure, extractive activities, or industrial-scale operations that typically lead to cumulative impacts over time or across sectors. Additionally, the activities are carefully aligned with existing national strategies and are complementary to ongoing initiatives without overlapping in a manner that would generate combined negative effects.</p> <p>Given the geographic dispersion of activities, their low environmental footprint, and their restorative nature, no significant cumulative environmental or social impacts are anticipated. Environmental and social screening during project preparation confirmed this low-risk profile.</p>			
Will the activities involve associated facilities and third-party impacts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>The LARACI project is designed to be self-contained and self-sufficient, with all planned interventions — such as CSA, agroforestry systems, and localized infrastructure improvements —</p>			

<p>taking place within the defined project boundaries in the central regions of Côte d'Ivoire (the Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé, and Gbêkê).</p> <p>The project does not rely on external infrastructure or services (e.g., roads, processing plants, or utilities) that would typically qualify as associated facilities. All essential infrastructure and services needed to implement project activities are incorporated directly into the project design and managed by the implementing entities.</p> <p>Moreover, the project will not induce environmental or social impacts on third parties outside of its implementation areas. The activities are low-risk, inclusive, and based on participatory approaches that strengthen, rather than disrupt, local systems.</p> <p>Therefore, there is no need for additional due diligence related to associated facilities or third-party impacts.</p>			
Are the activities likely to induce potential social conflicts?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>The LARACI project is designed to be inclusive, participatory, and community-driven, targeting rural populations engaged in agriculture in the central regions of Côte d'Ivoire (the Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé, and Gbêkê). The project promotes equitable access to CSA technologies, capacity building, and financial services, with a strong focus on social cohesion and empowerment of vulnerable groups, including women and youth.</p> <p>Project activities are based on voluntary participation and developed through stakeholder consultations to ensure alignment with local priorities and needs. There are no land acquisitions, displacements, or exclusionary practices that might trigger grievances or competition over resources.</p> <p>In fact, the project is expected to strengthen social structures by improving livelihoods, fostering collaboration among farmers, and reducing vulnerability to climate-related shocks. Consequently, the risk of social conflict is minimal, and no further assessment is required in this regard.</p>			
Do the accredited entities, executing entities and implementing agencies (grantees, sub-borrowers and proponents) have the capacity to implement the environmental and social management plans/action plans?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Has the E&S risk category of the project been provided in the funding proposal?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Has the E&S risk category and the rationale for the categorization of the project been provided in the relevant sections of the funding proposal?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there any additional environmental, health and safety requirements under the national laws	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

and regulations and relevant international treaties and agreements?			
<p>The LARACI project benefits from the robust capacities of its Accredited Entity and Executing Entities to effectively implement the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP), ensuring adherence to GCF/IFC Environmental and Social standards and best practices.</p> <p>1. CGIAR System Organization – Accredited Entity</p> <p>As the Accredited Entity, the CGIAR System Organization brings extensive experience in agricultural research, climate-resilient practices, and environmental and social safeguards. CGIAR's global research portfolio focuses on sustainable and resilient food, land, and water systems, directly aligning with the objectives of the LARACI project. Its commitment to capacity sharing and policy innovation supports the effective management of environmental and social aspects in complex agricultural projects.</p> <p>2. FIRCA – Executing Entity</p> <p>The Fonds Interprofessionnel pour la Recherche et le Conseil Agricoles (FIRCA) is accredited by the Green Climate Fund (GCF) for environmental and social risk category B projects, indicating its capability to manage projects with medium environmental and social risks. FIRCA's accreditation reflects its adherence to GCF's fiduciary standards and its capacity to implement and monitor environmental and social safeguards effectively.</p> <p>3. AfricaRice – Executing Entity</p> <p>AfricaRice, a CGIAR Research Center, possesses significant expertise in environmental impact assessments, particularly in rice-based agri-food systems. Their policies, innovation systems, and impact assessment programs focus on evaluating the real-world impacts of agricultural research, ensuring that environmental and social considerations are integral to project implementation.</p>			
Are the identification of risks and impacts based on recent or up-to-date information?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>The environmental and social risk assessment of the LARACI project was conducted using current and context-specific data, collected and analyzed during the 2025 feasibility study and through the April 2025 environmental and social screening exercise that included key consultations with the NDA/MINETE, the EEs (AfricaRice and FIRCA) and service providers such as IITA and the Alliance of Bioversity and CIAT who are directly involved in the implementation of field activities.</p>			
Labour and Working Conditions	YES	NO	TBD
Will the activities potentially have impacts on the working conditions, particularly the terms of employment, worker's organization, non-discrimination, equal opportunity, child labor, and forced labor of direct, contracted and third-party workers?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

No. The activities are not expected to have negative impacts on working conditions, including terms of employment, workers' rights to organize, non-discrimination, equal opportunity, or the risk of child and forced labor among direct, contracted, or third-party workers.

The LARACI project is designed with a strong **social inclusion and safeguard framework**, aligned with both national labor laws and international standards, including those of the International Labor Organization (ILO) and IFC Standards.

- The project emphasizes the **promotion of decent work** through capacity-building, inclusive participation, and equitable access to climate-smart technologies and rural employment opportunities, particularly for women and youth.
- Activities will be implemented through **community-based approaches and established institutions** (e.g., FIRCA, AfricaRice), which are required to comply with national labor regulations and policies promoting **non-discrimination, equal pay, and safe working conditions**.
- Specific safeguards are in place to ensure that **child and forced labor are strictly prohibited**, and awareness-raising campaigns and monitoring systems will be integrated into project implementation to enforce this standard.
- The project will also promote **fair recruitment practices and respect for the right of workers to organize**, in line with Côte d'Ivoire's labor code and applicable international frameworks.

Overall, the project is expected to have **positive impacts on rural employment and working conditions**, and no adverse effects are anticipated that would require further assessment or mitigation measures.

Will the activities pose occupational health and safety risks to workers including supply chain workers?



The LARACI project involves **low-risk, small-scale agricultural and infrastructure activities** such as soil management, agroforestry, climate-smart irrigation, and post-harvest handling. These interventions are not associated with hazardous materials, heavy machinery, or industrial-scale operations that would typically pose major occupational health and safety (OHS) risks.

To further ensure safety:

- The project design incorporates **capacity-building and training components** focused on safe and sustainable farming practices, including **climate-smart techniques and responsible input use**.
- As the Executing Entities including **FIRCA** and AfricaRice are experienced in rural development and adhere to national **OHS regulations and international best practices**, ensuring that all workers — direct or contracted — operate in safe working environments.
- Where small infrastructure works are required (e.g., minor irrigation systems), the project will apply **basic OHS measures**, such as protective equipment, safe tool usage, and supervision, as part of the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP).
- The project avoids the use of **hazardous chemicals and high-risk equipment**, thereby minimizing supply chain risks as well.

In conclusion, while minor physical risks may exist in agricultural settings, these are well within manageable limits and will be addressed through preventive training and safety protocols , ensuring worker health and safety throughout the project lifecycle.			
Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention	YES	NO	TBD
Will the activities generate (1) emissions to air; (2) discharges to water; (3) activity-related greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, (4) noise and vibration; and (5) wastes?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Yes, but the activities are expected to generate only minimal and manageable levels of emissions to air, discharges to water, greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions, noise, vibration, and waste.</p> <p>The LARACI project involves small-scale CSA interventions that are inherently designed to reduce environmental impacts rather than exacerbate them. However, as with any agricultural development, some limited environmental outputs may occur:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Emissions to Air: Minor emissions may result from the use of machinery for land preparation or from the application of organic inputs. However, the project promotes low-emission practices such as agroforestry, use of biochar, and reduced tillage, which help to offset and mitigate these emissions. 2. Discharge to Water: There may be limited and localized runoff from composting or fertilization. However, the project's focus on integrated soil and water management, organic inputs, and sustainable irrigation significantly reduces the risk of harmful water contamination. 3. Activity-related GHG Emissions: Some GHG emissions may be generated, particularly from rice cultivation. However, the project incorporates climate-smart practices — such as intermittent rice irrigation, biochar use, and organic soil amendments — specifically to reduce methane and nitrous oxide emissions. Overall, the project is expected to have net-positive climate mitigation outcomes, contributing to national GHG reduction targets. 4. Noise and Vibration: These will be minimal, limited to small-scale construction or rehabilitation of infrastructure (e.g., irrigation systems, small-scale storage units), and will be temporary and localized with no long-term or significant impact on communities or wildlife. 5. Waste: Waste generation is expected to be minimal and mainly organic, such as crop residues and biodegradable waste from farming operations. The project promotes the use of these byproducts (e.g., composting or mulching), thus minimizing waste disposal needs. 			

<p>In summary, while minor environmental outputs are expected, the project's design actively incorporates mitigation measures, and its overall impact on air, water, GHG emissions, noise, and waste is low, controlled, and environmentally sustainable.</p>			
<p>Will the activities utilize significant amounts of natural resources including water and energy?</p>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>No. The activities will not utilize significant amounts of natural resources, including water and energy.</p> <p>The LARACI project promotes climate-smart and resource-efficient agricultural practices that are specifically designed to optimize the use of natural resources, particularly water and energy:</p> <p>Water Use: The project focuses on improving water efficiency through small-scale, sustainable irrigation systems (e.g., Smart-Valleys approach) and better soil moisture retention techniques such as mulching and agroforestry. These approaches reduce water consumption and enhance resilience to drought, especially in rainfed agricultural systems.</p> <p>Energy Use: The project does not involve energy-intensive infrastructure or mechanization.</p> <p>Overall, the interventions are designed to be low-input and environmentally sustainable, helping smallholder farmers adapt to climate change without placing significant pressure on natural resource systems. Therefore, no significant or unsustainable use of water or energy is anticipated.</p>			
<p>Will there be a need to develop detailed measures to reduce pollution and promote sustainable use of resources?</p>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Yes, but only to a limited extent. The need to develop detailed measures to reduce pollution and promote the sustainable use of resources will be addressed through the project's Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP), aligned with the GCF ESS standards and IFC Environmental and Social Performance Standards.</p> <p>While the LARACI project is inherently designed to promote sustainable agriculture, climate-smart practices, and environmental resilience, it will still include targeted measures within the ESAP to ensure pollution control and sustainable resource management, consistent with IFC Performance Standards 3 (Resource Efficiency and Pollution Prevention) and 6 (Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources).</p> <p>Specifically:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The project promotes efficient water use through techniques such as Smart-Valleys water management, thereby reducing pressure on water resources. • Organic inputs, agroforestry, and integrated soil fertility practices reduce reliance on chemical fertilizers and minimize risks of land and water contamination. • Agricultural waste will be reused through composting and mulching, reducing the need for external inputs and avoiding pollution from disposal. 			

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> GHG emissions, especially from rice systems, will be addressed through intermittent flooding, biochar application, and improved soil management, helping the project meet climate mitigation goals. The ESAP will include practical and enforceable commitments for all project partners and executing entities to monitor resource use and prevent pollution. <p>These measures are already embedded into the project's logic and will be formalized and tracked through the ESAP, ensuring consistency with IFC's sustainability framework without requiring standalone pollution control or resource-use plans beyond what is proportionate to the project's low-risk profile.</p>			
Community Health, Safety, and Security	YES	NO	TBD
Will the activities potentially generate risks and impacts to the health and safety of the affected communities?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>The LARACI project is designed around low-risk, community-based agricultural interventions that aim to improve rural livelihoods, food security, and climate resilience. The activities focus on sustainable farming practices, small-scale irrigation systems, capacity-building, and extension services, which are unlikely to pose threats to public health or community safety.</p> <p>However, in alignment with IFC Performance Standard 4 (Community Health, Safety, and Security), the project includes preventive measures within the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP) to address any minor risks, including:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Safe management of organic inputs and composting to avoid contamination or unpleasant odors. Mitigation of risks related to water use, ensuring sustainable abstraction that does not negatively impact downstream users or ecosystems. Training for farmers and community members on safe handling of farming tools, agroecological techniques, and the use of water systems. No use of hazardous chemicals or large-scale construction that could generate environmental health risks or infrastructure-related dangers. <p>In addition, the project's participatory and inclusive design ensures that communities are actively involved in planning and decision-making, which further reduces the risk of unforeseen health or safety concerns.</p> <p>Therefore, the potential risks to community health and safety are minimal, localized, and manageable, and no further specialized studies are required beyond standard ESAP provisions.</p>			
Will the activities increase the risk of sexual exploitation, abuse and harassment?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>No. The activities are not expected to increase the risk of sexual exploitation, abuse, and harassment (SEAH).</p> <p>The LARACI project is designed to promote inclusive, community-based agricultural development, with a strong emphasis on social safeguards, gender equity, and protection of vulnerable groups, in</p>			

alignment with IFC Performance Standard 2 (Labor and Working Conditions) and Performance Standard 4 (Community Health, Safety, and Security).

While any project involving community mobilization and the engagement of multiple actors may carry a residual risk of SEAH, the LARACI project includes specific risk mitigation and prevention measures, integrated into the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP). These include:

- Community sensitization and awareness-raising on gender-based violence (GBV) and SEAH prevention.
- Code of conduct requirements for all project staff, contractors, and partners, outlining zero tolerance for SEAH.
- Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRMs) that are embedded within the processes of each EE, which can handle SEAH-related complaints appropriately.
- Targeted awareness raising on safety, health and SEAH to be conducted by ESS focal points of each EE and local facilitators, including sensitization on ethical conduct and safeguarding responsibilities.
- Inclusive stakeholder engagement processes to ensure women, youth, and marginalized groups have safe spaces to participate and voice concerns.

As such, while the project proactively acknowledges and plans for the potential risk, the likelihood of SEAH is low due to the project's design, safeguards, and governance structure, and effective mitigation measures are already in place to prevent and respond to such risks.

Will there be a need for an emergency preparedness and response plan that also outlines how the affected communities will be assisted in times of emergency?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
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No. The LARACI project does not require a standalone emergency preparedness and response plan, as the nature of the activities does not pose significant risks that would necessitate such a plan.

The LARACI project involves low-risk, small-scale agricultural and community-based interventions — such as climate-smart farming, soil restoration, and decentralized water management — that do not involve hazardous infrastructure, industrial processes, or large-scale construction that could lead to emergency scenarios.

According to IFC Performance Standard 4 (Community Health, Safety, and Security), emergency preparedness and response planning is typically required when project activities pose a real risk of accidents, disasters, or incidents with potential large-scale impacts on communities. In the case of LARACI:

- There are **no planned activities involving hazardous materials**, high-voltage power systems, chemical storage, or large dams.
- Water management systems (e.g. Smart-Valleys) and infrastructure are **small-scale and community-managed**, with minimal failure or disaster risk.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> The project promotes resilience to climate-related shocks (e.g., droughts, floods) through improved farming practices and early warning systems—not the kind of risk that requires emergency protocols beyond community planning. <p>However, basic community awareness and response measures — such as how to manage climate-related hazards — will be integrated into the project’s training and outreach efforts, particularly under the agrometeorological and risk information components. These efforts will strengthen local adaptive capacity and response readiness, especially in areas already prone to climate variability.</p> <p>Therefore, while no formal emergency plan is needed, the project’s existing resilience-building and risk awareness measures are sufficient and appropriate for the level of risk involved.</p>			
Will there be risks posed by the security arrangements and potential conflicts at the project site to the workers and affected community?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>No. The project is not expected to pose risks related to security arrangements or potential conflicts at the project sites that would endanger workers or affected communities.</p> <p>The LARACI project is designed around inclusive, participatory, and community-based agricultural interventions located in relatively stable rural areas of Côte d’Ivoire (Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé, and Gbêkê). The activities do not involve sensitive assets, restricted zones, or contested resources that would typically require the involvement of formal security forces or pose risks of social unrest.</p> <p>The project includes the following considerations to ensure a conflict-sensitive and secure operating environment:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> No private or public security forces are foreseen to be engaged in project implementation. The activities are low-risk and implemented through local institutions and service providers. The project’s focus on social inclusion, equitable benefit-sharing, and grievance redress mechanisms minimizes the risk of conflict or tension between stakeholders. Stakeholder consultations and participatory planning approaches help ensure that project benefits are fairly distributed and that no group is excluded or disproportionately impacted. Capacity-building activities will also include training on conflict resolution and social cohesion, especially where interventions engage multiple community groups. <p>As such, the risk of security-related conflict is minimal, and the project environment is expected to remain safe for both workers and local communities without the need for special security arrangements. Nonetheless, if unforeseen tensions arise, the project has built-in tools such as grievance mechanisms and community dialogue platforms — to respond appropriately.</p>			
Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement	YES	NO	TBD
Will the activities likely involve land acquisition and/or physical or economic displacement?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>No. The activities are not likely to involve land acquisition or result in physical or economic displacement.</p>			

<p>The LARACI project is designed to operate within existing agricultural lands and community-managed areas in the central regions of Côte d'Ivoire (Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé, and Gbêkè). The project does not require the acquisition of private land or the expansion into new areas that would lead to displacement. All interventions will occur on voluntarily provided or already-utilized lands, with no resettlement or restriction of access to livelihoods.</p> <p>A participatory approach has been adopted for planning and implementation, ensuring that community consent is obtained and existing land uses are respected. There are no commercial infrastructure developments (e.g., industrial facilities, roads, or power lines) that would necessitate involuntary resettlement or compensation.</p> <p>Thus, the project does not trigger land acquisition or resettlement risks, and no additional safeguard instruments (e.g., Resettlement Action Plans) are required. The Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP) will continue to monitor this aspect to ensure compliance throughout implementation.</p>			
Are the activities likely to alter existing land use and restrict access to natural resources resulting in loss of livelihoods and other economic activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>No. The activities are not likely to alter existing land use or restrict access to natural resources in a way that would result in the loss of livelihoods or other economic activities.</p> <p>The LARACI project is designed to enhance, not disrupt, existing land use and livelihoods. The project does not require land use conversion from natural ecosystems or communal grazing or forest lands that local communities rely on for subsistence. No interventions are planned in protected areas or ecologically sensitive zones that would trigger access restrictions. On the contrary, the project promotes improved access to natural resources, such as water and climate information services, which are expected to enhance productivity and livelihood resilience.</p> <p>Community participation and stakeholder consultations are central to project planning, ensuring that all activities align with local priorities and respect customary land use rights.</p> <p>Therefore, rather than restricting land or resources, the project is expected to secure and enhance livelihoods, especially for smallholder farmers, women, and youth. No further studies or action plans are required to address loss of access or land use changes.</p>			
Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of Living Natural Resources	YES	NO	TBD
Is the project or programme likely to be located on modified, natural and/or critical habitats or in protected or internationally recognized ecological areas?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>No. The project is not likely to be located on modified, natural, or critical habitats, nor in protected or internationally recognized ecological areas.</p>			

<p>The LARACI project targets agricultural lands and rural communities in the central regions of Côte d'Ivoire (Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé, and Gbêkê), areas that have historically been used for farming and are already heavily modified by human activity, particularly by smallholder agriculture and cocoa production.</p> <p>The feasibility study confirms that project sites are not located within or near protected areas, critical habitats, key biodiversity areas, or internationally recognized conservation zones.</p> <p>The interventions focus on restoring and enhancing ecosystem functions in degraded agricultural landscapes through agroforestry, erosion control, and soil rehabilitation, contributing positively to biodiversity rather than threatening it.</p> <p>No conversion or degradation of natural or critical habitats is planned or anticipated.</p> <p>Therefore, the project poses no significant risks to natural or critical habitats, and no additional biodiversity assessments are required beyond the safeguards already embedded in project design.</p>			
Will the activities potentially introduce invasive alien species of flora and fauna affecting the biodiversity of the area?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>No. The activities are not expected to introduce invasive alien species of flora or fauna that could affect the biodiversity of the area.</p> <p>The LARACI project promotes CSA and agroecological practices that are aligned with principles of biodiversity conservation and sustainable land use. The project does not involve the introduction of exotic plant or animal species that are not already adapted or locally accepted.</p> <p>The project emphasizes the use of improved local and climate-resilient crop varieties (e.g., cassava, yam, rice), and legume intercropping with native species like <i>Gliricidia sepium</i>, which are already present in the region and have known ecological compatibility. There are no activities involving, livestock breed introduction, or importation of exotic plant species that would raise concerns of biological invasiveness. The improved breeds of fish that are promoted in the context of integrated rice-fish systems are non-invasive and well-adapted to the local ecological context and are not associated with evidence of invasive potential. Agroforestry systems and integrated soil fertility management approaches are designed to enhance biodiversity and ecosystem services, not undermine them.</p> <p>Therefore, the risk of introducing invasive alien species through LARACI project activities is negligible, and no additional mitigation measures are required beyond those already embedded in project design and procurement protocols.</p>			
Is the project or programme likely to have potential impacts on biodiversity (especially critically endangered and/or endangered species, endemic or restricted-range species, and globally significant migratory or congregatory species) and ecosystem services, including production of living natural resources?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

No. The project is not likely to have potential negative impacts on biodiversity — including critically endangered or endemic species — or on ecosystem services and the production of living natural resources.

The LARACI project is focused on improving productivity and resilience of already-degraded agricultural lands, primarily through CSA, agroforestry, and soil restoration techniques in the central regions of Côte d'Ivoire (Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé, and Gbêkê). These areas are not known to host critical habitats or populations of endangered, endemic, or migratory species.

Project interventions are site-specific, small-scale, and conducted on modified lands already in use by smallholder farmers. These landscapes are heavily cultivated and do not intersect with protected areas or recognized biodiversity hotspots. The project aims to restore ecosystem functions and improve services such as soil fertility, water retention, and carbon sequestration, thereby enhancing rather than degrading biodiversity and ecosystem services. Agroforestry systems and erosion control measures will help improve habitat connectivity and biodiversity within agricultural landscapes. No clearing of forests or conversion of natural habitats is planned, and the use of pesticides or other biodiversity-threatening inputs is either excluded or strictly controlled. Therefore, the project is expected to have net positive effects on local biodiversity and ecosystem services, and no adverse impacts on endangered species or critical ecological functions are anticipated.

Will the activities have potential impacts on or be dependent on ecosystem services including production of living natural resources (e.g., agriculture, livestock, fisheries, forestry)?



Yes, the activities will be dependent on ecosystem services, particularly those related to agriculture and land productivity but the impacts are expected to be positive and restorative rather than negative.

The LARACI project is directly linked to **ecosystem services**, as it seeks to enhance the resilience and productivity of agricultural systems in Côte d'Ivoire. It is dependent on services such as **soil fertility and nutrient cycling, water availability and regulation, pollination etc.**

However, rather than degrading these services, the project is specifically designed to **restore and sustain them** through **CSA** and nature-based solutions. In accordance with **IFC Performance Standard 6 (Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services)**:

- The project promotes agroforestry, intercropping, mulching, and organic soil amendments, which enhance ecosystem functionality.
- It supports the sustainable management of land and water resources, especially through improved watershed practices (e.g., Smart-Valleys).
- The project does **not involve practices that would overexploit natural resources**, such as unsustainable logging, overgrazing, or fishing.

<p>In conclusion, while the project depends on key ecosystem services to achieve its agricultural development goals, it is designed to strengthen and regenerate these services, leading to positive, long-term environmental and livelihood outcomes.</p>			
Indigenous Peoples	YES	NO	TBD
Are the activities likely to have impacts on indigenous peoples and communities, such as impacts on lands and natural resources, land tenure and on cultural resources?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are the activities likely to lead to physical displacement of indigenous peoples and/or restrict the access of indigenous peoples to lands and resources resulting in loss of livelihood?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the activities provide equitable opportunities to indigenous peoples and other vulnerable groups during stakeholder consultation and in decision-making during the preparation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of the activities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the activities need to obtain free, prior and informed consent (FPIC)? If so, has the project obtained FPIC?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Will the activities potentially have any indirect impacts on indigenous peoples, ethnic minorities, or vulnerable and marginalized groups?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>.</p> <p>While the absence of formal recognition under national legislation alone is not sufficient to determine the absence of Indigenous Peoples, no Indigenous Peoples are officially recognized within the LARACI project areas. In line with the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy, a screening was conducted to assess whether any groups present may meet the Policy's scope of application.</p> <p>This assessment identified the seasonal presence of transhumant pastoralist groups, primarily Fulani (Peulh) herders, including in the Gbêkê region. These groups are highly mobile, do not have permanent settlements within project intervention sites, and project activities do not involve land acquisition or restrictions on access to grazing areas or transhumance routes. Nonetheless, adopting a precautionary approach, the project will include pastoralist groups in stakeholder engagement, ensure continued access to shared resources, and provide culturally appropriate communication and grievance mechanisms accessible to mobile populations.</p>			

Cultural Heritage	Yes	NO	TBD
Will the activities restrict access to cultural heritage sites and properties?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Under the LARACI project no activities are planned in or near recognized cultural heritage sites, sacred lands, or properties of archaeological, religious, or historical significance. The project design includes inclusive community engagement processes, ensuring that local knowledge, traditions, and cultural sensitivities are respected.</p> <p>Furthermore, the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP) will include chance find procedures to ensure that, in the unlikely event any cultural heritage is encountered during implementation, activities will be paused and appropriate authorities consulted. Therefore, the project will not restrict access to cultural heritage and poses no risk to culturally significant properties or practices.</p>			
Will the project or programme be located on areas that are considered to have archaeological (prehistoric), paleontological, historical, cultural, artistic and religious values or contain features considered as critical cultural heritage?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>The LARACI project is situated in the central agricultural regions of Côte d'Ivoire (Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé, and Gbêkê), which are primarily composed of rural, intensively cultivated, and community-managed lands. These areas are used for farming activities and do not overlap with any officially designated cultural heritage sites or recognized zones of archaeological or historical significance. Project activities, such as soil restoration, agroforestry, and irrigation improvements, will take place in already modified environments, with no excavation or land conversion that could disturb heritage features. While the risk is negligible, the project will include a chance find procedure within the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP), ensuring that any unexpected discoveries during implementation are managed in compliance with national laws and heritage protection protocols.</p> <p>Therefore, the project is not expected to have any impact on cultural heritage, and no further cultural heritage assessments are required.</p>			
Stakeholder engagement and grievance	Yes	NO	TBD
Will the activities include a continuing stakeholder engagement process and a grievance redress mechanism and integrated into the management/implementation plans?	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<p>Yes. The activities will include a continuing stakeholder engagement process and a confidential grievance mechanism, both of which are integrated into the project's management and implementation plans.</p> <p>The LARACI project has been designed with a strong emphasis on inclusive stakeholder participation, transparency, and accountability throughout the project lifecycle.</p>			

A **continuing stakeholder engagement process** is embedded in the project, ensuring that communities, local authorities, civil society, and other stakeholders are actively involved in:

- Project planning and prioritization of activities,
- Implementation and monitoring, and
- Feedback and adaptive management.

The Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP) includes provisions for:

- Regular consultations, especially with vulnerable groups (e.g. women, youth, smallholders),
- Capacity building for local institutions to manage stakeholder dialogue, and
- Transparent communication of project goals, risks, and benefits.

A **Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM)** will be established at both the community and institutional levels to:

- Provide an accessible, confidential, and culturally appropriate channel for complaints,
- Ensure timely resolution of concerns related to project implementation, including environmental, social, or labor issues,
- Document and track grievances and outcomes.

These mechanisms will be managed by the executing entities (FIRCA, AfricaRice) and will be continuously monitored and adjusted as part of the ESAP.

Thus, stakeholder engagement and grievance redress are not only planned but are **core components of the LARACI project's governance and risk management structure**, ensuring social sustainability and accountability.

Part C: Findings

C1. Environmental and social overview

Detailed project location(s) and salient physical characteristics relevant to the E&S assessment:

The *Land Restoration and Climate-Smart Agriculture for Climate Resilient Inclusive Growth in Côte d'Ivoire (LARACI)* project will be implemented in four central administrative regions of Côte d'Ivoire: Nzi, Moronou, Iffou, La Mé and Gbêkê. These regions were selected based on their high vulnerability to climate change, significant land degradation, and agricultural potential.

i) Geographic context:

The project area is located in central Côte d'Ivoire, characterized by a transitional agro-ecological zone between the rainforest and savannah regions. The geography includes a mix of low hills, plateaus, inland valleys, and river catchments that are key to local water management. The climate is tropical, with a distinct rainy season and dry season, and increasing climate variability is affecting agricultural productivity.

ii) Social context:

The targeted regions are predominantly rural with high dependence on agriculture for livelihoods, especially smallholder farming. Communities are engaged in food and cash crop

production (notably rice, cassava, yam, and cocoa). Social vulnerabilities include youth unemployment, gender disparities in land access, and limited access to finance and extension services. These areas have a high concentration of poor and climate-vulnerable households and include a diversity of ethnic groups with customary land tenure systems.

While the absence of formal recognition under national legislation alone is not sufficient to determine the absence of Indigenous Peoples, no Indigenous Peoples are officially recognized within the LARACI project areas. In line with the GCF Indigenous Peoples Policy, screening was conducted to assess whether any groups present may meet the Policy's scope of application.

This assessment identified the seasonal presence of transhumant pastoralist groups, primarily Fulani (Peulh) herders, including in the Gbêkê region. These groups are highly mobile, do not have permanent settlements within project intervention sites, and project activities do not involve land acquisition or restrictions on access to grazing areas or transhumance routes. Based on this screening, they do not meet the full defining characteristics of Indigenous Peoples under the GCF Policy; therefore, FPIC requirements are not triggered. Nonetheless, adopting a precautionary approach, the project will include pastoralist groups in stakeholder engagement, ensure continued access to shared resources, and provide culturally appropriate communication and grievance mechanisms accessible to mobile populations.

The project promotes inclusive development with targeted benefits for women, youth, and marginalized farmers, and emphasizes participatory planning to address historical inequalities.

iii) Salient environmental and social characteristics:

- Land Degradation: The regions face severe soil fertility decline due to unsustainable farming practices, deforestation, and erosion, which the project seeks to reverse through CSA and agroforestry.
- Water Stress and Climate Risk: Inland valleys and water catchments are under pressure from irregular rainfall and poor watershed management. The project will introduce efficient irrigation and smart water management practices.
- Biodiversity: The project areas are already modified and not located in or near protected areas, key biodiversity zones, or critical habitats. The project does not involve land conversion or the introduction of invasive species.
- Cultural Heritage: No cultural heritage sites or properties of archaeological or spiritual significance have been identified in the project areas. Chance find procedures will be included in the Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP).
- Community Dynamics: Social cohesion is generally strong but can be affected by youth marginalization, land tenure disputes, and gender-based exclusion. The project integrates grievance redress mechanisms and a gender-sensitive stakeholder engagement process.

In summary, the project is situated in environmentally degraded but agriculturally strategic zones, where the primary risks are low and manageable, and the anticipated environmental and social impacts are overwhelmingly positive — centered on resilience, equity, and sustainability.

C. 2. Institutional capacity of AE and EEs

The institutions involved in implementing the LARACI project, including the CGIAR System Organization acting as AE, and AfricaRice and FIRCA that will act as EEs appear to have the capacity to implement the environmental and social management plans/action plans effectively. The project includes significant institutional support, comprehensive capacity-building measures, and established organizational structures that are well-equipped to manage environmental and social risks.

CGIAR, with the System Organization as the AE and one of its Centers, AfricaRice, acting as EE, brings extensive experience in agricultural research and climate-smart practices, ensuring that the environmental and social aspects are managed according to international standards. In the context of environmental and social (E&S) safeguards, FIRCA – also acting as EE in the project – possesses **basic institutional frameworks** for ensuring compliance with national environmental regulations and managing agricultural risks.

However, the EEs direct experience with **international Environmental and Social Standards such as IFC's Performance Standards** are still developing. To address this, the project design includes **targeted capacity-building measures** for FIRCA and AfricaRice staff and national partners to strengthen their understanding and implementation of E&S risk management aligned with IFC requirements.

C.3. Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC)

The Environmental and Social Risk Classification (ESRC) for the LARACI project is assessed as Low Risk (GCF Category C). This classification is based on the project's small-scale, community-based nature, focused on CSA, sustainable land management, and localized infrastructure improvements in already cultivated rural areas. The activities are not expected to generate significant environmental or social impacts and do not involve land acquisition, resettlement, or work in ecologically or culturally sensitive areas. Risks related to pollution, labor, community health and safety, and biodiversity are minimal and manageable through standard mitigation measures included in the project's Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP), which aligns with IFC Environmental and Social Performance Standards. Furthermore, the project includes robust stakeholder engagement processes and an accessible grievance redress mechanism. The executing entities, including FIRCA, and AfricaRice, have demonstrated adequate institutional capacity to manage environmental and social risks effectively. Given these factors, the overall environmental and social risk profile of the project is low.

C.5. Proposed Measures, Actions and Timing

- Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP):

Following the environmental and social screening, the LARACI project has developed an Environmental and Social Action Plan (ESAP) part of Annex 6 of the GCF funding proposal for *Land Restoration and Climate-Smart Agriculture for Climate Resilient Inclusive Growth in Côte d'Ivoire (LARACI)*. The ESAP outlines targeted mitigation measures for all identified environmental and social risks, clearly defines roles and responsibilities for implementation, and includes a timeline for executing each measure. The ESAP prioritizes risks based on their potential significance, establishes expected outcomes, and provides indicative budgeting to

ensure effective implementation. The plan will ensure full compliance with applicable IFC Environmental and Social Performance Standards and national environmental and social regulations and will serve as a central tool for environmental and social risk management throughout the project lifecycle.

- Stakeholder Engagement Plan:

Annex 7 of the LARACI FP includes a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP) that adheres to the principles of transparency, accountability, inclusiveness, non-discrimination, and “do no harm”. Building on consultations conducted during project preparation, the SEP defines a comprehensive strategy to engage all affected communities and individuals, including vulnerable and marginalized groups, in project activities. It includes specific measures for information disclosure, culturally appropriate consultations, and informed participation, ensuring gender-responsive and equitable engagement. The SEP also describes the project-specific, activity-level grievance redress mechanism, that will be aligned with the AE’s (CGIAR System Organization) grievance system, and the Green Climate Fund’s Independent Redress Mechanism, enabling timely and appropriate resolution of community concerns.

Part D: Sign off

Sign-off: Specify the name and designation of the person responsible for the environmental and social screening and any other approvals as may be required in the accredited entity’s own management system.

Roland Sundstrom

Roland Sundström, Practice Lead, Program Delivery, Special Advisor to the Chief Scientist

17 April 2026

Appendix 2: Land conflict screening checklist tool

Purpose of the tool

This checklist is used to **screen proposed beneficiary plots and project sites** to ensure that:

- Land is free of disputes;
- Use rights are socially recognized;
- Project activities do not trigger conflicts;
- Selection complies with **conflict-sensitive land management principles**.

It applies to:

- Individual beneficiary plots
- Community lands
- Shared natural resources (valleys, water points, grazing areas)

Section 1 – Basic Site Identification

Item	Information
Region / Department / Village	
Name of beneficiary / community group	
Type of land	<input type="checkbox"/> Individual <input type="checkbox"/> Family <input type="checkbox"/> Community <input type="checkbox"/> Shared resource
Estimated size of land	
Current land use	
GPS Coordinates (if available)	
Date of screening	
Screening officer	

Section 2 – Land Tenure Status

A. Legal status

Question	Yes	No	Comments
Does the land have a formal title?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

If no title, is the land under recognized customary tenure?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are customary rights recognized by local authorities?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

B. Land use legitimacy

Question	Yes	No	Comments
Has the beneficiary used the land for at least 3 years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the land actively cultivated or managed?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Do neighbors recognize the user's rights?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Section 3 – Conflict Risk Screening

A. Existing disputes

Question	Yes	No	Comments
Is the land currently subject to any dispute?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Has the land been disputed in the past 5 years?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Are there overlapping ownership claims?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is there ongoing court or customary mediation?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

YES TO ANY ABOVE THEN THE SITE IS NOT ELIGIBLE UNTIL RESOLVED

B. Potential conflict risks

Question	Yes	No	Comments
Could the project restrict access to others?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the land used seasonally by pastoralists?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the land near a transhumance route?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Is the land shared by multiple families?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	

Could project benefits create social tensions?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	
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Section 4 – Community validation

A. Required validation

Validation Actor	Confirmed	Signature
Village Chief / Customary Authority	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Local Land Committee	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Neighboring land users	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Local Government Representative	<input type="checkbox"/>	

B. Community meeting verification

Item	Completed
Public validation meeting held	<input type="checkbox"/>
Minutes recorded	<input type="checkbox"/>
Attendance list attached	<input type="checkbox"/>
No objections raised	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 5 – Eligibility determination

Screening outcome

Result	Action
<input type="checkbox"/> Eligible	Proceed with project support
<input type="checkbox"/> Conditionally eligible	Mitigation measures required
<input type="checkbox"/> Not eligible	Exclude site from project

If Conditional: Required actions

- ☐ Conflict mediation needed
- ☐ Additional community consultation

- ☐ Pastoralist access arrangements
- ☐ GRM monitoring required

Section 6 – Risk level classification

Risk Level	Criteria
Low	No disputes, strong community validation
Moderate	Minor potential tensions but manageable
High	Active disputes or unclear ownership

Section 7 – Documentation required

Attach:

- Map or sketch of land
- Photos
- Meeting minutes
- Signed validation forms

Section 8 – Approval

Role	Name	Signature
Screening Officer		
Project Safeguards Specialist		
Local Authority Representative		

Appendix 3: Child labor screening questions for beneficiary assessments

Purpose

This screening tool is designed to ensure that project support under LARACI does not directly or indirectly contribute to child labor, in accordance with:

- **IFC Performance Standard 2 – Labor and Working Conditions**
- **GCF Environmental and Social Standards**
- **ILO Conventions 138 & 182**
- **National labor laws of Côte d'Ivoire**

The tool helps distinguish between:

- Acceptable **age-appropriate family support**, and
- **Prohibited child labor**, including hazardous or exploitative work.

Section 1 – Household composition

1. Are there children under 18 years living in the household?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, indicate number by age group:

Age Group	Number
Under 12 years	
12–14 years	
15–17 years	

Section 2 – Participation of children in farming activities

2. Do children in the household help with farm activities?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If yes, specify:

Activity Type	Yes	No
---------------	-----	----

Light tasks (watering, collecting crops, feeding animals)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Heavy manual work	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Handling tools (machetes, machinery)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Applying pesticides or chemicals	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working during school hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Working at night	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 3 – Education and wellbeing

3. Are all school-age children regularly attending school?

☐ Yes ☐ No

If no,
explain:.....
.....

Do any children miss school to work on the farm?

☐ Yes ☐ No

Section 4 – Risk identification

The following situations indicate potential child labor risk:

Risk Indicator	Yes	No
Children under minimum working age performing farm labor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children performing hazardous tasks	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Work interfering with schooling	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Children working excessive hours	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

Section 5 – Beneficiary declaration

I confirm that:

- No child labor is used in project-supported activities;
- Children will not be engaged in hazardous work;
- Children's education will not be affected.

Name: _____
Signature / Thumbprint: _____
Date: _____

Section 6 – Screening officer assessment

- ☐ **Low Risk** – No child labor concerns
- ☐ **Moderate Risk** – Awareness and monitoring required
- ☐ **High Risk** – Not eligible until corrective action taken

Comments:

.....
.....

Screening officer name: _____

Signature: _____

Section 7 – Follow-up actions (if risks identified)

- ☐ Provide child labor awareness training
- ☐ Monitor household periodically
- ☐ Refer to local child protection authorities
- ☐ Suspend project support until resolved

Key principle applied

Children may assist families in light, non-hazardous tasks outside school hours, but any work that is hazardous, exploitative, or interferes with education is strictly prohibited under the project.
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Appendix 4: Code of conduct on the prevention of child labor

Preamble

The Land Restoration and Climate-Smart Agriculture for Climate Resilient Inclusive Growth in Côte d'Ivoire (LARACI) Project is committed to promoting sustainable agricultural development while safeguarding the rights, dignity, health, and wellbeing of children. Recognizing that rural agricultural systems often involve family participation in farming activities, the Project affirms its obligation to prevent exploitative, hazardous, or harmful forms of child labor in accordance with national legislation and international standards.

This Code of Conduct establishes the principles and obligations that apply to all project beneficiaries, service providers, contractors, community groups, and individuals participating in or benefiting from LARACI-supported activities.

This Code is aligned with:

- ILO Convention No. 138 (Minimum Age for Employment);
- ILO Convention No. 182 (Worst Forms of Child Labor);
- IFC Performance Standard 2 (Labor and Working Conditions);
- GCF Environmental and Social Safeguards;
- Applicable national labor laws of Côte d'Ivoire.

Article 1 – Zero tolerance of child labor

The LARACI Project adopts a zero-tolerance policy toward child labor in all project-supported activities. No child shall be engaged in work that is exploitative, hazardous, or detrimental to their physical, mental, moral, or social development, or that interferes with their education.

Participation in the Project is conditional upon full compliance with this policy.

Article 2 – Definition of child labor

For the purposes of this Code, child labor refers to any work performed by a person under the age of 18 that:

1. Is below the legally established minimum working age;
2. Exposes the child to hazardous conditions;
3. Involves excessive physical strain;
4. Requires handling of dangerous tools, machinery, or agrochemicals;
5. Interferes with regular school attendance;
6. Compromises the child's health, safety, or development.

Article 3 – Prohibited activities

Under no circumstances shall children be involved in:

- The handling, mixing, or application of pesticides, fertilizers, or chemical substances;
- The use of sharp tools such as machetes or mechanized equipment;
- Carrying heavy loads or performing strenuous manual labor;
- Working in flooded rice fields or other hazardous agricultural environments;
- Night work or extended working hours;
- Any task that prevents attendance at school or interferes with academic performance.

Article 4 – Acceptable age-appropriate assistance

The Project recognizes that in rural family settings, children may provide limited assistance in non-hazardous household or farming tasks. Such assistance is acceptable only when:

- The tasks are light and age-appropriate;
- They are performed outside school hours;
- They do not expose children to physical, chemical, or environmental hazards;
- They do not compromise education or wellbeing.

The distinction between acceptable family support and child labor shall be guided by international standards and national legislation.

Article 5 – Responsibilities of beneficiaries and partners

All beneficiaries and partners of the LARACI Project shall:

1. Ensure that no child labor is used in project-supported activities;
2. Prevent children from engaging in hazardous agricultural work;
3. Promote school attendance and support children's education;
4. Participate in awareness and capacity-building activities related to child labor prevention;
5. Cooperate with monitoring visits and compliance assessments conducted by the Project.

Article 6 – Monitoring and compliance

The LARACI Project will implement monitoring measures, including field inspections, beneficiary screening, and awareness activities, to ensure compliance with this Code. In cases of suspected child labor:

- Immediate corrective measures will be required;

- Continued non-compliance may result in suspension or termination of project support;
- Serious violations may be referred to competent authorities in accordance with national law.

Article 7 – Grievance and reporting

The Project’s Grievance Redress Mechanism (GRM) provides a confidential and accessible channel for reporting concerns related to child labor. All complaints shall be treated with discretion and investigated promptly. Retaliation against individuals who report violations is strictly prohibited.

Article 8 – Awareness and capacity building

The LARACI Project will conduct awareness campaigns and training sessions for beneficiaries, extension agents, and community leaders to strengthen understanding of child labor standards and safe agricultural practices.

Declaration of commitment

I/We hereby declare that I/we have read, understood, and agree to comply fully with the provisions of this Code of Conduct on the Prevention of Child Labor under the LARACI Project. I/We understand that failure to comply may result in corrective measures or withdrawal of project support.

Name of beneficiary / organization: _____

Village / location: _____

Signature / thumbprint: _____

Date: _____

Witness (Project Representative): _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____

Appendix 5: Chance find procedures

1. Purpose:

These Chance Find Procedures apply to all LARACI project activities that involve small-scale infrastructure works, land preparation, irrigation development, or earth-moving activities. The procedures ensure that any previously unknown cultural heritage resources encountered during project implementation are properly identified, protected, and managed in accordance with:

- IFC Performance Standard 8 (Cultural Heritage);
- GCF Environmental and Social Standards;
- National cultural heritage legislation of Côte d'Ivoire.

2. Definition of cultural heritage

For the purposes of the LARACI Project, cultural heritage includes both tangible and intangible heritage recognized at local, regional, national, or international levels.

Tangible Cultural Heritage	Intangible Cultural Heritage
<p>This includes movable and immovable objects, structures, and natural features of cultural significance such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Archaeological remains;• Historical buildings or ruins;• Burial sites or sacred grounds;• Religious monuments or artefacts;• Traditional cultural landscapes. <p>These may be located in rural or agricultural areas and may be found above or below ground</p>	<p>This includes practices, expressions, knowledge, skills, and traditions transmitted across generations, such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Sacred cultural sites;• Ritual spaces;• Traditional land-use practices;• Cultural expressions associated with landscapes.

3. Legal framework and responsible authorities

In Côte d'Ivoire, cultural heritage protection is governed by national legislation administered by the:

- Ministry of Culture and Francophonie, particularly the Directorate responsible for cultural heritage;

- National Institute of Cultural Heritage (INPC), which oversees archaeological and heritage protection.

These authorities are responsible for evaluating and managing any chance finds.

4. Chance find procedures

If cultural heritage resources, artefacts, or sites of potential cultural value are discovered during project activities, the following steps shall be taken:

Step 1 – Immediate Suspension of Activities	All works in the immediate vicinity of the discovery shall be stopped immediately to prevent disturbance or damage.
Step 2 – Site Protection	The site shall be secured to prevent theft, vandalism, or accidental damage. If removable artefacts or sensitive remains are identified, temporary protective measures shall be put in place, including restricting access to the area.
Step 3 – Notification	The following parties shall be notified immediately: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The site supervisor or implementing agency field staff; • FIRCA (Accredited Entity and project coordinator); • Local administrative authorities (Prefecture or Sub-Prefecture); • The Ministry of Culture and Francophonie through the National Institute of Cultural Heritage.
Step 4 – Evaluation by Authorities	The competent national cultural heritage authority will conduct an assessment to determine: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The significance of the find; • Whether it qualifies as cultural heritage; • Appropriate protection and management measures.
Step 5 – Decision on Resumption of Activities	Based on the assessment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • If the discovery is not considered cultural heritage, project activities may resume upon authorization. • If the find is confirmed as cultural heritage, the competent authority will provide guidance on appropriate handling, documentation, conservation, or relocation measures.
Step 6 – Documentation and Reporting	All chance finds shall be documented and reported in project safeguard monitoring reports, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Description of the find; • Location and circumstances of discovery; • Actions taken; • Decisions issued by authorities

5. Roles and responsibilities

Actor	Responsibilities
Contractors / Field Teams	Immediate suspension of work, securing site, initial reporting
FIRCA	Coordination, reporting to authorities, monitoring compliance
AfricaRice / Service Providers	Technical support and documentation
Local Authorities	Facilitation and site protection
Ministry of Culture / INPC	Evaluation and decision-making

6. Compliance

Failure to comply with these procedures may result in:

- Suspension of project activities;
- Contractual penalties;
- Legal action under national cultural heritage laws.