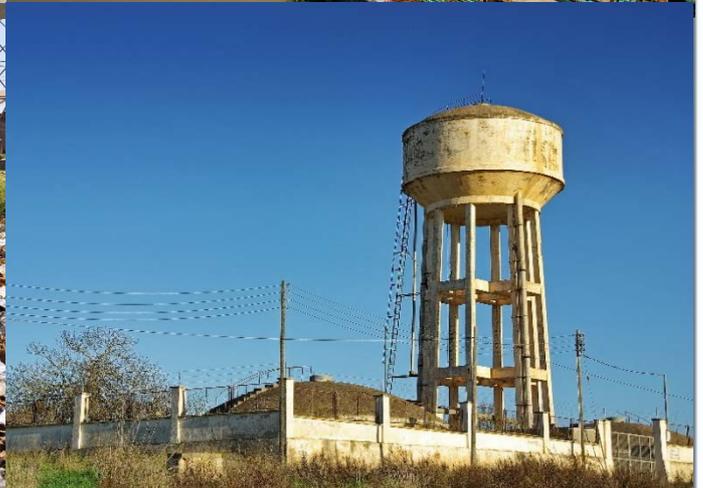




25 years Netherlands Commission for
Environmental Assessment

GUINEA (DRIVE18GN01)

Advisory Review of the ESIA for the Five Link and Access Bridges in the City of Conakry



23 November 2018
Ref: 7292



Advice of the Secretariat

Title	Advisory Review of the ESIA for the Five Link and Access Bridges in the City of Conakry
To	The Netherlands Enterprise Agency (RVO.nl)/DRIVE
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Date	23 November 2018
From	The Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment
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1. Introduction

In its effort to solve traffic congestion in the city of Conakry, the National Directorate of Infrastructure (DNI) of Guinea has partnered with Dijkstraal B.V. for the construction of 5 bridges. Dijkstraal and DNI have submitted this project for funding to the RVO DRIVE facility. The RVO requires that an environmental and social impact assessment (ESIA) for the project is available to support decision making on funding for this project. This ESIA must comply to the IFC Performance Standards, indicated by RVO as their reference framework. Dijkstraal B.V. is responsible for the preliminary design of the project, and has hired Louis Berger, an international consultancy firm to execute the ESIA¹.

In October 2018 the Netherlands Commission for Environmental Assessment (NCEA) was asked by RVO to review the ESIA report that was received on 15 October. The main purpose of this advisory review report is to give advice on the quality of the ESIA report and process. A draft of this advisory report has been discussed with RVO on 23 November 2018.

The project initiative

The construction of five bridges is a project located in the capital city of Guinea, Conakry. The main objective of this project is to improve accessibility of the city of Conakry with the construction of five bridges and improvement of their linked roads. Four of these bridges are planned in the Conakry Prefecture namely: Kakimbo Bridge, Demoudoula Bridge, Kiroti Bridge and Kissosso Bridge. The fifth bridge is planned in the Coyah Prefecture on the outskirts of Conakry and is called the Kassonya Bridge. These bridges will increase access of densely populated neighbourhoods in Conakry that are separated by shallows and rivers. The bridges range from 96 m up to 144 m in length and are accompanied by 13.54 km of road (see Annex 1 for a map of the project area and the 5 bridges).

The project consists of:

- construction of five mixed steel bridges
- construction and improvement of roads connecting to the (existing) urban network

The proponent for this project is the Ministry of Public Works, as represented by the National Directorate of Infrastructure (DNI). The DNI is responsible to plan for (infrastructural) works in the entire network of the republic of Guinea, to seek funding and to monitor these operations.

Approach taken by the NCEA

This advice was prepared by a working group of experts acting on behalf of the NCEA². The group comprises expertise in the following disciplines: ecology, infrastructure, social impacts and resettlement procedures.

The NCEA has reviewed the following version of the ESIA report:

¹ The NCEA uses the term Environmental and Social Impact Assessment (ESIA) instead of EIA in order to emphasize that social aspects are included in the scope.

² The NCEA is an independent statutory body of experts based in the Netherlands to provide independent advice on ESIA in the Netherlands since 1985 and internationally since 1993.

- Project to implement five link and access bridges in the city of Conakry, Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Draft (September 2018).

In addition, the NCEA has considered the following supplementary information to better understand the information provided in the ESIA report:

- Socio-economic Assessment for 5 Bridges Project – September 2018
- Feasibility studies of each of the five bridges:
 - Kakimbo bridge – September 2018
 - Demoudoula bridge – September 2018
 - Kiroti bridge – September 2018
 - Kissosso bridge – September 2018
 - Kassonya bridge – September 2018

For the review of the ESIA report the NCEA has made use of the following reference framework:

- Guinean Laws and Regulations concerning Environmental Assessment, mandated by the Bureau Guinéen d'Études et d'Évolution Environnementale (BGEEE);
- The IFC Performance standards on Environmental and Social Sustainability;
- General Environmental Health and Safety Guidelines of the World Bank, specifically on Construction & Decommissioning.

The NCEA has reviewed the ESIA report, complemented with information from the Socio-Economic Assessment and the feasibility studies provided.

NCEA Review and local EIA Process

In order to receive the necessary permits, the project initiators will need to submit an ESIA to the Environmental Assessment Agency: BGEEE. This current review undertaken by the NCEA has been conducted based on a draft ESIA and is taking place prior to the review by the BGEEE. The draft ESIA reviewed by the NCEA does not contain a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) or Livelihood Restoration Plan (LRP) (or combination of both).

The Guinea regulations require a RAP/LRP process, for which consultation is ongoing at this moment, and will result in a stand-alone report, which needs to be approved by the BGEEE as well.

The NCEA recommends that the ESIA and RAP/LRP are fully aligned and integrated Specifically, that the ESIA information is made available during the RAP/LRP consultations, and that the ESIA is updated based on the RAP/LRP (consultation) outcomes.

Once a final, updated ESIA is available for submission to the BGEEE, the NCEA is available to give an update of her review, possibly in co-ordination with the review of the BGEEE.

Reading guide

In chapter 2 the main findings of the working group are addressed and recommendations to these findings are given.

Chapter 3 notes other findings and provides recommendations for these findings.

2. Main findings

The NCEA is of the opinion that the Environmental and Social Impact Assessment report (hereafter 'the ESIA') contains much useful baseline-data. The information on biodiversity and the description of different species in the affected area is extensive. Furthermore, the socio-economic analysis is informative and the graphical presentation of discounted cash flows (Fig 20) is illustrative. The consultation of the Project Affected People (PAP) is judged as inclusive and reports of the meetings are helpfully illustrated with photos.

However, the NCEA also concludes that the ESIA does not provide sufficient information for informed decision making by RVO. In this chapter the NCEA sets out 7 key areas where the ESIA needs to be improved to meet the benchmarks. Detailed findings are described in chapter 3 of this advice. The NCEA recommends that additional assessment is undertaken and that the ESIA is supplemented to address the following shortcomings³:

- Project design and description:
Both design and description of the project are incomplete and require clarification.
- Institutional framework:
Roles in, and relation to the project of different key stakeholders are not sufficiently clarified.
- Biodiversity-related impacts and mitigation:
More information is required on the impacts on, and mitigation measures for biodiversity and eco-system services.
- Project impacts and impact area ill-defined:
The assessment of project activities and their impacts need clarification and further explanation in terms of time (planning) and locations (maps).
- Socio-economic assessment:
Relevant information on the socio-economic impacts of the project is lacking, including the impacts of displacement and a clear distinction in the scope of impacts.
- Traffic management plan:
Management and assessment of increased traffic flows needs additional information.
- Environmental and Social Management and Monitoring Plan (ESMMP):
The management and monitoring of environmental and social impacts is not sufficiently addressed in the current ESMMP.

These issues are further elaborated below, including recommendations to address these shortcomings.

³ Please note that the presentation of the following shortcomings is not linked to any hierarchy nor subject to priorities or ranking.

Project design and description

The current description of the project in the ESIA is not sufficiently comprehensive and the design needs to be revised:

The ESIA states that the length of the Kakimbo and Demoudoula bridges (120 m and 144 m respectively) are to be specified after the topographic survey and considering environmental and social constraints. This includes ensuring that the width of the access roads is adapted to reference speeds based on the context of each bridge/neighborhood crossed. Such constraints need to be studied, incorporated in the project design and demonstrated on maps. These elements are of influence on the environmental and social impacts and thus need to be incorporated in the ESIA.

In addition, the ESIA needs to demonstrate that the design of both the bridges and access roads takes into account different transport modes (motorized vehicles, carts, pedestrians and cyclists) with varying speeds and potential increase in traffic as the country and capital further develop. Increase in traffic movements will trigger a higher risk of traffic accidents that should be addressed and managed within the ESIA. Where improved roads become major axes, it is also prudent to integrate in the project design facilities for market stalls so that sidewalks are sufficiently safe and kept clear for pedestrians. Thirdly, the ESIA identifies a risk of exposure of riparian communities to accidents on access roads. The construction of sidewalks to protect pedestrians has been incorporated in the project design. However, the ESIA also states that although “the development provides for sidewalks to protect pedestrians, these are most of the time used to park vehicles”, thus indicating a need to provide facilities to park vehicles. There is no evidence in the ESIA that such parking facilities have been incorporated in the project design.

Furthermore, while an amount of 1.4 million EUR for street furniture and lighting has been incorporated in the budget, these facilities are not mentioned in the project description nor design, apart from Kassonya, and an explanation of the importance of such facilities has not been provided.

The description nor the design provide maps of the exact project intervention. Both project description and design would benefit from clarification by maps. This will also support an improved identification of the project’s zones of direct and indirect influence. In this no distinction should be made between the immediate impact area and the close impact area as is currently the case. Both immediate and close impact area should be treated in the same order of importance to avoid focus on just the close impact area. Note that environmental and safety buffers can extend beyond the right of way.

Currently, the project description nor design demonstrate that environmental and safety buffer areas have been considered for both the construction and the operations phase of the project. Based on scientific data on noise, air and traffic collected for each access road, buffer areas excluding habitation and other uses as appropriate need to be applied on either side of the access roads to maintain the health and safety of local communities, the environment and road users during construction and operation. Also, these need to be laid out on maps.

In the draft ESIA quarries and borrow pits are included in the ‘wider impact area’ but related impacts have not been identified and assessed. Technical, logistic and administrative bases

nor facilities for manufacturing asphalt mixes and concrete are mentioned in the project description and the related impacts of these aspects have been identified and assessed either. Environmental and social impacts of these associated structures are equally subject to identification and assessment and need to be outlined in the ESIA according to the IFC Performance Standards. Given the project's commitment to complying with international standards, including those of the IFC, it is not sufficient to develop an Environmental and Social Impact Notice (ESIN), a simplified form of ESIA, for these structures as required by the legislation of Guinea.

Furthermore the five bridges are treated as one project, because these appear interconnected in the urban agglomeration of Conakry and to affect each other. However, the Kassonya bridge can be considered to be part of the (future) main road network, while the other four are part of their respective residential or community area. The NCEA advises the bridges to be treated as individual projects since there is no dependency between the bridges from a traffic point of view. The 5 bridges are largely independent projects. Benefits from one bridge are not related to the other bridges: Kassonya is part of the road network of the agglomeration. Kiroti, Kakimbo, Kissosso and Demoudoula are in the neighbourhood network. The latter four won't add much to fluidity of the traffic of greater Conakry.

It is recommended to adjust project design and description in a manner that incorporates the elements mentioned. This should result in a clear outline of the scope of the project in terms of both location as well as different phases of the project.

Institutional framework

The ESIA lists a number of ministries. However, it remains unclear what each of their roles encompasses and what their relation is to the current project. It is confusing and even irrelevant to mention these different (public) organizations without further referring to them in the ESIA. It also needs to be confirmed whether the Ministry of Energy and Hydraulics is indeed a relevant institutional stakeholder for the 5 bridges project.

The ESIA introduces the Prefectural Committees for Environmental and Social Monitoring (CPSES). The report notes that their establishment will take place gradually, and committees are not yet in place in all prefectures. It needs to be indicated in the chapter on the Institutional Framework of the ESIA whether the Prefectural Committees for Environmental and Social Monitoring relevant to the project are or will be in place, so that the project's resource requirements in regard to environmental and social monitoring can be established.

It is recommended to clarify the relevance and role of the different ministries mentioned in the ESIA and their relation to the project. The establishment of Prefectural Committees and their respective tasks towards Social Monitoring should be defined and described within the ESIA.

Biodiversity-related impacts and mitigation

The way in which the various identified impacts from chapter 10 of the ESIA are mitigated remains unclear. Several impacts are “of concern” or “moderate” and demand specific treatment. The ESIA introduces a quality system for the contractor, instead of detailed mitigation of the expected impacts. Yet, for the ESIA it is necessary to explicitly explain how each of the “of concern” and “moderate” impacts will be mitigated. This has not been done which according to international good practice is a shortcoming.

Impact mitigation in the form of biodiversity offsets is not addressed. One specific issue needs special attention. According to the report, in the lowlands the flow of rivers may be significantly disturbed by deposits of various materials, such as cutting materials. The impact is scored as “moderate” in all sites, with “certain” likelihood for the Kassonya site, the most biodiverse site. The mitigation section does not indicate any measure to prevent the impact described.

Instead the ESIA refers to biodiversity offsets by introducing restoration initiatives for Kassonya and Kakimbo sites. These initiatives are not specified and are very small in terms of available budget. The NCEA advises to pay more attention to a better description of the expected impacts and (im)possibilities for mitigation. The ESIA should first emphasize if impacts can be avoided, secondly how they can be mitigated and thirdly how effects can be compensated, justifying the mitigation hierarchy.

Related to this, is the issue of affected ecosystem services and the IFC Performance Standard 6 on Biodiversity Conservation and Sustainable Management of living Natural resources. The ESIA indicates that disturbing impacts may be significant at the Kassonya site, but no mitigation measures have been defined.

The report does not refer to ecosystem services at all. At Kassonya the downstream tidal mangroves are expected to provide ecosystem services that are exploited by local inhabitants (fish and shellfish, timber, firewood, other non-timber forest products). Following the IFC PS 6 on biodiversity, it is expected that ecosystem services in a project affected area are identified and assessed in consultation with local stakeholders. PS 6 clearly states that impacts on priority ecosystem services should be avoided. If avoidance is impossible, mitigation measures have to make sure that value and functionality of priority ecosystem services will be maintained.

It is recommended to give more detailed information on potential impacts on lowlands (downstream from the construction site) rivers at Kassonya and Kakimbo sites, particularly in relation to disturbance by deposits of various materials such as cutting materials. This should be followed by stating mitigation measures to reduce the expected impacts. Furthermore an ecosystem services inventory of the area impacted by the project should be carried out in order to fulfil the requirements of IFC (PS 6) and obtain a clear view of all ecosystem services in the impacted area.

N.B: for the ecosystem services of agricultural productivity an inventory has been made at the project sites (without referring to it as an ecosystem service). For the services in the wider impact area this has not been done but should be done in order to assess the impact in the wider impact area. Particular attention should go to the Kassonya site where likely downstream impacts are expected.

Project impacts and impact area ill-defined

The ESIA makes no clear distinction between wider, direct and close impact areas. The wider and close impact areas (WIA/CIA) do not seem to be supported by any kind of analysis. Both terms refer to a range of influence: local at construction site and borrow sites, and wider according to noise contours, downstream in waterways, downhill in erosion sensitive areas; social zone of impact is related to commuting, etc.

Remarkably, the ToR for the ESIA study states that the area of impact is confined to the boundaries of the city of Conakry. It is hard to verify if downstream impacts at the Kassonya bridge are still within the limits of Conakry. It should be noted that a certain way of delineation of impacts, before the actual assessment is carried out, seems too limited and prevents the assessment to be correctly conducted. This causes the neglect of possible impacts outside the designated assessed area.

From the provided information in the ESIA, it is hard to determine whether the impact levels are complete. The ESIA provides qualitative information that does not cover the entire area of influence. The circumstances in which the ESIA was conducted may have prevented the collection of quantified information, such as gangs at the Kassonya site (p.89). A proper assessment, however, requires a detailed causal chain description, an analysis of the situation. It could provide more insight in the impacts and their range of influence. The application of adequate environmental and safety buffers areas will also facilitate the identification of the area of influence.

There is no proper description of activities, so it remains unclear how impacts are produced. The ESIA does not provide any information on the project components, activities, location of these activities and what technologies to be applied. The ESIA mainly focuses on the construction phase but lacks to specify the detailed components of this phase. This raises questions, such as where the locations of asphalt plant, cement plant, borrow sites are, and which roads will be used for material transport? This information is not specified. The ESIA's only indication is that the production plants will be located in principle in areas away from housings and that the contractor should comply with local rules and legislation. The ESIA is silent on how and where it will conduct these activities. The ESIA should include in its assessment during the construction phase, the impacts related to the extraction and transportation of materials and parts.

Throughout the report no uniform indication is stated between the construction phase and the operation phases. The distinction between the construction and operation phases needs to come out clearer in order to facilitate the identification of the zones of influence and improve the identification and assessment of the different impacts.

<p>It is recommended to provide more clarity and description of the proposed activities, their expected impacts and their zones of influence in the ESIA. These elements should be supported by a map and a timeline in which the different phases of the project are presented.</p>
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Socio-economic assessment

The ESIA outlines the impacts of displacement to an extent but it is expected that impacts of physical and economic displacement i.e. loss of housing and livelihoods, will be more significant and severe than currently described. The lack of complete census and asset data and the lack of environmental and safety buffers along the roads will increase the area where impacts of displacement will be generated. The ESIA does not provide sufficient information as to how or when the project will address these issues.

Compensation methods are outlined only to a limited extent in the report. No information is provided on methodologies for determining compensation rates and whether compensation will also be provided in kind⁴. The ESIA does not indicate whether compensation costs were calculated for the entire area that was surveyed, i.e. an area that exceeds by 4 m the actual footprint of works, or only the immediate impact area where impacts of displacement will be generated. The current assessment lacks information that is essential to establish a correct budget calculation. The ESIA does not contain a Resettlement Action Plan as prescribed by the Terms of Reference and required by international standards. In order to ensure that the project complies with the standards it commits to and from a risk management perspective, a full Resettlement Action Plan should be developed that contains, at a minimum, the elements outlined in Annex 3 of this report.

The description of the socio-economic environment in the ESIA merges data on the wider project area and on the directly affected population. However, these should be presented separately: the socio-economic data on the directly affected population (impact on livelihoods, displacements etc.), based on an adequate identification of the project's areas of impact, should be presented separately in a summarized format in the ESIA and outlined in full in the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP).

The conducted (qualitative) survey reported in the ESIA is not sufficient in delivering the essential information. The collection of both quantitative and qualitative data is essential to understand current socio-economic conditions.

There is no evidence in the ESIA that data on the prevalence of malaria and sexually transmitted infections (STIs) for the local study area have been recorded in the socio-economic survey. This is crucial information to monitor and evaluate the presence of the workforce on health impacts for the local population during and after construction, and thus needs to be incorporated in the ESIA.

The ESIA does not contain any information on vulnerability nor an identification of risk factors for increased vulnerability.

It is recommended that a Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) is developed that contains all information required to establish a correct budget calculation.

It is recommended that the socio-economic data are improved and presented in one single chapter with a clear distinction between data relevant to the wider area (commune and sub-prefecture) and data relevant to the neighbourhood level, and a summary of the data on the people affected by displacement which are described in full in the RAP.

⁴ The ESIA refers to compensation practices by Rio Tinto and rates in Boké, another region of the country.

Traffic Management Plan

Both the ESIA and the socio-economic study do not clearly indicate a traffic management plan. This is important because the bridges will cross (sharp) creeks and interconnect neighbourhoods. They will establish an additional connection between the T(ransversal)- roads; and run parallel to the Route le Prince, that runs over the ridge, and the northern or southern corniche or equivalent road. It is expected that this will create additional traffic flows through these neighbourhoods to connect upper Conakry (PK36) with Kaloum.

Currently there is no valid traffic model for the agglomeration of Conakry available to support expected traffic volumes. This makes traffic planning and substantiating the rationale for construction of the bridges a difficult task. The NCEA believes interventions like the proposed bridges may cause short term changes in flows and intensities of traffic. They are not very likely to add capacity to the crowded urban network. Substantial extension of access to the network and of the number of day trips can only be achieved by adjusting the main factors in the urban transport system. For example by (re)creating:

- a main access road crossing the entire agglomeration, without level junctions
- a rapid mass transport system including dedicated lanes
- limiting city access to target groups
- tolling of target groups
- urban development (through relocation) in areas with better access

In this sense it is expected that construction of the bridges will have a short-term effect on the traffic in the agglomeration, until the traffic has reached the same level of saturation as before. Variables like travel time and vehicle emissions may very well stay at the same levels. The Urban Mobility Plan (PDU) under preparation and to be delivered before 2019 could shed some light on the issues mentioned.

It is recommended that a traffic management plan is developed in order to assess the impacts related to increased traffic flows including traffic forecasts and a division of short- and long-term expectations. References to available studies and reports are crucial to provide a complete assessment.

Environmental and Social Management and Monitoring Plan (ESMMP)

The list of mitigation measures presented in the ESIA is not comprehensive. A summary of project impact mitigation measures and execution and monitoring terms does not list compensation as a mitigation measure for the destruction of private property, nor lists livelihood impacts and the applicable mitigation measures.

Community stakeholders have expressed high expectations around opportunities to be employed on the project. Therefore, a Local Employment Plan is needed that contains a clear definition of 'locals' (Conakry is too broad as a priority area), an identification of the areas from which residents will be hired by priority and the process for identifying local workers. Furthermore, a Stakeholder Engagement Plan will also need to be developed and implemented, that includes a grievance mechanism and a communication plan to clarify that not everybody can be hired and explain the local employment procedure.

The Stakeholder Engagement Plan will also need to outline the strategy for communicating with and compensating the people who reside or use land located in the 4m excess right-of-way and have been surveyed but are potentially not affected by the project. The survey will have raised expectations for compensation among those people. This constitutes a risk to the

implementation of the project that needs to be managed properly.

The period of construction is estimated to last between 8 and 12 months. The frequency of monitoring activities, currently set at annually or twice a year, needs to be revised to allow for regular monitoring and implementation of corrective measures during the construction period. Indicators for social impacts, including water availability for communities, also need to be integrated in the monitoring matrix and plan.

It is recommended to complete the ESIA with an ESMMP that respects all the components essential for monitoring of impacts of this project. The NCEA advises to include on top of the Resettlement Action Plan and the Traffic (Management) Plan, the following missing parts:

- Stakeholder Engagement Plan with a grievance resolution mechanism
- Local Employment Plan

3. Other Findings

In this chapter other findings are further elaborated upon and recommendations to address these shortcomings are described. These findings can be considered as less pertinent than those mentioned in chapter 2 and therefore are addressed in a separate chapter.

No information on downstream areas

The ESIA states that the flow of rivers may be significantly disturbed by deposits of various materials. This leads to the question of what the downstream impacts of such disturbance might be. The report provides maps of the upstream catchment of the marigots up to the bridge construction site. Watersheds upstream of the bridge locations are well-defined; related to hydrology and peak flows. The site descriptions are well presented with illustrative photographs.

The report however does not provide any information on the downstream areas. Verifying the map with the different bridge locations, one could conclude that Kakimbo, Demoudoula and Kiroti flow directly into sea; the ESIA does not provide information on the status of coastal ecosystems, except for a description of the presence of serious water quality problems.

Kissossa and Kassonya flow into a delta under tidal influence. These areas can be expected to be impacted by hydrological changes or increased sediment runoff.

The Kassonya bridge is built near an area with well-preserved mangroves; it is a location of ecological importance. So the decision to expand the inventory to 1 km up- and downstream suggests the ESIA has taken into account downstream effects. The choice however of 1 km remains unsubstantiated as it is not supported by any information on the expected extent of the impacted area.

It is recommended to describe the downstream part of the 5 catchments and indicate what impacts can be expected in these areas. This is particularly relevant for the construction phase where cuttings and earthworks may create increased sediment flows and hydrological changes.

Information on threatened species and vulnerable populations

The baseline information in the ESIA identifies high value species which are assessed by IUCN as vulnerable or higher (= threatened), or species with limited habitat and/or assessed by the National Monograph on the Biological Diversity of Guinea as threatened. The inventory reveals 17 high value plants species. For birds the observed hooded vulture (*Necrosyrtes monachus*) is indicated as NC, which is not explained. The IUCN classifies this species as critically endangered. Furthermore, one frog, two fish and 5 non-vertebrate species are considered high value at the national and/or at global level. None of the species is endemic to Guinea only.

Presentation of species conservation status per site would provide clarity on issues per site. The ESIA currently delivers the information for all sites combined and lacks therefore specification and overview per site. Information should be sorted out per site and clarified to obtain a better overview.

While most locations are heavily degraded urban areas, two sites represent relatively important biodiversity at the downstream side of the bridges. The sites of Kassonya (mangrove)

and Kakimbo (residual classified forest) contain the largest number of flora species with special status.

For the observed high value species more information is required. Information has been collected in the dry season only. For trees and shrubs this can be sufficient; for herbaceous flora and animals this is rather insufficient. For example, for the hooded vulture one would need to know if the animal is breeding near the project site. For all high value species an assessment needs to be made on:

- what impacts the projects can have on these populations;
- whether these impacts can be avoided (mitigated);
- in case the impacts cannot be mitigated, what is the chance that a significant proportion of the population will be lost.

The report states that the construction of the five bridges could have significant impacts on these species and their natural habitat. However, the ESIA does not provide mitigation measures to address the impacts this might inflict on specific species.

It is recommended to assess the likelihood that significant proportions of a population of vulnerable or threatened species will be lost. Evidently this assessment should include mitigation measures to capture the impacts on threatened species of the project.

Relevance of information on frameworks & (inter)national conventions

The relevance of provided information on Policy, Legal and Institutional National Framework remains unclear. A major list of green conventions has been mentioned in the report (e.g. ESIA Guidelines from CBD or Ramsar conventions), including the National Biodiversity Strategy. The report states:

“During works implementation, the project will have to take all the necessary measures to comply with the fundamental conventions ratified and signed by the Government of Guinea so that the latter can fulfil its commitments vis-à-vis the international community in matters of environmental and social protection”

When checking the Ramsar wetland convention database for example it appears that none of the six designated Ramsar sites in Guinea are influenced by the project. Therefore, it seems irrelevant to refer to this convention. Equator principles are referred to as well but are not treated in the ESIA. The ToR requests for special attention to the green and climate conventions. These have neither been treated in any detail.

The ESIA describes the Land Tenure and State-owned Land Code for the project and the procedure of expropriation for public purposes. However, it is not clear from the report if this procedure is applicable to this project and whether the ‘public utility decree’ has been published. This is a crucial step to proceed with the process of consultation. The ESIA needs to confirm that the project is indeed subject to the expropriation procedure and that the public utility decree has been published, or when it is expected to be published and append a copy of the decree to the ESIA as applicable.

Furthermore, the ESIA seems to refer to infrastructure applicable to mining projects. The ESIA needs to be tailored to the 5 bridges project, including the associated infrastructure, so no copy-paste from other projects.

It is recommended to clarify in what manner the cited frameworks and the need for reference to (inter)national conventions are relevant for the proposed project activity and its impacts. The ESIA should therefore strictly make a distinction to what is related to the project and discard what is not.

Restoration and conservation plans

Support to the restoration and conservation of the Kakimbo classified forest is proposed. In itself a good initiative, but as a compensation measures too little specified. The terms of reference of the intervention will be drafted by the Engineer. It seems questionable if this responsibility should entirely be given to the Engineer. Including experts in nature conservation from local based organizations could contribute to the quality of the proposed conservation measurements. The same is recommended for the support to the conservation and value enhancement of the mangrove of Kassonya and support to the reforestation and market garden production in the lowlands of Demoudoula and Kiroti.

It is recommended when drafting the proposed conservation plan, that local or regional knowledge institutes responsible for nature conservation be included to contribute to the proposed conservation plan.

Safety and maintenance

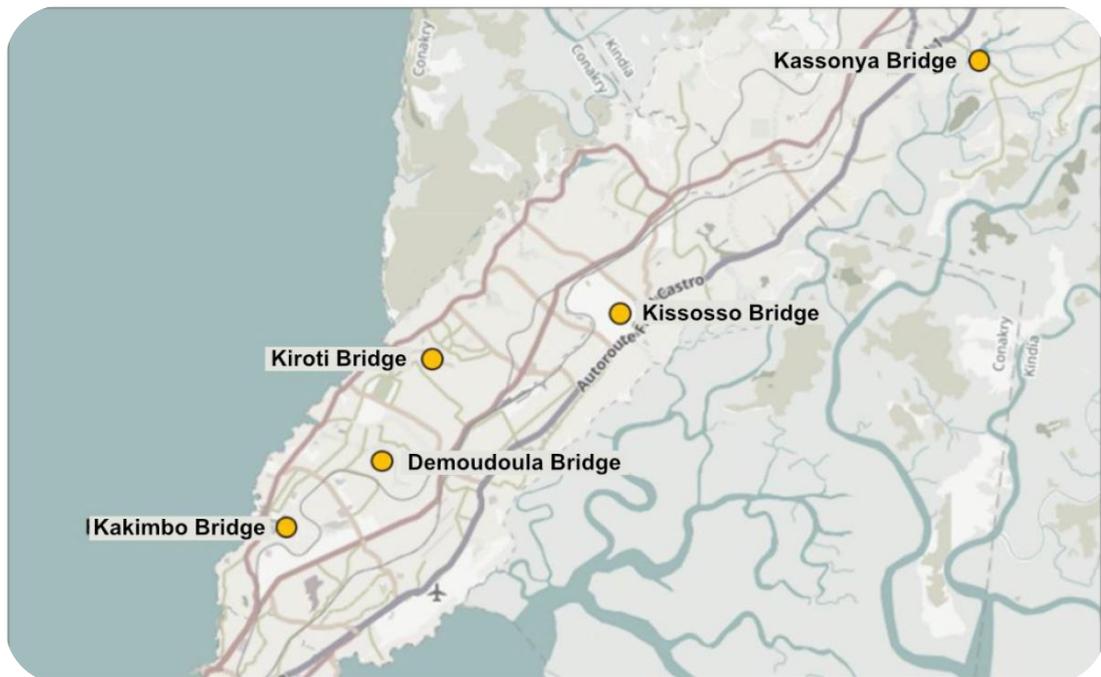
The construction phase is characterized by transportation of large and heavy equipment, materials and parts on narrow roads. This may cause damage and safety issues. Damage to the general road network of Conakry: between quarries or borrow pits and the project access; and from production sites (asphalt/concrete plants) and the sea port (bridge elements). Safety issues may arise from on-site handling of large or heavy loads and the moving of vehicles. This has not been sufficiently addressed in the ESIA.

The type of construction selected for both bridges and access roads are such that they are relatively low in demand for maintenance. The bridge will be partially constructed of hot-dip galvanized steel elements. These elements will need to be connected. At the connection points the corrosion protection will be critical and demand for careful inspection and monitoring to safeguard an expected life of 40-60 years for the hot-dip galvanized parts. A clear maintenance plan of the bridges and roads to guarantee the safety is not present in the ESIA.

It is recommended to engage safety stewards to ensure good working and living conditions in the affected area. An assessment of the construction site and the access roads, that will be heavily used during construction, should be added to the ESIA. Inspection of the affected area in post-construction will allow for careful compensations and repairs inflicted during construction. Any damages due to overloading or abuse of sidewalks or verge can be repaired based on the inspection reports.

It is recommended to present a maintenance plan for both bridges and roads that secures the safety of the construction once in operation.

Annex 1: Location of the five bridges in Conakry



Source: Project to implement five link and access bridges in the city of Conakry, Environmental and Social Impact Assessment Draft - Louis Berger International (September 2018) p.12.

Annex 2: Resettlement Action Plan

The IFC Performance Standard 5 on Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement (PS 5) is clear with regards to land acquisition and resettlement; living conditions and livelihoods should improve or at least be restored for the PAPs. The NCEA advises that the Resettlement Action Plan (RAP) to be developed for the project in line with PS 5 contains, at a minimum, the following:

- A clear description of the project and justification of the project footprint, the area of direct influence where impacts of displacement will be generated including adequate buffer areas for noise and air pollution, and maps to demonstrate both;
- An outline of the efforts taken to minimize impacts of displacement; it needs to be demonstrated what location variants have been studied for this project in order to minimize the generated impacts.
- Objectives and studies undertaken in support of resettlement planning and implementation such as census, socio-economic surveys, asset surveys;
- Regulatory framework with a full gap analysis of the applicable legislation of Guinea against the requirements of IFC Performance Standard 5 on Land Acquisition and Involuntary Resettlement, and an outline of the strategies to bridge the gaps.
- Institutional framework with an outline of those public stakeholders relevant to land acquisition and resettlement;
- A description of the socio-economic baseline conditions of the directly affected population based on applied method for collecting quantitative and qualitative data with all project-affected persons (PAPs). Collection of data should encompass all persons both with formal or informal right to ownership, usage, etc. to an asset affected by the project. Data must be collected on men, women, and children where relevant, and for specific groups such as youth, elderly, disabled people, vulnerable people, business men and women.
- A full description of the magnitude of displacement with photos and maps for each of the 5 project components separately and indicating whether impacts will be temporary or permanent.
- An outline of the stakeholder engagement strategy including an identification of all relevant stakeholders and a summary of public consultation and disclosure associated with land acquisition and resettlement.
- A definition of displaced persons and criteria for determining their eligibility for compensation and other resettlement assistance, including relevant cut-off dates.
- An entitlements matrix showing all categories of affected persons, their losses, their compensation entitlements and what options they are being offered.
- The valuation of and compensation rates for losses, including the methodology used in valuing losses to determine their replacement cost. Considering the changing real estate market conditions, compensation amounts must enable project-affected people to acquire replacement housing and/or business structures (as applicable) in the vicinity of the project area in order to facilitate continued access to existing livelihood activities that are not affected by the project and existing economic and social networks. Otherwise they risk being pushed out to cheaper areas and lose not only their assets to the project but suffer significant impacts on their wellbeing including livelihood strategies. In addition, as per good practice, compensation rates need to be calculated for each crop, including productive trees, separate.

- Resettlement compensation packages and assistance measures, including where applicable the provision of in-kind compensation and a justification of cash compensation.
- Measures taken to support vulnerable people.
- Livelihood restoration measures to be used to improve or restore livelihoods of displaced people, including the employees of affected businesses, and for land-based livelihoods a preference of replacement land and support to redevelop market gardens for example instead of cash compensation.
- An outline of the grievance resolution mechanism.
- The roles and responsibilities for resettlement implementation.
- The resettlement implementation schedule and budget that includes compensation costs for the area where impacts of displacement will be suffered.
- The measures that will be implemented to monitor and evaluate the effectiveness of mitigation measures by the implementing agency, supplemented by independent monitors to ensure complete and objective information; performance monitoring indicators to measure inputs, outputs, and outcomes for resettlement activities; involvement of the displaced persons in the monitoring process; evaluation of the impact of resettlement for a reasonable period after all resettlement and related development activities have been completed.