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Project Information Document (PID)

Appraisal Stage | Date Prepared/Updated: 12-Aug-2025 | Report No: PIDIA01277

BASIC INFORMATION

A. Basic Project Data

Project Beneficiary(ies)	Region	Operation ID	Operation Name
Angola, Angola, Angola, Angola, Angola, Angola, Burundi, Burundi, Burundi, Burundi, Comoros, Comoros, Congo, Democratic Republic of, Congo, Democratic Republic of, Congo, Democratic Republic of, Ethiopia, Ethiopia, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Madagascar, Madagascar, Malawi, Malawi, Malawi, Malawi, Mozambique, Mozambique, Mozambique, Somalia, Federal Republic of, Somalia, Federal Republic of, Somalia, Federal Republic of, South Sudan, South Sudan, South Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania, Tanzania, Tanzania, Zambia, Zambia, Zambia	EASTERN AND SOUTHERN AFRICA	P506439	Accelerating Access to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in the Eastern and Southern Africa Region
Financing Instrument	Estimated Appraisal Date	Estimated Approval Date	
Investment Project Financing (IPF)	04-Aug-2025	25-Sep-2025	
Borrower(s)	Implementing Agency		
AUDA NEPAD	AUDA-NEPAD		

Proposed Development Objective(s)

The PDO for phase 1 is to improve governance and build institutional capacities for climate-resilient water supply and sanitation service delivery in the participating countries in the Eastern and Southern Africa (AFE) Region.

The PrDO for the MPA is to increase access to climate-resilient drinking water supply, sanitation and hygiene services in participating countries in the Eastern and Southern Africa (AFE) Region

Components

Strengthening Platforms to Accelerate Access to WASH
Advancing Governance, Reforms and Regulation
Improving Service Delivery Performance
Leveraging Financing for Climate Resilient WASH Infrastructure

PROJECT FINANCING DATA (US$, Millions)

Maximizing Finance for Development

Is this an MFD-Enabling Project (MFD-EP)?	Yes
Is this project Private Capital Enabling (PCE)?	No

SUMMARY

Total Operation Cost	**15.60**
Total Financing	**15.60**
of which IBRD/IDA	**10.60**
Financing Gap	**0.00**

DETAILS

World Bank Group Financing

International Development Association (IDA)	10.60
IDA Grant	10.60

Non-World Bank Group Financing

Trust Funds	5.00
Cooperation in International Waters in Africa	5.00

Environmental And Social Risk Classification

Moderate

Decision

The review did authorize the team to appraise and negotiate

Other Decision (as needed)

B. Introduction and Context

Regional Context

1. **A renewed emphasis on investing in the Eastern and Southern Africa (AFE) region's water, sanitation and hygiene (WASH) sector is critical to restore long-term growth, enhance climate resilience, and develop human capital**. The region is losing 5% of its annual GDP, or approximately $170 billion per year, due to poor WASH services. In 2022, there were 277 million people without access to basic water and 458 million without access to basic sanitation in AFE. These gaps are larger in rural areas, where the largest share of the region's poor live, with some countries having access to basic sanitation rates as low as 5%. The lack of menstrual-friendly facilities further depresses female school attendance. While progress remains uneven, a growing number of countries are taking steps through reforms, innovations, and partnerships.

2. **Lack of WASH access also has strong gender, equity, and health implications.** In AFE countries, the percentage of households where women are responsible for water collection drastically exceeds that of men. In some cases, this percentage is higher than 90%, highlighting deep-rooted inequalities in WASH-related domestic labor. Poor WASH leads to increased diarrheal diseases, the leading cause of child mortality in Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA), causing more than 8% of child deaths. Nearly 35% of all children are stunted, partly due to unsafe water, inadequate sanitation, and insufficient hygiene. Having safe and reliable water and sanitation facilities at home is especially beneficial for women and children, who bear the disproportionate burden of collecting off-site water.

3. **Water and sanitation access gaps are further aggravated by climate change.** In 2022, there were an additional 63 million people without water and 174 million without sanitation in the region compared to the year 2000. If these trends continue, by 2030, 345 million and 550 million people in the region will be without basic water and sanitation services, making them more exposed to the worsening impacts of climate change, such as heatwaves, floods, and droughts. In fact, Eastern Africa experienced five failed rainy seasons between October 2020 and early 2023, resulting in the worst drought in 40 years. In the AFE region, 69% of all people without water and 71% of those without sanitation live in Fragile, Conflict, and Violence (FCV) countries, where lack of security and institutional weaknesses exacerbate WASH access issues.

Sectoral and Institutional Context

4. On average, public expenditure in WASH is still low and inefficient in the AFE region, with regressive subsidies, high donor dependence, and poor sustainability and efficiency of services. The region's estimated investment gap for achieving universal WASH access between 2023 and 2030 is $150 billion, or 1.4 percent of AFE's GDP. Actual investment rates would need to increase 3 times for urban water and 14 times for rural sanitation. Poor operational efficiency and low investment rates, along with low creditworthiness of service providers and poor understanding of the sector by financial institutions, make it difficult for utilities to make necessary investments to improve services and build resilience.

5. Despite limited public funding, the expansion of WASH access faces obstacles in mobilizing private capital due to regulatory risks and weak legislative environments. Public Private Partnerships (PPPs) are often hampered by lack of technical expertise and de-risking instruments. Accessing commercial financing remains challenging for municipalities and utilities, which undermines the needed investments. The WASH sector faces governance challenges such as institutional fragmentation, unpredictable funding, and weak coordination. Only nine countries in the region have a functioning national government-led platform.

6. There is a consensus in the sector on moving from a business-as-usual approach towards a strategic vision that uses a systems change approach to accelerate access rates and achieve SDG6. The five principles endorsed at the WASH Leadership Summit include government-led planning and monitoring platforms, tackling governance bottlenecks, offering incentives for service delivery efficiency, boosting investments and private sector participation, and embedding resilience to climate change impacts (See Figure 1). Most AFE countries are currently at a basic level for scaling up WASH access, though some frontrunners exist.

Figure 1. Five Principles of the Systems Change approach

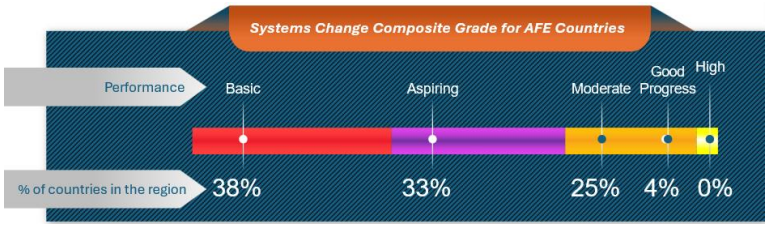

Figure 2. Systems Change Composite Index for 24 AFE Countries

7. **The World Bank is involved in a major scale-up effort for WASH access with a portfolio of US$5.8 billion, aiming to benefit 54 million people by 2030**. However, the project-by-project approach has inherent inefficiencies and fragmentation, making it difficult to mobilize private sector financing or attract new sources of funding like carbon revenues and climate finance.

C. Proposed Development Objective(s)

Development Objective(s) (From PAD)

The PrDO for the MPA is to increase access to climate-resilient drinking water supply, sanitation and hygiene services in participating countries in the Eastern and Southern Africa (AFE) Region.

Key Results

8. **The proposed PrDO indicators include:**

- PrDO Indicator 1: Number of people with access to water supply services. Disaggregated by gender, and sub sector (rural-urban), and level of service (% safely managed)
    - Target 1 by 9/2032: 17 million people with access to at least basic water supply services, of which 50 percent having safely managed access, and at least 40 percent in rural areas[1]
- PrDO Indicator 2: Number of people with access to sanitation services. Disaggregated by gender, and sub sector (rural-urban), and level of service (% safely managed)
    - Target 2 by 9/2032: 13 million people with access to at least basic sanitation services, of which 10 percent access to safely managed services, at least 80 percent in rural areas[2]
- PrDO indicator 3: Number of schools and health care facilities with WASH facilities, disaggregated by schools and health care facilities.
    - Target 3 by 9/2032: 7,500 schools or health care facilities with new WASH facilities
- PrDO indicator 4: Number of beneficiaries with enhanced resilience to climate risks, disaggregated by gender.
    - Target 4: by 1/2032: 17 million (same as PrDO1)

9. **The PrDO Indicators are attributable to the Corporate Scorecard:** people with access to water supply, sanitation, and hygiene services, and will be used across all country phases. In addition, the AFE-WASH includes a menu of indicators from which participating countries would select relevant indicators depending on the country specific design and needs.

10. **The PrDO level indicators will apply to all country-level operations to allow aggregation at MPA level.** Country operations will develop their project results framework, using indicators of choice from a menu of indicators corresponding to the activities under each pillar of the program. The country operations will thus include indicators that can be aggregated at program level, pertaining to results indicators mapped to each of the four pillars of the program (see section Results Framework of the MPA in section VI)

D. Project Description

11. The **Accelerating Access to WASH in Eastern and Southern Africa (AFE WASH) MPA** is a comprehensive, systems-based regional framework designed to scale up sustainable and climate-resilient water and sanitation services. It promotes a long-term, phased approach through Investment Project Financing (IPF) and Program-for-Results (PforR) operations, tailored to each country's context. The program emphasizes government-led planning, governance reform, efficiency gains, private capital mobilization, and resilience across the water value chain. It aims to significantly increase access to WASH for people, schools, and health facilities by aligning national investment programs with a common regional intervention framework.

12. The MPA consists of 13 phases—one regional and 12 country-specific operations[3]—with a total envelope of US$2.574 billion, including US$1.32 billion from IDA, US$240 million from IBRD, and the remainder from Private Capital Mobilization (PCM), government counterpart funding, and development partners. Countries are expected to join within the first three years of the eight-year program, with tailored support based on their readiness and needs. The program supports countries with strong delivery systems, those consolidating reforms, and fragile states requiring foundational support, including interventions for refugees and host communities.

[1] Basic access refers to access to an improved water source that is within 30 minutes return trip; safely managed access means that water is accessible on premises, available when needed, and free of contamination. (JMP)
[2] Basic access refers to access to an improved sanitation facility (that is, one that hygienically separates human excreta from human contact); safely managed is a higher level of service that requires safe collection and off-site treatment and disposal/re-use.
[3] *The 12 participating countries are Angola, Ethiopia, Madagascar, Malawi, Somalia, Tanzania, South Sudan, Mozambique, Zambia, Comoros, Burundi, and DRC.*

13. **The AFE WASH MPA structure consists of four pillars or Program Components encompassing the overall scope of the Program.** The four pillars contain a comprehensive menu of activities tailored to the needs of participating countries to achieve the Program's development objectives. The activities will be tailored to the specific context to effectively advance the reform agenda and achieve the greatest possible impact. The choice of financing instruments will depend on the country's context.

Pillar 1/Program Component 1: WASH Acceleration Platforms

14. This pillar will support the development of (i) a Regional Platform for knowledge and benchmarking and (ii) national WASH platforms and corresponding preparation of national or subnational WASH investment plans. National WASH Acceleration Platforms will consolidate government-led efforts to coordinate sector stakeholders around National WASH Investment Plans on financing and reforms, but also on policy and technical guidance with an emphasis on climate resilience, inclusivity, and gender equality. The pillar will promote budget allocations and preparation of multi-year national or subnational investment plans for WASH in both rural and urban areas that will provide the main framework for expanding timely access to WASH for all. Government-led national WASH platforms will coordinate the efforts of key sector stakeholders, including Ministry of Finance; Ministries of Water and Sanitation; Ministries of Education and Health; other relevant Ministries/agencies; donor partners; and civil society organizations. These platforms will manage linkages with policies and plans for water resources management, floods, and disasters, ensuring the investments proposed are coherent and climate resilient. Countries may adapt from successful examples in the region like the "One WASH platform" in Ethiopia, that coordinates policy, financing and technical inputs through coordinated planning, financing and implementation of WASH investments. This pillar will also support comprehensive sectoral monitoring and evaluation (M&E) systems to track progress. This pillar will include improving the data and feedback systems that accurately track the time that women spend collecting water (in the context of access to 'basic' and 'safely managed' water) to inform decisions or incentives for achieving at least basic access for women.

15. The Regional Phase will support countries in setting up the national platforms and preparing National Investment Plans by promoting cross-learning and best practices. Through high-level engagements, the Regional Phase shall advocate for countries prioritizing WASH in policies and in government budgetary allocations. It will be aligned with ongoing regional efforts on mobilizing finance for WASH (under PIDA), the water investment monitoring scorecard, and other efforts for promoting capacity building and resilience. The African Union Development Agency (AUDA-NEPAD), the implementing agency for the Regional Phase, will provide support to capacity building, systems change dashboard, and strengthen partnerships with civil society and other non-state stakeholders for Pillar 1 activities.

Pillar 2/Program Component 2: Sector Governance Reforms

16. **This pillar will focus on strategic governance and supporting institutional reforms and enhancing regulatory oversight.** It will offer incentives and technical assistance to initiate essential governance and institutional reforms. These will include strengthening policies and institutional capacities and improving accountability and transparency within the sector. Sector reforms and their implementation will be informed by analytics and the deployment of tools like Public Expenditure and Institutional Reviews (PEIRs), Water Sector Assessment Programs (Water SAPs), enterprise bottleneck and employment multiplier studies. The pillar will also cover flood and drought management strategies and use the EPIC[4] Response Framework for identifying bottlenecks and developing roadmaps for improving climate resilience.

17. Depending on the country context, Pillar 2 supports reforms through designing incentives for updating national water policies, enacting modern water laws, clarifying institutional mandates, supporting decentralized service delivery, promoting efficient fiscal transfers, building organizational and personnel capacities in decentralized levels and in national agencies, and skilling community groups to be employed in O&M activities. The vital role of non-sector actors will be recognized and bottlenecks in the operations, e.g. of small and medium-local entrepreneurs, sought to be addressed by

[4] Enable, Plan, Invest, Control

policy measures to integrate them formally, also easing their access to financing. The Pillar will also support improving citizen engagement and accountability[5] by taking stock of existing regulators in terms of capacity to engage consumers, capture and aggregate consumer feedback and improve transparency on service provision including to underserved populations. Regulators will receive technical assistance to expand their capacities, autonomy and mandates. The Regional Phase will support participating countries in revision of policies, strengthening institutions and regulatory frameworks, supporting regulatory twinning arrangements, development of standard regulatory tools/instruments and helping countries adopt these to their contexts, as well as through capacity building and regional knowledge exchanges.

Pillar 3/Program Component 3: Improving Service Provision Performance

18. This pillar focuses on enhancing WASH service delivery models by improving the sustainability and climate resilience of operations and service provision in both urban and rural areas. This pillar aims at improving the creditworthiness and climate resilience of urban utilities as well as the implementation of sustainable, resilient and low-carbon operations and maintenance (O&M) models in rural areas. This pillar will support the development and implementation of Performance Improvement Action Plans (PIAPs) and Rural Water and Sanitation Service Professionalization Strategies (RWSSPS) to improve operational and financial sustainability of operators. The implementation of these plans and strategies will aim to reduce water losses (thus increasing available water supply and contributing to adaptation) and energy consumption (thus reducing GHG emissions). Other activities will help improve the operating ratio of utilities and efficiency of rural service providers. Support will also be provided to strengthen institutions with dedicated mandate, budget and personnel for scaling up sanitation, especially in rural areas. Particular attention shall be given to skilling and capacity building of community groups including women and youth groups, for them to be employed in construction, operations and maintenance, and repairs of water schemes, household and public toilets, etc. The pillar will also support developing information management systems, monitoring tools necessary to generate reliable data and evidence, and systems of customer engagement and systematic feedback to guide the PIAPs. Climate resilience will be mainstreamed throughout the plans and strategies by promoting flood and drought disaster risk management, and use of renewable or low-carbon energy sources. This pillar will emphasize the importance of market-based strategies for service expansion backed by innovative financial support, particularly in sanitation for both rural and urban contexts. For urban sanitation, this may involve City-Wide Inclusive Sanitation (CWIS) Plans and their implementation where relevant. For rural areas, this may include strategies for sustaining behavior change and developing market-based sanitation services and innovative models for delivering smart subsidies that crowd-in demand and promote local private sector development and jobs. Under this pillar, private sector and community capacity and innovation will need to be leveraged. The pillar will also promote affordability and inclusion for low-income and vulnerable populations to gain access and improve service delivery through mechanisms like utility scorecards, benchmarking of service providers' systems for customer and civic engagement and closing customer feedback loops. These activities will contribute to more informed policy discussions and operational strategies for water investments. This will also help harness the potential of water investments in leveraging employment. The Regional Phase will support regional capacity building initiatives for utilities, informal rural and urban service providers, city administrations, rural WASH agencies, and skilling community groups.

Pillar 4/Program Component 4: Financing Climate-Resilient WSS Infrastructure and Promoting Private Sector Participation

19. **This pillar entails financing all WASH infrastructure to expand access.** The pillar will have a strong focus to leverage private sector expertise and capital to expand resilient water and sanitation infrastructure, including WASH facilities in schools and health centers, and rural sanitation programs, as well as in the long-term sustainability of the built infrastructure via adequate operation and maintenance. Along with other pillars, this pillar will support countries to prioritize WASH in their budgets strategically to leverage private and innovative financing. By working with IFC and MIGA,

[5] For example, through use of diagnostics to assess service providers' systems for engaging consumers, citizens and civil society and for leveraging consumer feedback for improved responsiveness and service delivery.

this pillar will finance WASH infrastructure designed to both withstand climatic shocks and improve beneficiaries' drought and flood resilience[6] while aiming to enable and mobilize private capital and expertise, for example through hybrid finance structures, PPP transactions and risk mitigation instruments to mobilize commercial financing and equity and attract competent management. The pillar will promote the use of financing innovations including micro-finance, climate finance, etc. for scaling up access to water and sanitation. Support will be provided to address supply-side bottlenecks including utilities' access to commercial/blended finance, small entrepreneurs' access to innovative finance, and measures to increasing the flow of financing for each of the sub-sectors, e.g. for CWIS in urban sanitation, etc. The program will also identify opportunities for peer-to-peer learning among participating countries. The AFE WASH MPA will develop tools to assess the skills and need gap for participating countries, in order to help design country-specific projects that take into account capacity strengthening and skilling programs that benefit local communities.

20. The pillar includes a range of resilience-building activities, including improving the broader water resource management (WRM) to more efficiently allocate water resources during times of scarcity and provide flood protection; promoting basin-level WRM strategies that integrate flood and drought preparedness and response; supporting investments in water storage, aquifer recharge and development, and water reuse for drought resilience; and ensuring new and rehabilitated infrastructure is climate-resilient.[7] At the regional level (Phase 1) expertise will be mobilized to support countries with state-of-the art advisory services and technical support for transboundary aquifer assessments and climate-resilient groundwater management plans to inform national investment plans.

21. The Regional Phase will support country operations collectively and individually across preparation, implementation and post-closing. Overall, the Regional Phase aims to create a conducive environment for reforms and increase investments, helping countries choose elements from the four pillars of the MPA to facilitate systems changes that are likely to have practical traction in their contexts. Implementation of country phases will generate insights into appropriate systems change elements for different contexts, supporting iterative implementation and encouraging peer-to-peer learning in support of the MPA learning agenda.

Legal Operational Policies	Triggered?
Projects on International Waterways OP 7.50	Yes
Projects in Disputed Area OP 7.60	No

Summary of Screening of Environmental and Social Risks and Impacts

21. Accelerating Access to Water, Sanitation and Hygiene in the Eastern and Southern Africa Region (P506439) will primarily finance Type 2 and Type 3 technical assistance (TA) activities to support improvements in governance, institutional capacity, regulatory frameworks, and resource mobilization for climate-resilient water supply and

[6] Improving sanitation contributes to adaptation by reducing the volume of untreated wastewater discharged into the environment (thereby increasing the volume of available water and improving water quality). The improved water quality will in turn lower the incidence of waterborne diseases and reduce the potential impact of floods, as flood waters will become less contaminated (thus raising communities' resilience to floods). In addition, climate-proofing WSS infrastructure will lead to fewer service disruptions."

[7] The World Bank's *Resilient Water Infrastructure Design Brief*, published in 2017, focuses on the three natural hazards most likely to affect water and sanitation infrastructure—droughts, floods, and high winds. It provides hard and soft recommendations for the climate-proofing of WSS infrastructure.

sanitation service delivery across the Eastern and Southern Africa (AFE) region. Activities include support to national WASH investment planning, transboundary aquifer assessments, regulatory strengthening, performance improvement plans for utilities, benchmarking and monitoring systems, and preparation for private capital mobilization in the WASH sector. Although the project will not finance any civil works or infrastructure with direct physical or environmental footprints, it is expected to inform and influence future downstream investments in water and sanitation infrastructure under country-specific operations. As a result, the project carries moderate environmental and social risks, primarily due to potential indirect and downstream impacts associated with those future investments. Key environmental risks include potential impacts on:(1) Occupational and community health and safety, particularly related to poor sanitation and hazardous waste handling, (2) Water use efficiency and water balance, especially in transboundary aquifer systems, (3) Improper disposal of wastewater or sanitation sludge, potentially affecting local ecosystems and drinking water quality, (4) Pollution risks stemming from future infrastructure development if technical guidance is not environmentally sound, (5) Biodiversity and sensitive habitats, particularly where transboundary assessments intersect with ecologically sensitive zones. Key social risks include: (1) Potential exclusion or inequity in access to future services if not addressed during planning, (2) SEA/SH risks associated with the engagement of consultants or facilitation of in-person technical activities, (3) Community health impacts, if downstream investments result in contamination of local water sources or mismanagement of sanitation systems, (4) Unclear delineation of land or water use rights, which may create tension if not well-managed in downstream infrastructure planning. While these risks are indirect in the context of the current TA-focused phase, they are considered moderate in scale and complexity, and manageable with appropriate mitigation measures. To address these risks, the Borrower, AUDA-NEPAD, will prepare and implement an Environmental and Social Commitment Plan (ESCP) and a Stakeholder Engagement Plan (SEP). During project implementation, the Borrower will also develop an Environmental and Social Screening Form and exclusion list to guide screening and risk mitigation for activities financed through the Component 4 grant scheme. In addition, the Borrower will ensure that environmental and social considerations are systematically integrated into the terms of reference (ToRs) for all relevant TA activities. The Project Implementation Unit (PIU), housed within AUDA-NEPAD, has strong experience in managing regional technical assistance and policy coordination initiatives but has limited prior experience with the World Bank's Environmental and Social Framework (ESF). However, AUDA-NEPAD has demonstrated a high level of commitment to building internal capacity for ESF compliance. The PIU will recruit a qualified environmental and social specialist and will be supported through training and ongoing implementation support from the World Bank to ensure effective environmental and social risk management throughout the project implementation.

E. Implementation

Institutional and Implementation Arrangements

22. **The AFE WASH MPA's institutional and implementation arrangements will focus on improved coordination and governance in the WASH sector.** At the country level, the platforms will be implemented by relevant agencies, including ministries of water, ministries responsible for sanitation, water and sanitation agencies, utilities, and regulatory agencies, and respective decentralized levels of government, as per each country's water sector institutional setting. While each country under the Program will differ, implementing arrangements will include (i) a clear governance structure to oversee strategic direction, ensure sector alignment and coordination, and approve workplan and budgets; (ii) the establishment of a Project Management Unit to manage day-to-day coordination, implementation, E&S and fiduciary roles and tracking of project-specific indicators; (iii) developing and regularly updated a strong monitoring and evaluation (M&E) framework; (v) targeted capacity-building activities to improve project implementation and improve knowledge sharing.

23. **AUDA-NEPAD will serve as the sole Implementing Agency responsible for the Project (phase 1 of the MPA).** AUDA-NEPAD will be responsible for overall coordination of the Project through the establishment of a Project Implementation unit (PIU). The PIU will be comprised of AUDA-NEPAD salaried staff, both existing as well as to be recruited staff following the agency's HR policies. For specific tasks, the PIU is supported by competitively recruited consultants. The PIU has been established on July 22, 2025, assigning existing staff for key roles. Within 30 days after effectiveness. AUDA-NEPAD will competitively select a project coordinator, who will be supported by a team of experts, including a water and sanitation specialist, fiduciary specialists (procurement and financial management), an environmental and social specialist, and a monitoring, evaluation and knowledge management specialist. An Advisory Committee for the Project will be established to engage other regional entities, including AMCOW, AUC[8], Regional Economic Communities (RECs) as well as representatives of the MPA participating countries to ensure coordination and facilitate agreement on joint activities. Country Coordination Teams will be set up at the level of the twelve participating MPA countries, that will consist of key stakeholders in the WASH sector, to ensure well-coordinated and demand-driven implementation of the Project's activities. The Project Operations Manual (POM) will include the roles and responsibilities of the PIU within AUDA-NEPAD, the Project Advisory Committee, as well as the Country Coordination teams within the MPA participating countries. The Project Procurement Strategy for Development (PPSD) outlines and justify single-source engagements with entities like ESAWAS (in association with AfWASA and PASA), GWP-SA, as well as IGAD and SADC-GMI for specific services where they bring unique value and competencies.

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APPROVAL

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