

IDEV

Independent Development Evaluation
African Development Bank

ANNUAL REPORT

2020

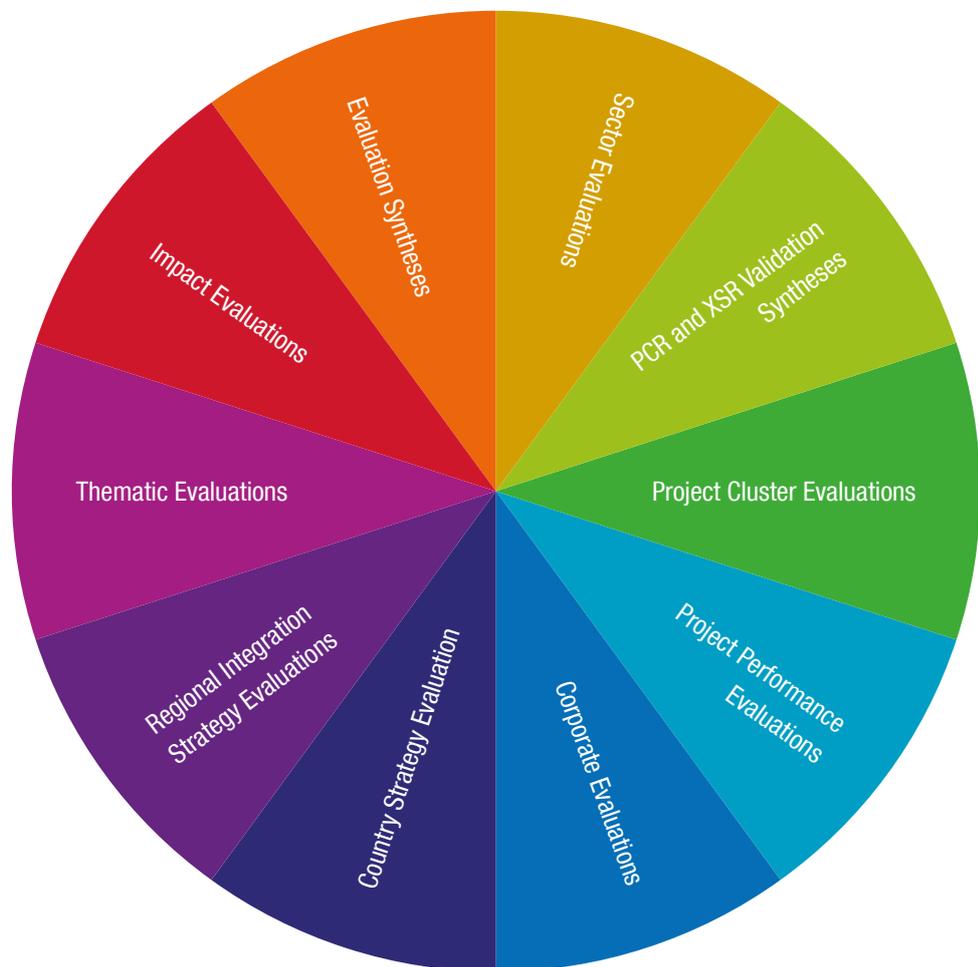
A NEW REALITY:

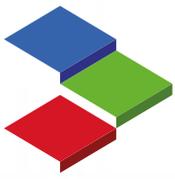
ADAPTING EVALUATION DURING COVID-19



AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP

IDEV conducts different types of evaluations to achieve its strategic objectives





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AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP

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About IDEV

Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV) is an independent and impartial unit dedicated to enhancing the development effectiveness of the African Development Bank (AfDB) in its regional member countries through:

- independent and influential evaluations,
- oversight over self-evaluation processes and products, and
- proactive engagement in evaluation partnerships and knowledge-sharing activities.

All of IDEV's activities are designed to meet the following three key objectives:

1. To provide a basis for accountability to key stakeholders including citizens, governments, funders and partners, by evaluating and documenting the impact of the AfDB's activities.
2. To contribute to enhanced learning helping to improve current and future policies, strategies, projects, and processes.
3. To promote an evaluation culture within the AfDB and in regional member countries to encourage a process of continuous learning and improvement. IDEV has a wealth of experience, expertise, and knowledge from evaluating the AfDB's development projects across Africa.

How does IDEV work with the African Development Bank?

IDEV carries out independent evaluations of Bank operations, policies and strategies, working across projects, sectors, themes, regions, and countries. By conducting independent evaluations and proactively sharing best practice, IDEV ensures that the Bank and its stakeholders learn from past experience and plan and deliver development activities to the highest possible standards. IDEV is also responsible for the oversight of the overall evaluation system within the Bank; the internal and external communication of evaluation findings and lessons; and the promotion of evaluation capacity development.

Disclaimer

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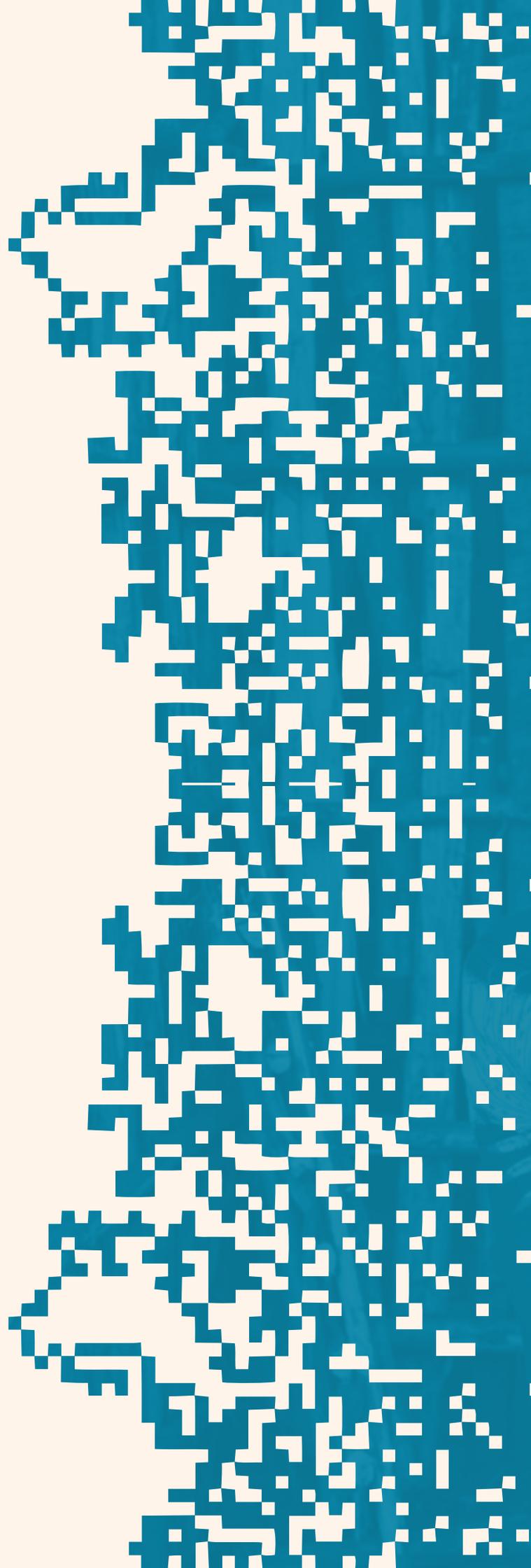


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Acronyms

AfDB	African Development Bank Group
ADF	African Development Fund
AfrEA	African Evaluation Association
APNODE	African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Evaluation
AWF	African Water Facility
CLEAR	Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results
CLEAR-AA	Center for Learning on Evaluation and Results – Anglophone Africa
CODE	Committee on Operations and Development Effectiveness
CPIP	Country Portfolio Improvement Plan
CSE	Civil Society Engagement
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
CPR	Country Portfolio Performance Review
CSPCRV	Country Strategy Paper Completion Report Validation
DBDM	Development and Business Delivery Model
ECD	Evaluation Capacity Development
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EPRADI	Evaluation Platform for Regional African Development Institutions
EVRD	Evaluation Results Database
FSDPS	Financial Sector Development Policy and Strategy
FSRP	Ffulso-Sawla Road Project in Ghana
GCI	General Capital Increase
GG-CC	Green Growth and Climate Change
GM	Gender Mainstreaming
IDEV	Independent Development Evaluation
IED	Independent Evaluation Department (Asian Development Bank)
IEG	Independent Evaluation Group (World Bank Group)
MARS	Management Action Record System
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
NDEA	New Deal on Energy for Africa
NEC	National Evaluation Capacities
NSO	Non-Sovereign Operation
PCR	Project Completion Report
PCREN	Project Completion Report Evaluation Note
RMC	Regional Member Country
RISP	Regional Integration Strategy Paper
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SME	Small and Medium size Enterprise
SO	Sovereign Operation
TS	Transition State
UNDP	United Nations Development Program
WASH	Water, sanitation and hygiene
WHO	World Health Organization
XSR	Expanded Supervision Report

MESSAGE FROM THE CODE CHAIR

2020 has been a tough year for the world and for the Independent Development Evaluation Function (IDEV) of the African Development Bank (AfDB), this has been no exception. The advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, almost unknown at the start of the year, has dominated all facets of work since then. Despite these challenging times, however, IDEV continued to deliver a continuous stream of quality evaluative products during 2020. In the context of the crisis, robust, evidence-based evaluations were more appreciated than ever.

In terms of its focus during 2020, IDEV's work has been relevant and effective. The historic seventh General Capital Increase that shareholders announced for the AfDB at the end of 2019 came with calls for a sharpened focus by the Bank on a variety of areas, many of which have been looked at in close detail by IDEV during 2020. I would in particular pick out in this context the IDEV Evaluation Synthesis of Gender Mainstreaming, the Evaluation of the AfDB's Strategy for Addressing Fragility and Building Resilience in Africa (2014–2019), the Evaluation of the AfDB's Private Sector Development Strategy (2013-2019), and the Evaluation of the AfDB's Support to the Energy Sector in Africa. All of these gave impetus to new strategic and policy thinking at AfDB, which will be consolidated through new strategies to be agreed during 2021.

Beyond its thematic work, the IDEV team delivered a range of significant country evaluations during 2020 – for example of the AfDB's programmes and portfolio in Mali and Egypt – which proved particularly challenging considering the context of the pandemic.

To demonstrate further the breadth of work that IDEV succeeded in delivering, two important impact evaluations should not be forgotten – the Impact Evaluation of the AfDB-supported small-scale irrigation projects in Malawi, and the Impact Evaluation of the AfDB-Funded Ghana Fufulso-Sawla Road Project. It would be easy to overlook these in the context of the bigger set-piece products that the team deliver. However in many ways these impact evaluations are the most insightful of all in terms of providing tangible and specific recommendations that the AfDB's project teams can learn from and put into practice in other areas that the AfDB lends its support to.



Chris Chalmers,
Executive Director for Italy, the
Netherlands and the United Kingdom
at the AfDB

On behalf of all of the CODE Committee, I would like to finish by congratulating the IDEV team on their hard but successful work during the year, including not least Ms Karen Rot-Münstermann who became Acting Evaluator General for the second time during the latter half of the year. As my predecessors noted in past annual reports, for evaluations to be successful, it is critical that evaluators, decision-makers, and implementers are able to work seamlessly together – respecting each other’s different positions and viewpoints, and striving at all times to find ways to improve the impact of what they do. This ambition for continuous improvement lies at the heart of all good evaluations, and I am confident that IDEV will continue to step forward with assertiveness and assurance in the year to come.



MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING SENIOR VICE PRESIDENT



Swazi Tshabalala,
Acting Senior Vice President, AfDB

In 2020, the global economy endured the worst crisis since World War II with the advent of the COVID-19 pandemic, leading to the cessation of normal economic activity around the world in the first few months. The impacts were devastating, both in terms of lives and in terms of the global economy. Africa's health impacts may have been muted in most cases relative to other parts of the World, but the economic fallout led to the largest contraction of Africa's GDP since the 1980s.

The African Development Bank's President immediately implemented Work-from-Home provisions to ensure the wellbeing of staff and got to work to figure out how the Bank can help African countries deal with the pandemic. The Bank responded by issuing the acclaimed US\$3 billion "Fight COVID-19" Social Bond in March, and announcing the US\$10 billion "Crisis Rapid Response Facility", all in the aid of supporting African countries in their efforts to respond to the health, social and economic impacts of the pandemic. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge the tremendous effort by the Bank staff, including our Evaluations team, for their resilience in responding to the multiple challenges and successfully delivering their program of work.

The lessons learned from the COVID-19 pandemic are going to be invaluable in shaping the Bank's agenda. We are, therefore, fortunate to have created and nurtured an excellent independent evaluation department that can distil and analyze what we have learned, with recommendations for efficiency and better delivery of our services to our Regional Member Countries (RMCs).

The Independent Development Evaluation Department (IDEV) celebrated 40 years of its existence in 2020. They endorsed their enduring relevance to the Bank by continuing to produce highly informative pieces of work even during the often-challenging circumstances

of the pandemic in 2020. These included the usual evaluation reports as well as knowledge products specifically developed to inform the Bank's crisis response, drawing on its previous experience with the Ebola epidemic and crisis response budget support.

Several policies and strategies were better informed in the delivery of the Bank's High 5s agenda. The evaluation synthesis of Gender mainstreaming has informed the new Gender Strategy which by all accounts is going to be valuable in the mainstreaming of Gender matters in the Bank's future operations. The water evaluations have been instrumental in informing improvements in the design of water and sanitation projects in the Bank. Equally, the evaluation of the AfDB's Private Sector Strategy and AfDB's support to the Energy Sector have all provided valuable lessons in the design and implementation of projects and programs throughout the year. Indeed, the various Country Strategy and Program Evaluations have provided the evidence and evaluative knowledge that has helped to produce better Country Strategy Papers and hence better programs for RMCs.

As the Bank gears up to support Africa's recovery post-COVID, the financing needs across member countries will require the Bank to help them mobilize considerable development assistance from a wide variety of sources, given that no one institution alone will be able to deal with the myriad of challenges ahead. In this regard, through the work of IDEV in the recently concluded Evaluations of the Bank's Partnerships (2008-2019) as well as the Evaluation of the Bank's Loan Syndication (2008-2019), the findings, lessons and recommendations emerging from these evaluations will be a valuable source of guidance for the Bank's resources mobilization and partnership efforts.

The collaborative relationship with IDEV has been instrumental in ensuring that the Management Action Record System (MARS), which tracks the implementation of evaluation recommendations, is up to date. In this among others, IDEV's role is at the heart of the Bank's ambitions to help African economies grow back better, faster and greener.

MESSAGE FROM THE ACTING EVALUATOR GENERAL

On behalf of Independent Development Evaluation, I am pleased to present to you our 2020 Annual Report.

The year 2020 will be imprinted in our minds for a very long time. The coronavirus pandemic disrupted our lives in ways that we could not have imagined one year ago. It has changed the way we live and work. The year became synonymous with working from home, videoconferencing, handwashing, mask wearing and physical distancing as measures to mitigate transmission of COVID-19. Operating in this new context, and undergoing an unexpected leadership change, IDEV showed strong resilience by continuing to deliver on its work program. In fact, it delivered a record number of 20 evaluation products across the full spectrum of evaluation types, including its first [Management Action Record System \(MARS\) report](#), which tracks the implementation of evaluation recommendations by the Bank.

I want to congratulate and thank the whole IDEV team for this achievement! While some of the products delivered date from previous work program periods and were originally foreseen to be completed earlier, IDEV has amply demonstrated its capacity to deal with difficult circumstances by adapting its way of working. It continued to be a reliable partner for the AfDB and its Regional Member Countries in contributing useful and relevant evidence and evaluative knowledge. In that vein, the [two lessons notes](#) that we produced to support the Bank's response to COVID-19 deserve special mention. IDEV also continued to organize events by taking them online, such as the workshop for Bank staff on Project Completion Reports, organized together with the Quality Assurance Division; the event on lessons from our [water evaluations](#), with the agriculture and agro-industry and water and sanitation departments; and of course, our flagship event, the [African Development Bank Development Evaluation Week](#). For the first time ever, the Evaluation Week was entirely virtual, with all the keynote speeches, presentations, and panel discussions taking place via Zoom. Finally, we continued to support evaluation capacity development, both in the Bank and throughout the African continent, both on the supply and demand sides.

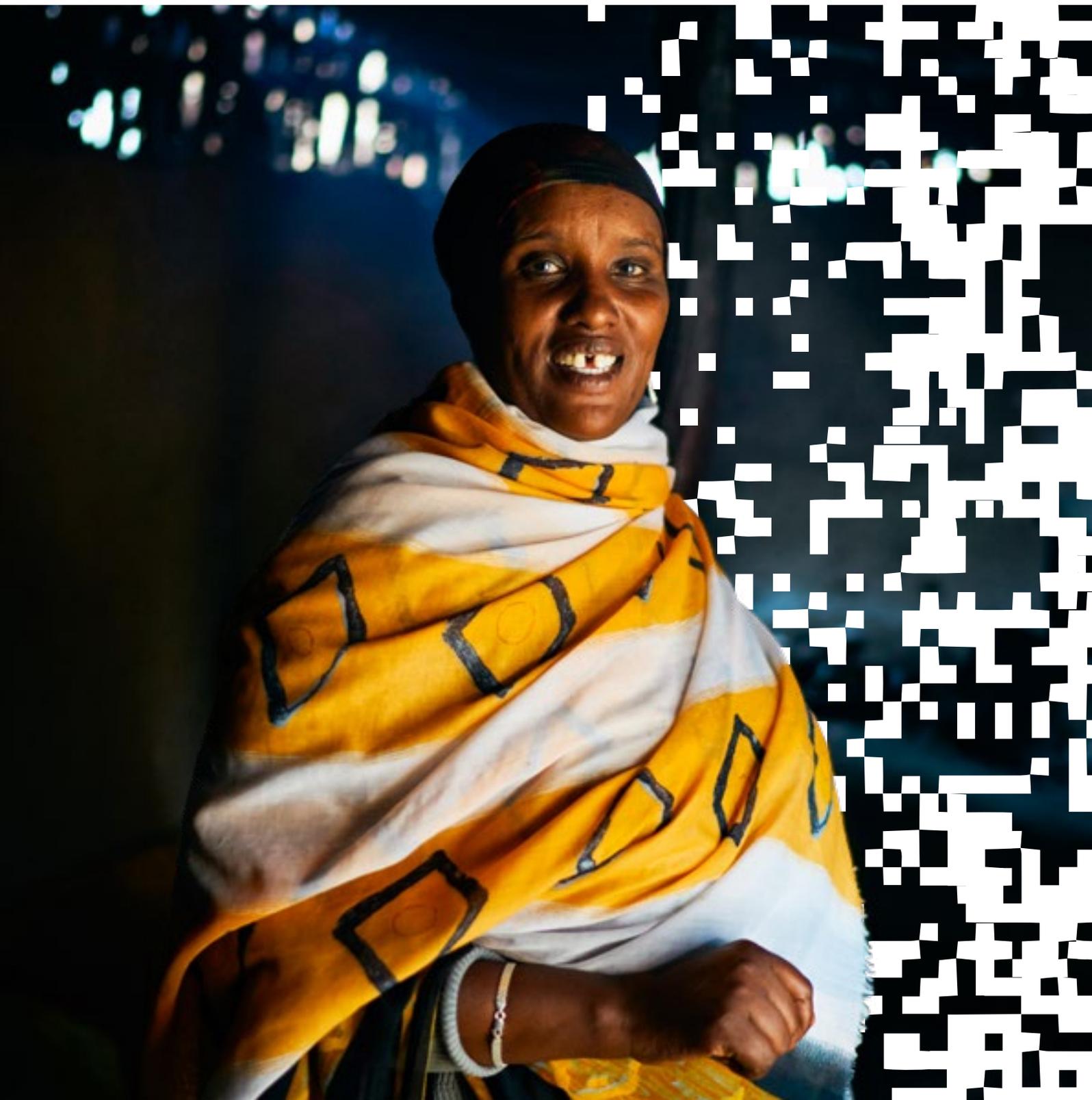


Karen Rot-Münstermann,
Acting Evaluator General, AfDB

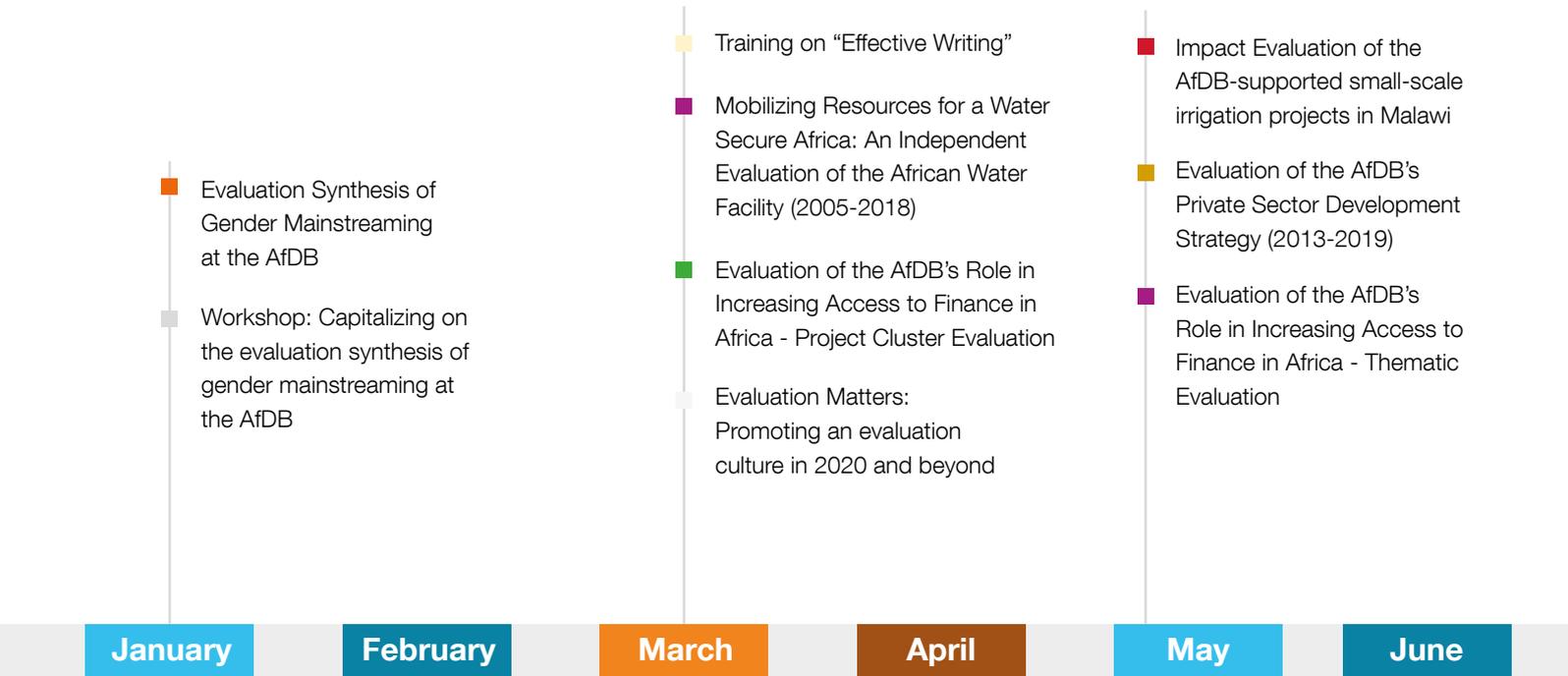
While evaluation needs to preserve its independence to speak truth to power, it also needs to engage with Management to ensure findings, lessons and recommendations are taken on board. Independence does not mean isolation, and engagement is a two-way street. I would like to thank the AfDB Board of Directors and AfDB Management for their unwavering support and guidance and for the excellent working relationships which have helped move evaluation knowledge to action more quickly than we might have otherwise.

2020 marked [40 years since the creation of an evaluation function at the AfDB](#). The evaluation journey at the Bank has been an interesting one. As we reflect on the last 40 years, we can see how far we have come as an institution, how the evaluation function has improved over time, and how we can continue to improve. I look forward to the next chapter of this journey as we work to deliver on our core mandate, which is to contribute to a better Bank, achieving greater development results for Africa.

2020 HIGHLIGHTS



IDEV 2020 TIMELINE



2020

Workshop on “Learning from Evaluations: Improving the quality of PCRs”

Training on "Change Management"

Learning event: “Closing the Action-Learning-Action Loop, Integrating Lessons Learnt from IDEV Water Evaluations in Feed Africa & WASH Operations”

2014-2019 XSR Validation Synthesis Report

Webinar: APNODE Cameroon shares good evaluation practices for effective decision-making

July

August

September

October

November

December

Evaluation of the AfDB’s Support to the Energy Sector in Africa

Evaluation of Mainstreaming Green Growth and Climate Change into the AfDB’s Interventions – Corporate Evaluation

Evaluation of Mainstreaming Green Growth and Climate Change into the AfDB’s Interventions – Energy and Transport Cluster

Joint webinar with IEG and IED on remote data collection techniques

Evaluation of the AfDB’s Civil Society Engagement

Training on "Rigorous Impact Evaluation"

Webinar “Towards better design and implementation of Irrigation Interventions: The case of Malawi” for AfDB staff

AfDB Development Evaluation Week 2020

Webinar “Towards better design and implementation of Irrigation Interventions: The case of Malawi” for Malawian Government officials

Webinar: APNODE Zimbabwe shares insights on drivers promoting the use of evaluation for public policy in Zimbabwe

Discussion Webinar on the Bank Group Policy and Guidelines on Portfolio Review and Restructuring

2018 PCR Validation Synthesis Report

Evaluation of the AfDB’s Policy on Portfolio Review and Restructuring

Evaluation of the AfDB’s Partnerships

Evaluation of the AfDB’s Loan Syndication

Evaluation Matters: Evaluation Week 2020

ROUND UP OF KNOWLEDGE, OUTREACH & DISSEMINATION IN 2020



Twitter:

Tweets: Impressions:
723 430,800

IDEV website activity:



New stories: Downloads: Pageviews: Unique visitors
to the website:
13 17,790 110,141 18,041



EVRD: Evaluation Result Database

Lessons added: Recommendations added: Queries made by users:
597 502 1994

MARS: Management Action Record System

Evaluations added: Recommendations added:
12 52

Management Actions added:
113





CONTEXT

TEN YEARS TO TRANSFORM OUR WORLD

In 2020, the world kick-started the Decade of Action to speed up the delivery of the [2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development](#). The Decade of Action calls for accelerating sustainable solutions to the world's biggest challenges -ranging from poverty and climate change to inequality and closing the finance gap- at three levels: **global action** to secure greater leadership, more resources and smarter solutions for the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs); **local action** embedding the transitions needed in the policies, budgets, institutions and regulatory frameworks of governments, cities and local authorities; and **people action**, including by youth, civil society, the media, the private sector, unions, academia and other stakeholders, to generate an unstoppable movement pushing for the required transformation. The United Nations SDGs are in tandem with the [African Union's Agenda 2063](#) and the African Development Bank Group (AfDB)'s [Ten-Year Strategy](#) and [High 5 priorities](#). Several initiatives called SDG Acceleration Actions have been undertaken to fast-track SDG implementation by key stakeholder groups –governments, businesses, civil society organizations and others– individually or in partnership across the world.

COVID PANDEMIC AND THE SHIFT IN GLOBAL DEVELOPMENT PRIORITIES

In March 2020, the World Health Organization (WHO) declared COVID-19 a public health emergency. The world as we knew it changed and a new reality rapidly took hold. This shifted global development priorities. The public and private sectors, individuals, and communities mobilized to respond to the impact of the pandemic. There was enormous need for resources to combat the crisis. Countries took unprecedented but unequal measures to contain the virus, each according to its capacity. Most countries focused on immediate response strategies to flatten the disease curve through non-pharmaceutical prevention and containment measures, notably personal hygiene, physical distancing, and reduction of economic activity, to various degrees. Travel restrictions and remote work became the new normal. COVID-19 continued to spread rapidly throughout the year, with far-reaching consequences and implications. In this context, there was a strong need for credible evidence on what works and what does not, why, for whom, and under what circumstances.

THE AfDB IN A NEW REALITY

As the world entered a new reality, so did the AfDB. The pandemic required the Bank to adapt both its way of working and its programs. In one day, the Bank went remote, with all its staff working from home in a digital workplace. All mission travel -crucial for the identification, appraisal, supervision, monitoring and evaluation of operations- was stopped. The AfDB also threw its full weight behind emergency response support to assist its Regional Member Countries (RMCs) at this critical time - designing and establishing a Crisis Response Facility of up to USD 10 billion mainly in the form of budget support, issuing a USD 3 billion social bond, approving a support operation for the WHO, reallocating existing resources and freeing up resources through cancellations, and strengthening coordination and collaboration with other development agencies. At the same time, the pandemic also provided opportunities for the AfDB to accelerate some of its institutional arrangements that enable the organization to operate seamlessly as One Bank¹ based on the recommendations of the [Evaluation of the Implementation of the Development and Business Delivery Model \(DBDM\) of the AfDB](#).

In this new working environment, the IDEV workforce had to be creative and innovative in doing its work, given the many restrictions and challenges. Scoping and design of evaluations, consultation with evaluation reference groups and other stakeholders, data collection and analysis, report writing, knowledge management, communication, dissemination and capacity development all had to be done remotely. This year was not business as usual, and still, IDEV delivered.

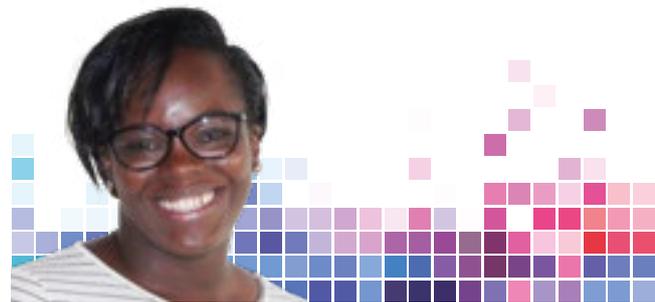


“ COVID-19 has changed my lifestyle. My work and family life were disrupted, and the balance tilted towards the latter. I now exercise every day to keep fit and I am closer to my wife and kids.”

Debazou Y. Yantio, Principal Evaluation Officer

“ The COVID 19 pandemic has completely changed my habits and the way I work. Fortunately, it didn’t take long for me to establish a new routine. I stay motivated thanks to sport and my work team with whom I am constantly in virtual contact.”

Stephanie Yoboue, Evaluation Officer



“ COVID-19 radically changed my way of working to a large extent by inhibiting my physical interactions with my colleagues and so I had to rely on emails, phone calls and Skype for work related conversations.”

Andrew Anguko, Chief Quality and Methods Advisor



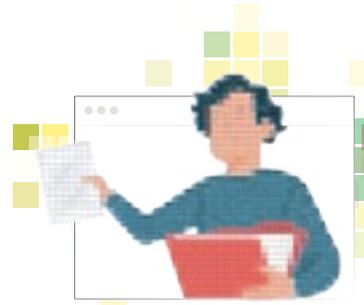
¹ The overriding objective of the One Bank initiative is to increase the AfDB’s efficiency and development effectiveness by strengthening accountabilities for results and breaking down the institutional silos that hamper performance.

2020 INSIGHTS

In 2020, while the AfDB has been impacted by the pandemic at various levels, including individual and institutional, the independent evaluation function of the Bank has demonstrated **resilience**, **adaptability** and **responsiveness** by continuing to deliver and remaining engaged and attentive to demands.



EVALUATION PRODUCTS DELIVERED



2 validation synthesis reports

2014-2019 Expanded Supervision Report validation synthesis report and 2018 Project Completion Report validation synthesis report



2 project cluster evaluations

on the Bank's support for access to finance and mainstreaming green growth and climate change into the Bank's interventions



2 impact evaluations

of Malawi irrigation projects and a Ghana road project



2 Country Strategy and Program Evaluations

for Egypt and Mali



2 sector evaluations

of the Bank's Private Sector Development Strategy and its support for the energy sector



4 thematic evaluations

of the African Water Facility, the Bank's support for access to finance, the Bank's partnerships and its loan syndication



4 corporate evaluations

of the Bank's Fragility Strategy, its portfolio review and restructuring policy, its civil society engagement, and mainstreaming green growth and climate change into its interventions



1 evaluation synthesis

on Gender mainstreaming



First

Management Action Record System (MARS) report

RESILIENCE

IDEV has demonstrated its resilience in different ways:

1. BY DELIVERING A RECORD 20 EVALUATION PRODUCTS

2020 has been an exceptional year for IDEV. Despite the uncertainty from the COVID-19 pandemic, it was able to ensure business continuity and continued to deliver on its core Work Program. In fact, it exceeded its target for 2020 by delivering a **record 20 evaluation products**, including 17 evaluations, 2 validation synthesis reports and its first Management Action Record System (MARS) report, which tracks the implementation of evaluation recommendations by the Bank (see [Annex 2](#)).

Evaluation products delivered include:

Validation Synthesis Reports

Synthesis Report on the Validation of 2014-2019 Expanded Supervision Reports

An Expanded Supervision Report (XSR), undertaken as a self-evaluation, records an AfDB private sector operation's performance when it has reached early operating maturity. IDEV independently validates a sample of XSRs each year – over the 2014-2019 period, this number was 46. This synthesis report aggregates the results of the 46 XSR validations.

The report found that monitoring for Early Operating Maturity by project type and self-evaluating all projects reaching operating maturity has not systematically taken place. Over the past decade, the Bank has been successful in internalizing the process of undertaking XSRs and improving the quality of XSRs, but not the process of selecting projects for the XSR exercise. The operations reviewed did result in positive development outcomes. The synthesis found that 34 of the 46 evaluated interventions realized positive results that, on balance, met or exceeded specified financial, economic, environmental, and social performance benchmarks and standards, i.e. an overall success rate of 74%. The overall disconnect between Management's and IDEV's ratings for the share of projects with positive outcome ratings is 8 percentage points. IDEV's quality assessment rated 43 of the 46 XSRs (93.5%) as satisfactory or highly satisfactory. This compares favorably with the 2011 synthesis, in which 20% of the reports were rated unsatisfactory. Notwithstanding the overall positive rating for the quality of XSRs, there is room for improvement in the area of identifying and formulating lessons.

Main lessons and drivers of success

- Working with good sponsors is the most deterministic factor in overall project success.
- Good front-end work is instrumental to the assessment and achievement of targeted development results.
- Non-lending assistance is correlated with higher rates of project success.
- There is an element of innovation in the Bank's use of instruments.



The synthesis report recommended the development of specific guidance on lessons that provides sufficient distinction between findings, lessons, and recommendations, and improves the staff's capacity to rate project performance to reduce or close the gap between self and independent ratings.

Synthesis Report on the Validation of 2018 Project Completion Reports

The AfDB undertakes self-evaluations of its sovereign operations through Project Completion Reports (PCRs) prepared by the Bank's operations departments. This report synthesizes findings from the independent validation of 65 PCRs prepared in 2018. It summarizes the key results of the 2018 PCR Evaluation Notes (PCRENs), focusing on the PCR quality; the performance of the projects, Bank and borrowers; and key lessons for improving the quality of PCRs and project results performance. The synthesis report found the quality of the 2018 PCRs to be satisfactory overall, though uneven. The percentage of PCRs with satisfactory quality increased from 59 in 2016 to 78 in 2018. The performance of the 2018 PCR projects was also found satisfactory, for the combined criteria of the relevance of project development objectives and design, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. It, however, decreased slightly from 77% in 2015 to 74% in 2018. In general, the PCRs tended to rate project performance significantly higher than the PCRENs. As points for improvement of the PCRs, the synthesis report pointed to the quality of the evidence, lessons, recommendations, M&E and compliance with the Bank's guidelines.



Main lessons

- **Project preparation and design:**
Integrating operations and maintenance and associated budget into project design is important for successful project implementation and results.
- **Implementation arrangements and performance:**
Inadequate implementation of a project's M&E framework can critically limit the available project information for evaluating performance and for learning from experience.
- **Institution and capacity building, and ownership:**
Involvement of relevant government agencies and national civil society organizations early in the project cycle is critical for improving the sustainability of project outcomes.

Project Cluster Evaluations

Evaluation of the AfDB's Role in Increasing Access to Finance in Africa - Project Cluster Evaluation

This project cluster evaluation, which supports a thematic evaluation (see below), examined 32 operations with an approved value of USD 3.3 billion, purposefully focused on countries where the Bank had multiple operations during the period under consideration (2011-2018). The evaluation found that access to finance remains a key constraint to private sector development and low-income populations' economic inclusion. It also found that the high priority given to access to finance in the AfDB's Financial Sector Development Policy and Strategy (FSDPS) and in partner countries was not reflected in the Bank's Country Strategy

Papers (CSPs) for the selected countries. Target groups were not sufficiently defined, and the broad intended development outcomes limited the Bank's role in advancing access to finance for the underserved. Although the AfDB's operations were in line with the FSDPS and relevant to their respective country contexts, the evaluation found that they tend to provide temporary solutions to financial sector development barriers rather than addressing the root causes.

Evaluation of Mainstreaming Green Growth and Climate Change into the AfDB's Interventions: Energy and Transport Cluster

This project cluster evaluation is one of the six building blocks of the corporate evaluation of Mainstreaming Green Growth and Climate Change (GG-CC) into the Bank's Interventions (see below). It assesses seven energy and transport projects in five countries: Cameroon, Morocco, Mozambique, Rwanda and Senegal, for a total value of USD 564 million. The evaluation found the relevance and effectiveness of the projects in achieving their intended GG-CC mainstreaming results (outputs and outcomes) to be satisfactory overall while their efficiency was found unsatisfactory. The evaluation noted that the AfDB has increasingly enhanced the integration of GG-CC principles into its sectoral policies and strategies, particularly in the energy sector, more so than in the transport sector. The Bank has also successfully mobilized and leveraged climate funds to finance major energy infrastructure projects. Although investments in green infrastructure have increased, particularly in renewable energy, there are still challenges faced in transitioning countries toward low-carbon development. Finally, the evaluation found that the AfDB is increasingly developing relevant knowledge products to support the integration of GG-CC in the energy and transport sectors.



Country Strategy and Program Evaluations

Egypt Country Strategy and Program Evaluation (2009-2018)

The evaluation covers a crucial period, namely the pre-revolution, revolution, and post-revolution periods. The Bank supported the country with 53 operations focusing on infrastructure development, macroeconomic stabilization, and inclusive growth. At close to USD 2.5 billion, Egypt's portfolio was among the AfDB's top five country portfolios over the period. Overall, the evaluation found that the performance of the AfDB was satisfactory, despite a volatile and challenging context. The Bank delivered a highly focused program adapted to the country's changing needs, although it was over-ambitious given resource capacity. The Bank's performance was found excellent in energy and water supply and sanitation, but the non-lending activities, such as technical assistance, did not progress well. Attention to crosscutting issues (gender equality, inclusiveness and green growth) has evolved at the strategic level; yet it could be better at the implementation and results reporting level. The evaluation expected that the large and positive benefits of the Bank's support will be maintained. Factors that supported the achievement of results include good program design, policy dialogue, ownership, and leadership by the Government of Egypt. In contrast, factors that hampered the achievement of results include insufficient funds and in-country staff, challenges in the projects' procurement process, and lengthy government project ratification processes.

The evaluation recommended the Bank to (i) strike an appropriate balance between budget support and investment operations underpinned by its comparative advantage; (ii) strengthen the balance in its program and project portfolio (increased private sector focus); (iii) enhance its role as a knowledge broker; and (iv) strengthen program delivery.



Main lessons

- A strong country ownership and relationship with the country, and flexibility in the design and delivery of Bank support, is essential when the country is undergoing rapid transition.
- Focusing and becoming deeply involved in strategic investments, institutional development and policy reform in key sectors is essential to the delivery of results over time.
- A coordinated, multi-partner approach to budget support works well, particularly when partners support common reforms, and have their own areas of focus to concentrate on.
- Linking dialogue and knowledge products to lending operations and complementing this with demand-driven policy reform support is an effective way of using non-lending resources.

Sector and thematic evaluations

Evaluation of the AfDB's Private Sector Development Strategy (2013-2019)

The evaluation of the AfDB's 2013-2019 PSD Strategy assessed the contribution of the Strategy to the Bank's efficiency and effectiveness, with a view to informing the new PSD Strategy that is currently under preparation. It noted that implementation of the Strategy commenced well during the early years but momentum subsequently stalled, with the PSD Results Measurement Framework not used to monitor progress and the planned mid-term review not undertaken. The evaluation found that the application of the PSD Strategy in the Bank's African member countries and its contribution to the achievement of the Ten-Year Strategy as well as the High 5s was highly relevant. At the same time, the Strategy had design weaknesses, and it could have defined criteria to better balance the non-sovereign operation (NSO) portfolio between operations through financial institutions and real sector operations. While the evaluation found that sovereign operations (SOs) satisfactorily supported improvements in the investment and business climate, the effectiveness of NSOs varied depending on the sector supported. Although linkages between SOs and NSOs were important, they were rare, and evident only in some case study countries. Institutional performance indicators focussed on key aspects of the Bank's effectiveness and efficiency, but this data has not been publicly available from 2016 onwards. The Bank did not report on its SO and NSO PSD portfolio in an integrated manner. In addition, the evaluation found only a limited number of operations in the 2013-2019 approval list for which completion reports and validated completion reports were available.

The evaluation recommended to adapt the Bank's institutional arrangements for PSD operations in order to maximize its impact in regional member countries and to strengthen linkages between its sovereign and non-sovereign operations at country/regional level. It also advised to carry out an in-depth analysis of the effect of NSOs on Small and Medium Enterprises, to increase the Bank's PSD operations in low-income and transition countries, and to improve the quality of PSD Strategy design, management, measurement and reporting of results.

Main lessons

- Good alignment with institutional strategy is a necessary condition, but the lack of a thorough analysis of financing and capacity constraints led to lack of realism in the ambition of the PSD Strategy.
- In the absence of common guidance for designing PSD programs, there was wide variation in the customization of PSD country/regional programs and High 5 PSD priorities, with lost opportunities to maximize the benefits of combining sovereign and non-sovereign activities.
- Lack of clarity in delivery responsibilities and institutional arrangements for PSD operations generally and NSOs in particular resulted in challenges in the smooth implementation of the PSD Strategy.
- The Bank did not fully understand the balance of sectors and instruments that would best support the needs of target groups of private sector beneficiaries.



Evaluation of the AfDB's Support to the Energy Sector in Africa

Over the 1999-2018 period, the Bank committed nearly USD 18 billion to the energy sector, implementing successive energy policies (1994 and 2012), frameworks, action plans and the New Deal on Energy for Africa (NDEA) 2016-2025. The evaluation found that while the Bank's support to the energy sector was relevant, there were shortcomings in the design of its projects, including in long-term sector planning, risk assessment, resource allocation and tracking of progress, among others. The Bank's support was deemed effective and sustainable, but challenges were noted in sector governance, regulatory frameworks and the affordability of services, especially for the poor. The evaluation recommended the Bank to improve the quality of NDEA management, measurement and reporting of results; to strengthen its assistance to the capacities of RMCs to formulate and implement comprehensive energy policies; to increase its support to RMCs to enhance power utilities' performance and the financial sustainability of the power system, and to increase its funding to RMCs and the private sector for sustainable energy access.

“ *The Energy Sector Evaluation, covering a 20-year period, demonstrated the Bank's impact on Africa's energy sector but also identified areas that require attention to further increase the effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Bank's interventions. Importantly the IDEV evaluation also assessed the first years of the Bank's New Deal on Energy for Africa (NDEA) strategy, providing clear guidance on how the NDEA can be adjusted to the market realities.* **”**

Daniel Schroth, Acting Director, Department of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency, AfDB



Mobilizing Resources for a Water Secure Africa: An Independent Evaluation of the African Water Facility (2005-2018)

The evaluation covered 118 interventions in 52 countries for a total volume of approximately USD 195 million approved by the African Water Facility (AWF), a multilateral Special Fund that provides grants and technical assistance to enable governments, non-governmental organizations and private-public partnerships to address the increasing investment need for the development and management of water resources in Africa. The evaluation found the AWF to be a highly relevant instrument and one of the few water-related actors that operate at the African continental scale to support project preparation, which enables further co-production and co-financing of projects with a range of development partners and actors. The AWF's focus on "soft" development aspects, such as project preparation, innovation, and policy development, was found to have added a unique value to addressing the continent's water and sanitation challenges. The development effectiveness of the AWF was deemed satisfactory overall, although there is an indication of a decline in recent years due to shifting strategic priorities. The AWF has been effective in enabling African countries to introduce innovative models for managing national water resources.

Main recommendations

- Be more flexible, nimble and efficient, to maintain the AWF's comparative advantage and fulfill its mandate, in collaboration with the AfDB.
- Improve the results reporting and communication of the AWF (about the AWF as a Facility, its operations, and achievements) to its range of stakeholders.
- Adopt concrete measures to improve its operational efficiency for optimal delivery on its mandates.
- Engage more with decision-makers and continue to market itself to donors to renew their participation and engagement, thereby increasing its financing.



“ *IDEV's evaluation of the African Water Facility presented a positive picture of the Facility's results and impacts and rated it as a highly relevant instrument in supporting African countries in addressing water sector challenges. It also identified areas of improvement, such as incorporating cross-cutting issues, especially gender as well as climate change, environmental and social equity into project design. The evaluation was very timely and has been a critical tool for engaging with the Facility's partners, strengthening resource mobilization efforts, and informing AWF's new strategic plan”.*

Wambui Gichuri, Acting Vice-President, Agriculture, Human and Social Development/Director, Water and Sanitation Department, AfDB



Evaluation of the AfDB's Role in Increasing Access to Finance in Africa

This thematic evaluation, which was informed by the aforementioned cluster evaluation, examined the spectrum of 226 interventions approved by the Bank in support of Financial Sector Development (FSD) over the 2011-2018 period, for a total value of USD 13 billion. It found that recent developments in the financial sector require attention in developing a new FSDPS. In addition, the FSDPS's hybrid nature (combining both a policy and a strategy) posed its own challenges: while the document reflected a state-of-the-art in financial sector knowledge, there was limited clarity on the relationship between the policy and the strategy, and the definitions of the concepts used. Despite increased internal capacity to deliver, the evaluation found weak coordination of FSD activities across the AfDB.

In terms of operational performance, the Bank's operations were found to be in line with the FSDPS's objectives and relevant to their respective client and country contexts, but the majority did not necessarily serve the underserved. Operations also did not seem to form part of a coherent Bank strategy toward FSD. While the operations were found effective in providing resources and services otherwise unavailable to client financial institutions, it was not feasible to track and measure development outcomes for end-beneficiaries. Although about half of the Bank's FSD operations were found to be efficient in terms of respect of time, overall efficiency was deemed only partially satisfactory due to inefficient communication, the lack of an automated procurement system, and clients' complaints of overly prolonged processes.



Main recommendations

- The role of the Bank in FSD should be clarified by focusing more on the Bank's strategic priorities, conducting sector diagnostics that identify barriers to access to finance at the country and regional levels, and being more explicit on how operations contribute to FSD;
- Position the AfDB as a key player in FSD, by stepping up the Bank's engagement in policy and regulatory dialogue, formalizing the coordination of the Bank departments involved in financial sector activities, improving outreach and deepening relationships with sector stakeholders, and increasing the resources for operations aimed at fostering regional financial integration;
- The Bank should improve the benefits for the intended target groups by better defining and measuring the project development outcomes and benefits for target groups, building on effective approaches to support SME finance, moving from a pipeline to a portfolio approach, and using a more deliberate approach to narrow the gender gap in access to finance.

“ We particularly appreciated IDEV's constructive approach to the Evaluation of the Bank's Role in Improving Access to Finance in Africa. Their willingness to engage meant that we had robust discussions about what was working well and areas where we need to refine our approach. The valuable lessons and recommendations in the report will inform and enrich the development of the 2021-2025 Financial Sector Development Strategy, and thus shape the Bank's engagement in the financial sector for years to come”.

Stefan Nalletamby, Director, Financial Sector Development Department, AfDB

Evaluation of the Partnerships of the AfDB

The AfDB's Ten-Year Strategy considers effective partnerships as one of the key approaches through which the Bank would deliver its development objectives. This evaluation assessed the Bank's approach to and management of development partnerships over the period 2008–2019, examining 75 active partnerships and the Bank's partnership ecosystem. It found that despite the Bank not having developed a specific partnership and resource mobilization strategy, its partnerships aligned with its strategies and were consistent with international development agendas and continental initiatives. Overall, the Bank was found to have been effective in using its various development partnerships to mobilize additional resources and deliver better results through the operations funded by these partnerships, but it did not manage its partnerships optimally to ensure results delivery using the most cost-efficient/effective means. However, the partnerships were generally found to be sustainable.

The evaluation recommended² the Bank to: (i) define and set out the strategic directions for partnerships and resource mobilization, clarifying priorities and ensuring coherence; (ii) review the current partnerships framework and institutional arrangements with a view to achieving strong coordination, greater efficiency and better results; and (iii) provide adequate resources, KPIs and incentives for the management of partnerships.

Main lessons

- A more precise definition of strategic direction contributes to the successful mainstreaming of partnerships.
- Clarification of roles and coordination from Senior Management are essential to achieve efficiency.
- Formalized and mainstreamed partnerships are likely to be more successful.
- Dedicated resources are an essential contributing factor to the success of partnerships.
- Investing in adequate systems is expected to have a cross-cutting impact for partnerships and more Trust Funds.
- Effective M&E, transparency, and accountability promote strong alliances.



Evaluation of Loan Syndication at the AfDB

Loan syndication and distribution is the process of involving a group of lenders in funding various portions of a loan for a single borrower, to spread the risk of financing a project. The evaluation assessed the performance of the Bank in mobilizing resources from the private sector through loan syndication over the period 2008–2019.

The evaluation found that the Bank's approach to syndicating loans was relevant, while its effectiveness and efficiency were unsatisfactory. Syndicated loans have been identified as an appropriate instrument to boost resource mobilization from the private sector and increase the Bank's leverage in various sectors, mainly infrastructure. The Bank's syndication program was considered a useful and adequate instrument that fits both the needs of the Bank's clients, regional member countries and potential investors. The implementation of syndication and the achievement of results thereof, however, did not meet expectations, mainly due to the low level of mobilization and the limited number of deals that the Bank led and brought to financial closure over the decade. The efficiency of the syndication function

² At the time of writing, the evaluation has not been presented to CODE yet. The recommendations will only be final following CODE's endorsement.

was hampered by multiple implementation challenges, among which weaknesses in internal coordination and the inadequacy of the incentives in place, notably Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) and staff capacity.

The evaluation recommended³ to develop a five-year strategic framework to establish syndication as a cost-covering and revenue-generating business function, with a sharper focus on business development. It also recommended to strengthen the syndication processes and delegation of authority in line with the One Bank Approach as well as to improve innovation, reporting, and learning of co-financing and syndication.



Main lessons

- Deals are likely to be more successful and closed relatively faster when processes are efficient.
- Reducing the average size of syndicated deals could increase the Bank's activity.
- Coordination and cooperation between investment officers and syndication experts, as well as building a strong network of lenders, are essential factors for success.
- Adequate delegation of authority empowers investment officers and syndication experts to close deals.
- Concentration could boost syndicated loan performance and the Bank's additionality.

Corporate evaluations

Evaluation of the AfDB's Strategy for Addressing Fragility and Building Resilience in Africa (2014–2019)

The evaluation assessed the relevance of the AfDB's Fragility Strategy 2014-2019, the efficiency of its implementation by the Bank and its effectiveness in term of results. It covered the Bank's assistance to Low-Income Countries eligible for the African Development Fund (ADF) and featured permanently or temporarily on the Bank's lists of Transition States⁴ (TS) during the 2014-2019 period. During this period, the AfDB approved 354 operations for 22 TS, representing a total amount of USD 6.48 billion. Overall, the Bank's Strategy was found relevant to meet the specific needs of TS, although it was more focused on responsiveness than prevention. The Bank was able to mobilize various financing instruments, including NSOs, to support TS in a context of continued decline in ADF resources. The evaluation found progress in the Bank adapting its policies, rules and procedures to situations of fragility. However, more could be achieved with greater Bank-wide ownership of the Strategy. The Bank was found to have shown flexibility and responsiveness to countries' changing contexts and needs, but no selectivity. Also, despite Bank efforts, the positive results achieved are too modest to reverse the dynamics that drive fragility. The timeliness of the Strategy's implementation was found to be unsatisfactory. Only budget support operations were implemented in a highly satisfactory manner. The sustainability of the outcomes was deemed unsatisfactory mainly due to the challenging environment in TS, financial constraints and institutional weaknesses.

³ At the time of writing, the evaluation has not been presented to CODE yet. The recommendations will only be final following CODE's endorsement.

⁴ Countries where the main development challenge is fragility

The main recommendations emerging from this evaluation include revising the Strategy to make prevention one of its principles of engagement and strengthen its overall relevance; creating conditions to better mainstream cross cutting issues into the Bank's strategies and operations in TS; and focussing on an integrated approach (strong synergy) for investment projects and a structural approach to capacity building.

Main lessons

- To remain relevant, a fragility strategy must be flexible, with mid-term reviews that are held on time, to allow it to adjust and consider the evolution of the rapidly changing context.
- In a context of continuous decline in highly concessional resources, early and preventive intervention targeting identified pockets of fragility will ultimately make it possible to be more effective and to preserve resources for concrete development actions.
- Having a partnership framework with other technical and financial partners, civil society organizations or private sector actors who have a comparative advantage over the Bank in certain situations, makes it possible to maximize the development impact of Bank interventions in any circumstance.



Evaluation of Mainstreaming Green Growth and Climate Change into the AfDB's Interventions

This corporate evaluation assessed the mainstreaming of Green Growth and Climate Change (GG-CC) into the AfDB's policies, strategies, tools and operations approved between 2008 and 2018. The transition to green growth is one of two overarching objectives of the AfDB's Ten-Year Strategy 2013–2022, and an integral part of the Bank's GG efforts is building resilience to climate change impacts.

The evaluation found that the results of GG-CC mainstreaming activities were increasingly evident after the Bank's approval of key policy and strategy documents such as the 'Transitioning Towards Green Growth' framework (2014) following the Bank's Ten-Year Strategy, and the "High 5s" (2015). The Bank did well in mainstreaming GG-CC in its policies, strategies and operations during design, but GG-CC references in country and regional strategies, sectoral policies, programs and projects were deemed to have been implemented in a limited way. Attention to measures that consider GG-CC were found to dissipate during project implementation, mainly due to capacity constraints at the country level. From the Bank's portfolio of 873 projects that were identified as mainstreaming GG-CC, 20 projects were selected for in-depth analysis. While the relevance of these projects was found satisfactory, their effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability were deemed unsatisfactory. The evaluation recommended to establish a clear theory of change and put in place adequate mechanisms to monitor and track GG-CC results throughout the project cycle.



Main lessons

- Where specialized GG-CC units are located higher in a multilateral development bank's structure, GG-CC results are better achieved.
- An increased role, capability and GG-CC expertise in Regional and Country Offices tends to enhance the performance of projects and non-lending interventions in the area of GG-CC.
- Monitoring and measuring of the Bank's achievement of GG-CC results are essential in ensuring that its intentions and its approved intervention designs that mainstream GG-CC are being implemented.

Evaluation of the AfDB's Portfolio Review and Restructuring Policy

This evaluation was undertaken to inform the revision of the AfDB's Portfolio Review and Restructuring Policy and its implementation guidelines. It found that the Country Portfolio Performance Reviews (CPRs) are relevant as a dialogue tool to assist member countries in meeting current Bank obligations, but only marginally relevant in addressing constraints to achieving the development objectives of projects or the portfolio as a whole. In addition, many of the portfolio review processes did not take advantage of the country knowledge and client relationships built by staff in the Bank's Country Offices. The current CPR guidelines were found to focus on processes rather than results, and do not articulate how the CPR would complement and reinforce project supervision. The evaluation also found that CPRs succeeded in aggregating findings and information from implementation progress reports, but have not been an effective tool for rectifying the consequences of weak project design and poor project supervision.

The evaluation recommended to refocus the CPR on the analysis of portfolio problems, with a view to problem-solving and promoting progress towards a country's development results, and to systematize and enhance support to Country Offices in the management of their country portfolio by clarifying the role of implementation support managers and improving coordination and cross-fertilization.

Main lessons

- Designing a policy instrument with too many objectives and multiple target audiences risks a loss of focus and effectiveness.
- Defining clear and simple processes and providing incentives to contribute to development results can improve the usefulness and effectiveness of the portfolio management and restructuring policy / guideline.
- A well-designed, results-oriented Country Portfolio Improvement Plan has the potential of becoming an effective tool for portfolio dialogue and monitoring.
- Institutionalizing a culture of quality and results can make an important contribution to project success.



Evaluation of the AfDB's Engagement with Civil Society

This evaluation assessed the Bank's engagement with Civil Society at the corporate, regional member country and project levels over the period 2012-2019, to enhance the Bank's approach and inform the development of a new Bank strategy on Civil Society Engagement (CSE). It found a lack of clarity and understanding around what the Bank aims to achieve with CSE. The lack of an M&E framework has also hampered monitoring, learning and knowledge management of CSE experiences. The evaluation found progress with respect to disclosure and access to information at the corporate level, but communication remains largely one-way, from the Bank to CSOs. The CSO Forum has been the most sustained example of corporate level dialogue. Internal and external collaborations and partnerships were found to be a substantial driver in enhancing meaningful CSE by the AfDB. However, the Bank's strategic and convening positioning has not fully reflected CSE in the design of the Bank's strategies and priorities, and its dialogues at the regional member country level. The evaluation's recommendations include enhancing awareness and common understanding of the purpose and potential value-added of CSE to the Bank's mandate as well as strengthening the resourcing approach for effective implementation of CSE. The evaluation also recommended to strengthen CSE in policy dialogue at the country and regional levels to contribute to the Bank's agenda of inclusive growth and good governance.

Main lessons

- Inadequate internal awareness limited the use of existing Bank mechanisms and institutional structures aimed at enhancing CSE. This in turn hindered the achievement of the desired outcomes.
- Lessons from the Bank and development partners point toward the potential usefulness of a credible and reliable accreditation system for Africa-based CSOs to enhance selectivity and mitigate reputational and operational risks for Bank staff in partnering with civil society.
- Conducting country- or region-specific mapping of civil society in line with the Bank's mandate and development priorities would help to contextualize the Bank's CSE and foster an enabling environment for CSOs.



“When civil society engages with the Bank, the Bank implements and probably takes into consideration a lot of civil society inputs. This is why it is very important to have feedback mechanisms and to close the feedback loop. It is also very important that the voices of civil society feed into the processes of evaluation. Our perspectives and our insights are used to improve the programming cycle through receiving our views on how things have gone. This evaluation is a very critical step and is very important in closing the perception gaps and the participation gaps”.

Laura Nyirinkindi, East African CSO Representative on the 2018-2020 Bank-Civil Society Committee

Evaluation synthesis on Gender Mainstreaming at the AfDB

The evaluation synthesis covered the period 2010-2018. It was a follow-up to the previous synthesis of gender mainstreaming undertaken by IDEV in 2012, and intended to inform the development of the Bank's new [Gender Strategy](#) for the period 2021-2025. The evaluation exercise examined the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, catalytic effect and sustainability of the Bank's gender mainstreaming approaches, mechanisms and results in light of institutional, regional and global priorities for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Africa. As part of the evaluation, a synthesis of evaluative evidence from 12 comparator institutions was conducted, and a number of good practices and lessons identified for the AfDB.

The report offered several points for consideration in developing the AfDB's new gender strategy, inter alia: (i) mapping the pillars and interventions in the Gender Strategy to the AfDB's Ten-Year Strategy, its High 5 priorities and the SDGs, as well as to internal corporate policies and processes, would enhance the usefulness of the strategy in the Bank; (ii) the new gender strategy should maintain the structure of the former gender strategy, with both internal and external components and a more streamlined and sharper focus; and (iii) co-development of the new gender strategy is critical to increase internal and external buy-in.

Main lessons



- Building on existing strengths and comparative advantages, while applying a sharper scope, would help the AfDB to mitigate weaknesses and better leverage its mandate.
- The Bank can strategically leverage the processes in its development and business delivery model and align with regional and global priorities by visibly and strategically linking the Bank's gender agenda to the SDGs. This would also enhance framing and optimal accountability at the RMC level.
- A clear senior management commitment to the gender agenda at the corporate and sectoral levels should be supported by an internal accountability system, adequate resourcing and visibility of the agenda.
- All entry points for gender mainstreaming in the AfDB project cycle need to be strategically used for maximum impact.

IDEV's evaluation synthesis was influential in shaping the Bank's new [Gender Strategy](#), approved at the end of 2020, thanks to strong engagement with the evaluation users throughout the evaluation process, and a dedicated capitalization workshop upon its completion.

“*The IDEV evaluation synthesis on gender mainstreaming was very instrumental in the development of the Bank's new Gender Strategy, ensuring it is anchored on lessons learned, best regional and international practices, as well as the Bank's comparative advantage*”.

Vanessa M. Moungar, Director, Gender, Women and Civil Society Department, AfDB



MARS Report tracking the follow-up of evaluation recommendations

In 2020, IDEV published its first yearly report assessing the follow-up by the AfDB of recommendations from its independent evaluations, which are tracked through the Management Action Record System (MARS – see Annex 4). The assessment considered the evaluation recommendations with all their actions due by December 2018, which represents 198 recommendations from 36 evaluations, with 304 sub-recommendations and 587 actions. The IDEV report found the level of adoption of recommendations, which considers the alignment of the AfDB Management actions to evaluation recommendations as well as the timeliness of their implementation, to be low. The analyzed Management action plans were highly aligned (84%) with the agreed evaluation recommendations. Most of the action plans (77%) have also been implemented, but generally with significant delays (on average, more than 18 months). Since Level of Adoption measures the extent of both alignment and timely implementation, and implementation scores lower, this drives the rating for adoption. Timeliness was found to have been the main challenge in the implementation of action plans.

The report recommended that Bank Management should strengthen a culture of results and accountability by i) continuing to track the implementation of the actions it agreed to take in response to IDEV's evaluation recommendations, and ii) holding Departments accountable for the timely implementation of these actions, including through the use of Key Performance Indicators. It also advised Management to record more systematically within MARS the evidence on the implementation of the actions it has taken to address IDEV's recommendations, and for IDEV and Management to work together to improve the quality of evaluation recommendations and ensure the number of recommendations made by IDEV remains manageable. Following the presentation of the report, 116 of the 198 assessed recommendations were retired because they have been implemented or were no longer relevant.

2. BY HAVING AN IMPACT ON NATIONAL STAKEHOLDERS IN REGIONAL MEMBER COUNTRIES

The influence of IDEV's evaluations went well beyond the AfDB, to reach national stakeholders in regional member countries also.

Impact evaluation of the AfDB-supported small-scale irrigation projects in Malawi

The development impact of two irrigation infrastructure projects in Malawi of USD 21 million each, completed in 2014 and 2017, was evaluated. These were the 2006-2014 Smallholder Crop Production and Marketing Project, covering 13 districts across the nation, and the 2009-2017 Agriculture Infrastructure Services Project, which covered seven districts in Southern Malawi. The evaluation found that the irrigation projects had a positive impact on crop productivity and crop diversity, including a substantial revenue increase of participating farmers, but crop intensity did not change as expected. Despite improved food security there where effective local leadership and markets existed, and reductions in poverty, no evidence of impact on child nutrition was found. A small, unexpected negative impact on



health was also indicated, and the evaluation found differentiated effects on female- vs. male-headed households. The evaluation recommended the Bank to support capacity and governance systems of local institutions, to enhance agricultural market access and to engage in knowledge work and policy dialogue.

In collaboration with the relevant sector departments and the Bank's office in Malawi, two webinars were organized, for the AfDB staff and Malawian government officials, to share and discuss the evaluation findings and recommendations. The Malawian Government stated its intention to make good use of the lessons from the evaluation. To address flaws in project design, for example, it has strengthened its capacity to undertake a better review of designs, by various ministries working together with local authorities. It is also applying higher standards of work and greater quality assurance. Finally, a taskforce composed of different departments is examining the issue of unutilized infrastructure in all irrigation schemes.

Main lessons

- Inadequate attention to the capacity and governance systems of local institutions undermines achievement of sustainable outcomes from irrigation development.
- Building market infrastructure is a necessary but not a sufficient condition to create markets for farmers.
- Technical quality of the construction designs of irrigation schemes should be ensured to enhance the effectiveness of the projects' outcomes.
- Empowering women to participate in irrigated farming can improve ultimate development outcomes, i.e., poverty reduction and household welfare.



“The AfDB IDEV Report provided us with a critical third eye view whose recommendations will certainly lead to improved planning, design, implementation and sustained attainment of irrigation’s broader impacts such as increased income levels, enhanced food security, nutrition and health for our farmers, their dependents and consumers at various spatial and time scales”.

Geoffrey C. Mamba, Director of Irrigation Services, Department of Irrigation, Ministry of Agriculture, Malawi

Impact Evaluation of the AfDB-Funded Ghana Fufulso-Sawla Road Project

The Ghana Fufulso-Sawla Road Project stands out as a flagship in terms of its inclusive and integrated design, which provides a holistic response to the socio-economic needs of the beneficiary districts by not only constructing a 147.5km road but also ancillary works including a hospital, health centers, education facilities, a water treatment plant and market centers, for a total sum of USD 156 million. Overall, the evaluation found a positive impact of the project on improved transportation conditions in beneficiary communities, on household

incomes, health and education outcomes, and poverty reduction; and the intervention benefited women and girls specifically, albeit to a lesser degree than men. However, these positive development outcomes were highly unlikely to be sustained due to deficiencies in design, capacity, maintenance, and community engagement and ownership. The evaluation recommended the AfDB to enhance its integrated approach to its road investments to foster development impact in terms of poverty reduction, to improve the quality of road projects' design and results focus, and to strengthen the human and institutional capacity to sustain development gains.

The evaluation made good use of data provided by Ghana Statistical Services. Two learning events, one internal (for staff) and one external (including the Ghana national stakeholders) are planned to share and discuss the evaluation findings, lessons and recommendations.

“ Before the road, armed robbery activity was high, especially during the rainy season, as the bad nature of the road slowed down the movement of cars. But this has reduced significantly as a result of the road.”

An official at the Central Gonja District Assembly, Ghana



Main lessons

- Integrating community development interventions into road transport infrastructure brings an added value to, and fast tracks, the AfDB's poverty reduction, job creation, and inclusive development efforts.
- Participation and collaboration among stakeholders are key to the sustainability of integrated road interventions similar to the Ffulso-Sawla Road Project, as they can amplify or jeopardize a project's impact.
- Coupling road projects with community development interventions can increase the likelihood of benefits accruing to women and girls.

“ IDEV's Impact Evaluation of the Ffulso-Sawla Road Project is insightful in that it has yielded many useful findings and lessons learned. Given the multifaceted dimensions of poverty on the African continent, the findings of the evaluation are invaluable in demonstrating the benefits of implementing comprehensive and integrated interventions. The evaluation provided robust evidence that the integrated approach resulted in an amplification of the project's impact and generated synergies that accelerated development. The report has therefore provided a blueprint for Board consideration in the review and approval of similar road transport infrastructure projects on the continent.”

Kenyah Barlay, Executive Director representing the Gambia, Ghana, Liberia, Sierra Leone and Sudan, AfDB



Mali Country Strategy and Program Evaluation (2005-2019)

The evaluation assessed the AfDB's support to Mali over three CSP periods. It covered 109 AfDB interventions with a total value of nearly USD 1.4 billion. It found that the performance of the Bank's strategy and program in Mali was satisfactory in terms of relevance, sustainability, efficiency, and consideration of crosscutting aspects (such as gender, environment, and youth), but unsatisfactory in terms of effectiveness, impact, institutional performance, and addressing fragility by building resilience. Challenges were faced in lengthy legal procedures and administrative red tape; inadequate capacity in terms of expertise and staffing; poor quality at entry of projects; frequent change of project officers at the AfDB; low understanding of the AfDB's disbursement procedures by service providers; and the difficult operating context characterized by fragility and insecurity. Among others, the evaluation recommended to (i) increase the AfDB's impact on the country's development, through a greater private sector share in the operations portfolio and a larger Bank contribution to knowledge; (ii) enhance engagement by the Country Office with different categories of development partners in Mali, including developing and implementing a communication and civil society involvement plan; and (iii) improve the AfDB's performance in the implementation of operations.

To help ensure the quality and usefulness of the evaluation, representatives from four Malian government ministries as well as Malian civil society took part in the Evaluation Reference Group. As part of efforts to promote usage of the evaluation by national stakeholders, the evaluation team held a meeting to share and discuss the preliminary findings of the evaluation. The AfDB's Country Office in Mali and the team preparing the next CSP for Mali (2020-2024) are taking into account the evaluation's findings, lessons and recommendations.

Main lessons

- In the configuration of Bank assistance, it is possible to maintain selectivity while showing the necessary flexibility to a country's changing needs.
- The Bank can achieve substantial and tangible outcomes, even in difficult contexts, by developing strategies and operations in a participatory manner with the government and civil society; developing projects in synergy with other technical and financial partners; establishing clear results frameworks on the basis of which results can be monitored and measured; adopting more flexible approaches in situations of fragility; and responding quickly to emergencies.
- Effective collaboration between the Bank and other development partners is essential in Mali, among others to build the capacity of the private sector and civil society in addition to that of the State.



“The Independent Evaluation of the AfDB's intervention in Mali has enabled us to fully understand our actions on the ground. It highlights our strengths and weaknesses while exploring future directions to increase our impact on the country's development.”

Maimouna Ndoye Seck, Executive Director for Benin, Burkina Faso, Cabo Verde, Comoros, Gabon, Mali, Niger and Senegal, AfDB

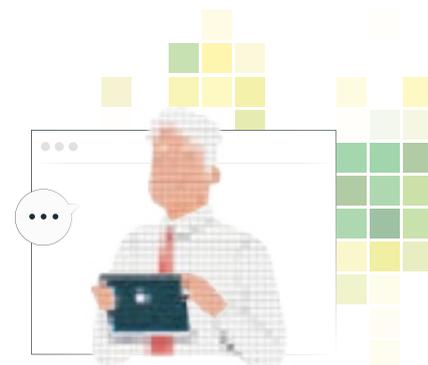


3. BY CONTINUING TO DELIVER KNOWLEDGE PRODUCTS AND TO ORGANIZE KNOWLEDGE EVENTS

Leveraging knowledge from completed evaluations and meaningfully applying it in operational processes is critical to encouraging positive change in development organizations. Evaluation is not an end itself, but a means to improve the relevance, quality, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Bank's interventions. For this to happen, knowledge must be disseminated in ways that speak to the intended users. In 2020, IDEV continued to produce, publish and disseminate knowledge products such as briefs, highlights and technical background reports for each completed evaluation. In addition, to further ensure that its evaluations will be used, IDEV (co-)organized eight (virtual) knowledge events to capitalize on the findings, lessons and recommendations from various evaluations.

The first event of the year was a [capitalization workshop on the evaluation synthesis of gender mainstreaming](#) at the Bank. This was followed by a virtual learning event, organized together with the Bank's departments for Agriculture & Agro-industry, Agricultural Finance & Rural Development, and Water & Sanitation, focusing on [how to turn lessons and recommendations from IDEV water sector evaluations into action](#) in water & sanitation and agricultural water management strategies and operations. On the same topic, after the presentation of its impact evaluation of two AfDB-supported small-scale irrigation projects in Malawi, IDEV and the Bank's Country Office in Lilongwe organized one webinar for Bank staff and one for Government officials to provide a better understanding of the [factors that affect the development outcomes of irrigation projects](#) and the opportunities to incorporate the evaluation lessons and recommendations into the design of future Bank irrigation interventions. At the end of the year, IDEV teamed up with the Bank's Strategies and Policies Department for a **discussion webinar on the Bank Group's Policy and Guidelines on Portfolio Review and Restructuring**, which are being revised on the basis of the findings and recommendations of the evaluation.

Quality is one of the three key principles underpinning the One Bank vision. To improve the quality of the Bank's Project Completion Reports and help the Bank draw lessons from the IDEV validations of the 2016 and 2017 PCRs that can inform future operations, a **workshop on PCR quality** organized by IDEV together with the Bank's Quality Assurance Division saw more than 300 Bank participants. A set of issues were raised that need to be addressed to improve PCRs, relating not only to the PCR format and guidance, but also to resources and processes, as well as training and additional M&E support. Another major theme was the incentives to invest in quality project completion reporting.

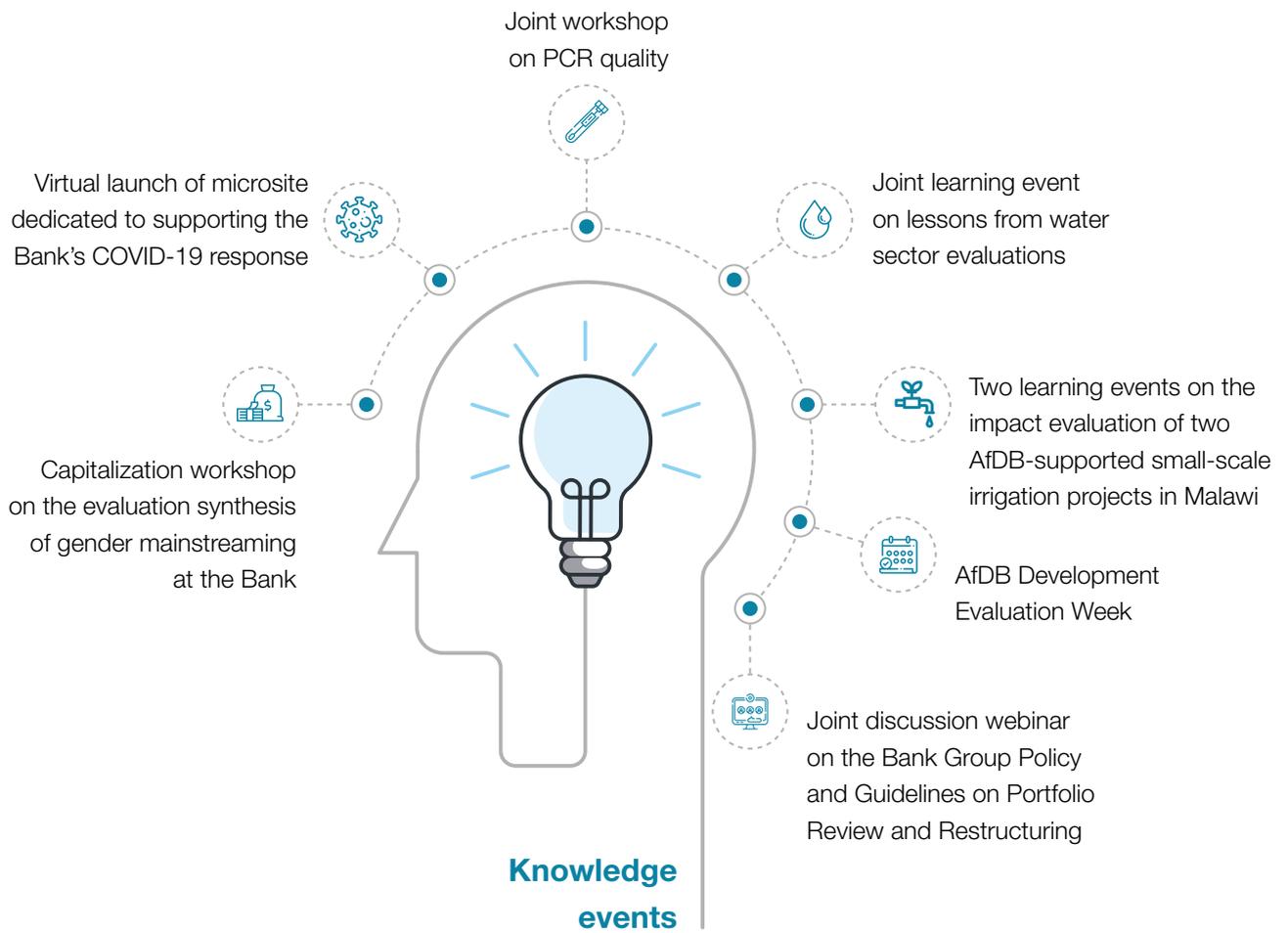


In 2020, [Evaluation Matters](#), IDEV's quarterly magazine dedicated to perspectives and insights on evaluation and development issues, covered topics such as [promoting an evaluation culture](#), the [use of big data and modern technologies in evaluation](#), and the [Bank's Development Evaluation Week](#).

“*Ultimately, it is the quality of our operations that determines the Bank's development impact*”.

Delivering as “One Bank” document

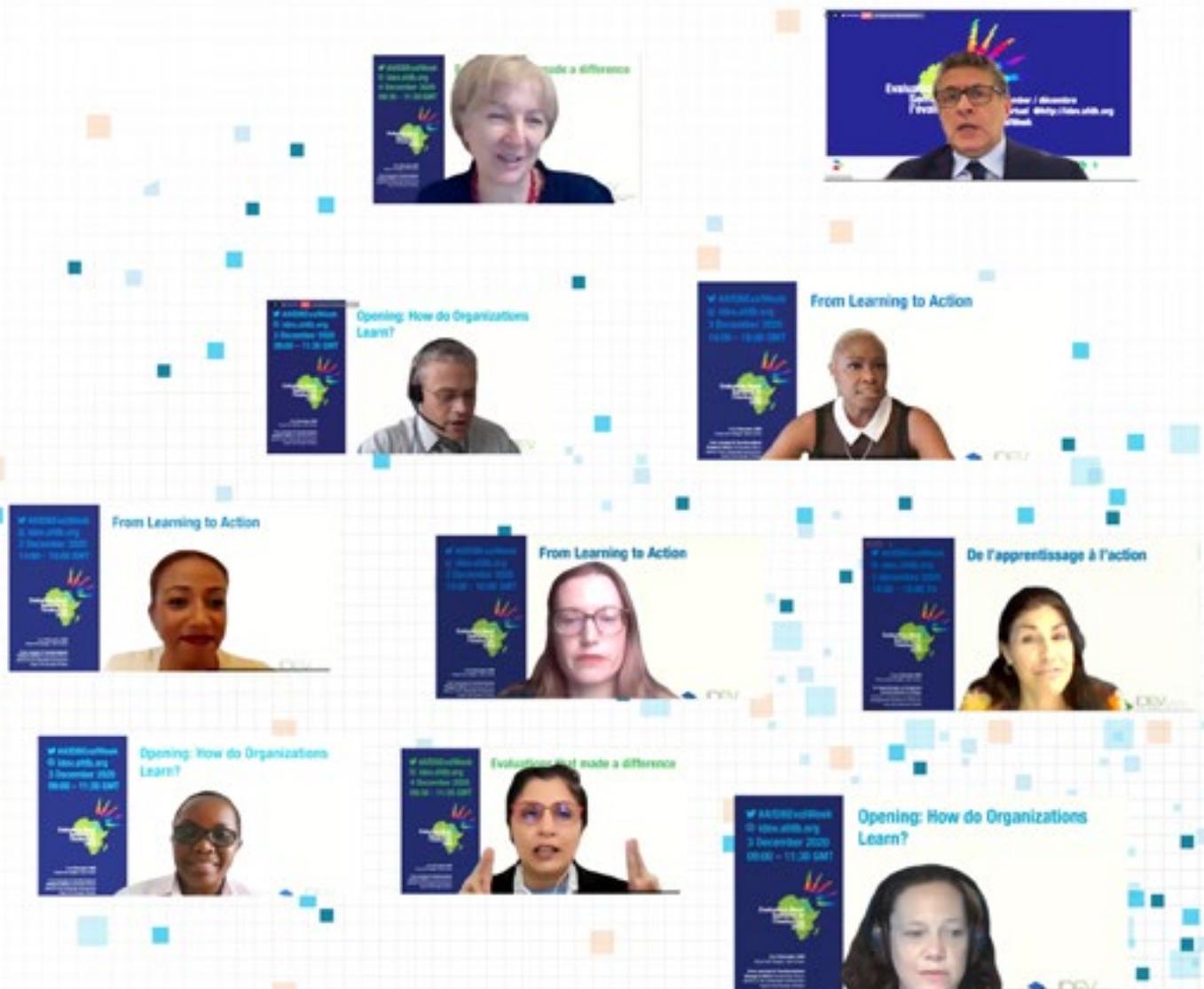




4. BY ORGANIZING A VIRTUAL EVALUATION WEEK

From 2 to 4 December 2020, the fourth edition of the [AfDB Development Evaluation Week](#) took place under the theme “From Learning to Transformational Change in Africa: Accelerating Africa’s delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Decade of Action.” Given the pandemic, the Evaluation Week 2020 was a fully virtual event. It consisted of six online sessions over three days, focused on how effective learning from evaluation is linked to the delivery of sustainable development results, against the backdrop of the global COVID-19 pandemic. The event was opened by AfDB Acting Senior Vice President Swazi Tshabalala and AfDB Acting Evaluator General Karen Rot-Münstermann. It was attended by both internal and external stakeholders. The key speakers included Peter Van Rooij, Deputy Regional Director for Africa at the International Labour Organization (ILO), who gave a keynote address on institutional learning. The event attracted more than 600 participants from all over the world.

More than 600 participants from all over the world





Six key lessons from the 2020 Evaluation Week

1. The quality of operations' design and preparation is an important determinant of the smoothness of their implementation and their achievement of development results.
2. The case of Uganda demonstrates that a country's commitment to putting in place mechanisms for implementing the Sustainable Development Goals is a crucial step in reaching them.
3. An organization that is open to learning, from evaluation and other evidence, is more likely to achieve transformational development results that contribute to the attainment of the SDGs.
4. However, to be open to learning, there needs to be a culture in the organization, propagated from the top, that it is acceptable to make mistakes.
5. Evaluation must be useful to the organization and should be seen as a benefit, rather than a necessary evil.
6. Evaluations should be relevant and responsive to knowledge needs. Evaluations only have value if they are used and have an impact, if they lead to improvements.

“What is often called a lesson learned is rather a mistake repeated when you scratch the surface.”

Peter Van Rooij, Deputy Regional Director, Regional Office for Africa, International Labor Organization



“The success of the Development Evaluation Week is a testament to the importance that the Bank attributes to learning from evaluation”.

Swazi Tshabalala, Acting Senior Vice-President, AfDB

“We work in the development sphere so we need to take risk. We should be willing to fail by taking risk. But where we can't fail is in learning from our failures and experiences”.

James Scriven, CEO, Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) Invest



5. BY CONTINUING TO PURSUE PARTNERSHIPS AND SUPPORT EVALUATION CAPACITY DEVELOPMENT IN THE AFDB AND ON THE CONTINENT

In 2020, IDEV continued to support evaluation capacity development in the Bank and throughout the African continent on both the supply and demand side. IDEV organized five trainings and learning events on evaluation for its staff, and several webinars that were open to a wider audience.

In times of crisis, policy-makers need quick assessments of policies, programs, strategies or functional delivery, with performance data and recommendations for improvements. A [webinar on rapid evaluation](#) was organized for IDEV staff to acquaint them with this evaluation tool. In addition, with just 10 years left to deliver the SDGs, IDEV's contribution to the final push included facilitating a webinar as part the gLOCAL Evaluation Week on [the UN 2030 Agenda & its SDGs](#), where African parliamentarians shared their experience of tracking progress on the SDGs. Other training and webinar topics included **remote data collection techniques**, **change management** and **rigorous impact evaluation**.

IDEV continued to support evaluation capacity development on the continent through [Twende Mbele](#), a peer-learning partnership on M&E among African governments (participating countries include: Benin, Ghana, Kenya, Niger, Uganda, and South Africa). It also continued to host the Secretariat of the African Parliamentarians' Network on Development Evaluation ([APNODE](#)), and organized two webinars with APNODE National Chapters (see Annex 3) to promote knowledge exchange and learning among parliamentarians. Furthermore, it continued to pursue partnerships to build capacity and promote a culture of evaluation, with organizations such as [EvalPartners](#), [CLEAR](#), [UNDP](#), and [UN Women](#). Finally, IDEV contributed to the newly launched [Global Evaluation Initiative](#) (GEI), an inclusive partnership responding to the global demand for better M&E.

IDEV remained an active member of the international evaluation community, contributing to discussions spearheaded by the OECD/DAC Evaluation Network on the implementation of the [revised international evaluation criteria](#), and to various working groups of the Evaluation Cooperation Group, among others.

Evaluation Capacity Development events



Training on
Effective Writing



Webinar on
Rapid Evaluation



Webinar on the UN 2030
Agenda and its SDGs
(as part of the gLOCAL
evaluation week)



Training on Change
Management



Webinar on remote
data collection
techniques



Training on
Rigorous Impact
Evaluation



Webinar with
APNODE Cameroon
on good evaluation
practices for effective
decision-making



Webinar with APNODE
Zimbabwe on drivers
promoting the use of
evaluation for public policy

ADAPTABILITY AND RESPONSIVENESS

1. ADAPTABILITY TO THE CRISIS CONTEXT

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic, IDEV has faced several challenges in conducting empirical data collection and site visits for its evaluations. Local and international travel restrictions resulted in limited access to governments, beneficiaries, and partners, and hindered IDEV evaluation teams' ability to conduct face-to-face interviews with key stakeholders. At the same time, the Bank moved all staff to working from home, thus stopping physical meetings of evaluation teams and Evaluation Reference Groups. In this environment, IDEV staff had to be creative and innovative in doing their work, and make maximum use of the resources at their disposal. To address these challenges while continuing to implement its work program, IDEV employed alternatives to the classical in-person methods of evaluation data collection, including virtual and online communication tools to interact with internal and external stakeholders and Evaluation Reference Groups. It also hired local consultants for local data collection. Where feasible, new sources of evidence such as "big data" and geo-spatial data sets were also considered and applied.

For example, in the [evaluation of the Gabon country strategy and program](#), which started in January 2020, the COVID-19 restrictions came into force just as the inception report was being finalized. Given that a field mission from Abidjan was no longer possible, the evaluation team developed an alternative plan for data collection and incorporated it into the inception report that was agreed by other main stakeholders: the consultant, the Bank's Country Office in Libreville, and the Government of Gabon. Meetings were held virtually, by means that were convenient to participants. In the end, the data collection took twice as long as usual, but the team managed to collect all necessary data for a robust and credible evaluation.

“ In the context of COVID-19, with travel restrictions, we had to be innovative and flexible. For the Gabon CSPE, our team was able to adapt the initial methodology by developing an alternative approach composed of a combination of remote interviews and site visits by local consultants, complemented by secondary data”.

Samson Houetohossou, Evaluation Officer, IDEV

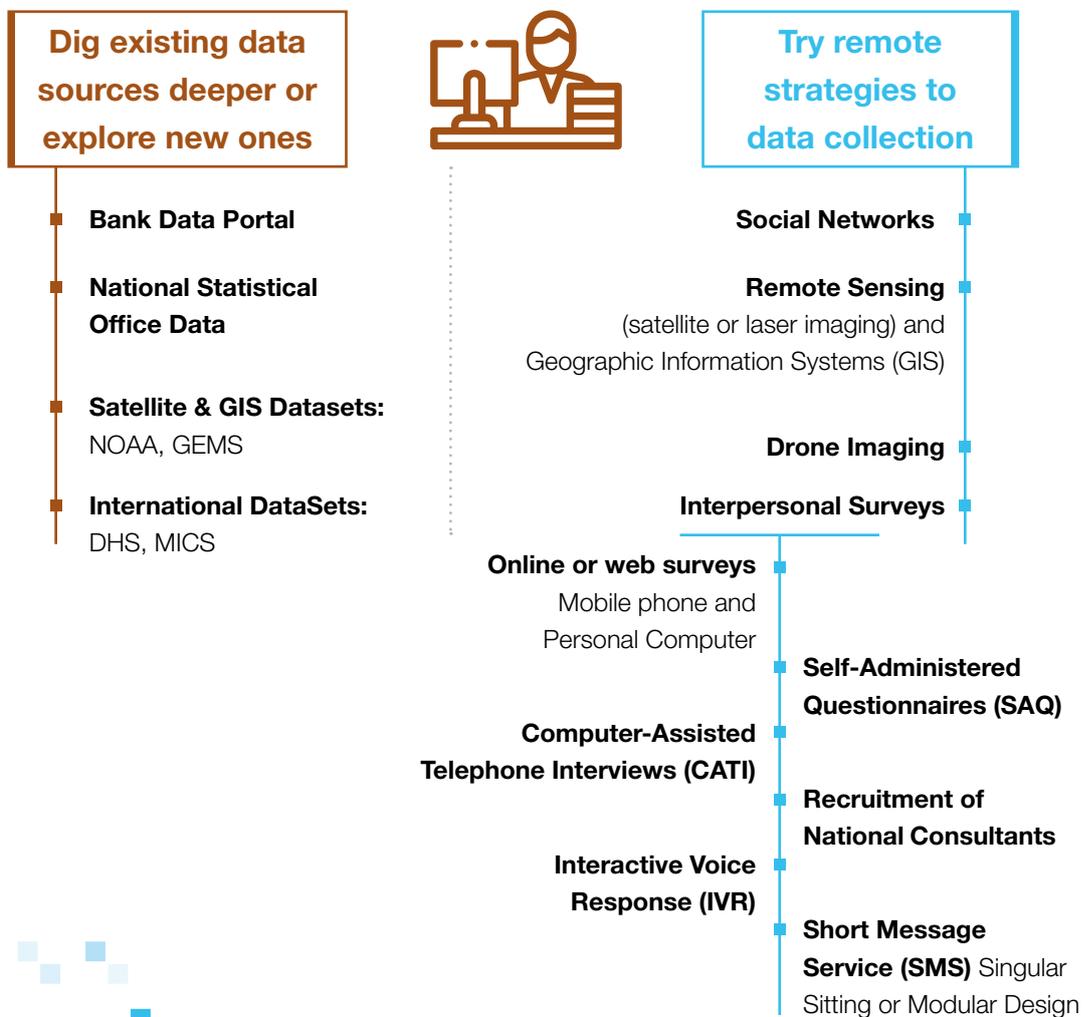


Gabon country strategy and program evaluation: Success factors for alternative data collection



- Technology: the quality of the internet connection, exploring the possibility of using different virtual meeting applications such as Zoom, MS Teams, Skype, etc.
- Buy-in and readiness (following much preparatory work): readiness of the evaluation team (including level of experience of the consultant), support from the Country Team and agreement of Government officials.
- Coordination, flexibility, learning from experience, and staying calm.

Alternative data collection tools for evaluations

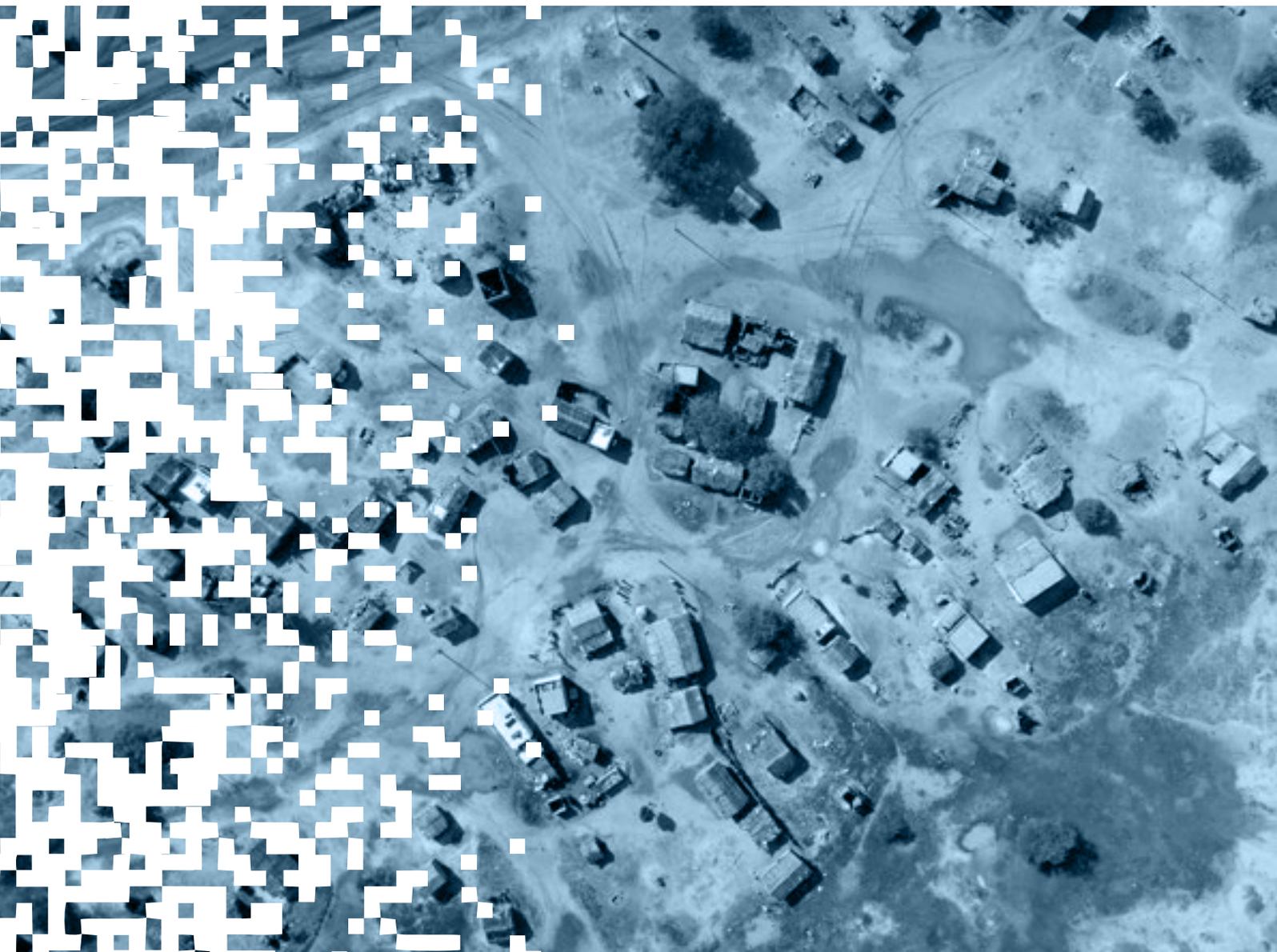


For the [impact evaluation of the Last Mile Connectivity Project in Kenya](#), IDEV used satellite imagery data to capture changes in access to electricity in 180 transformer communities across six Counties. The high resolution of the images allowed the team to analyze the quality of housing, a key indicator of wealth. The evaluation also used a publicly available population distribution mapping of Kenya to randomly select the households for the treatment and control groups. This approach supported the impact evaluation method of Spatial Regression Discontinuity Design.



Key lessons on satellite data collection from the evaluation of the Last Mile Connectivity Project

- Spatial datasets can be used in the design of evaluations. However, the evaluator should be intentional about their use and the ability of the evaluation team to use the technology.
- Spatial datasets are of varying resolution depending on whether or not they are publicly available.
- While spatial data is useful, its contribution is complementary, as an additional line of evidence, and for validating other sources of data (i.e, quality of housing).



In adapting its working methods, IDEV relied strongly on the support and collaboration of stakeholders such as Bank Country Offices, Government officials, members of Evaluation Reference Groups and AfDB Management, who after a certain adjustment period also proved resilient and determined to continue the Bank's work despite the circumstances.

2. RESPONSIVENESS TO NEW NEEDS AND REQUESTS

In 2020, there was a strong demand from the Bank's Board of Directors and Management for evaluative knowledge, in particular lessons from past experience, to inform new initiatives. To help the Bank respond more effectively to the COVID-19 pandemic, IDEV launched a dedicated [microsite](#) with relevant and actionable knowledge resources. The site includes two IDEV knowledge products developed specifically to support the Bank's response to COVID-19. The first provides a set of seven [key lessons drawn from the Bank's response to the Ebola outbreak in 2014](#), while the second presents [findings and lessons from the Bank's budget support instrument for countries experiencing a crisis](#). The microsite also includes links to other relevant internal and external evaluative knowledge.

IDEV also joined several knowledge partnerships in response to COVID-19. For example, it partnered with the Independent Evaluation Department at the Asian Development Bank on two initiatives: a knowledge product called [Responding to the Novel Coronavirus Crisis – 13 Lessons from Evaluation](#) and [Evaluation HEAD-lines](#), an interview series featuring conversations with the heads of independent evaluation functions to understand how they are adapting their evaluations to remain relevant during the COVID-19 crisis.

In May, IDEV proposed to CODE an update to its 2020 work program to incorporate two evaluations that had been requested as part of the agreement on the Bank's seventh General Capital Increase, namely an [evaluation of the Bank's Additionality and Development Outcome Framework](#) (to replace the planned evaluation of the Bank's guarantee instruments) and an **evaluation of its Non-Concessional Debt Accumulation Policy** (to replace the planned evaluation of the Bank's Amended Credit Policy). Subsequently, in the annual work program update done each year in November, IDEV agreed with CODE to add three evaluations to the 2021 work program which also respond to specific knowledge needs: an **evaluation of the Bank's crisis response support to RMCs in the face of COVID-19** (including the Crisis Response Facility), an **evaluation of the Bank's Transition Support Facility**, and an **evaluation of counterpart funding**. To make room for these new evaluations, other work in the program was dropped or downscaled.



THE EVALUATION FUNCTION
COMES OF AGE:

40 YEARS OF EVALUATION

AT THE AFDB

Evaluation



40 years of evaluation at the AfDB
40 ans d'évaluation à la BAD

2020 marked **40 years of the evaluation function at the AfDB**. Since the first dedicated evaluation unit was established in 1980, evaluation has become an integral part of how the Bank operates, how it is held accountable, and how it learns from what works and what does not. What was a small unit grew into the Operations Evaluation Department (OPEV) and eventually Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV) (see Annex 5). In 40 years, evaluations have informed so many policies, strategies, programs and processes that it is now essential for the Bank. The evaluation function can take pride in the work it has done and continues to do in enhancing the Bank's development effectiveness, in better projects, programs and policies, and in more transparent and rigorous practices.

This success has raised expectations. Over the years, IDEV has had to respond to increasing demand for evidence from the Bank's Board and Management, and to adapt to the Bank's changing needs, which were initially focused on compliance and accountability, and later evolved to more emphasis on learning. Likewise, an initial focus on project-level evaluations shifted to one on higher-level (country, policy, strategy, thematic, corporate) evaluations, in response to changes in demand. New types of evaluations, such as impact evaluations and mid-term evaluations, were introduced, and existing evaluation products were adapted to better provide the knowledge sought.

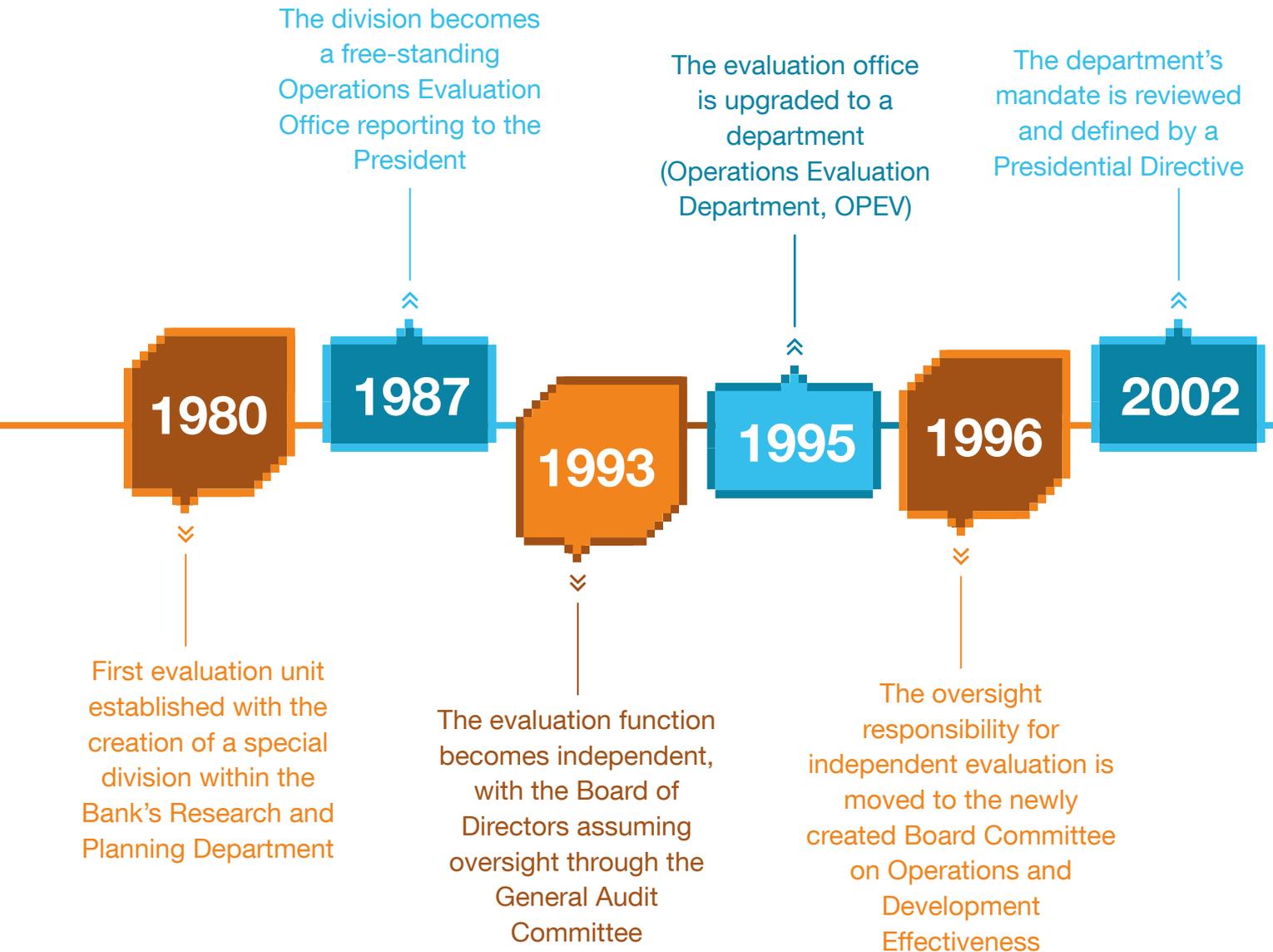
These developments were also reflected in the creation of a third division focused on knowledge management, outreach, and evaluation capacity development, in tailoring knowledge and communications products to the specific needs of the Bank and its stakeholders, and in strengthening evaluation capacities within the Bank and in its RMCs. These changes underline the importance that the function gives to both providing a basis for accountability and promoting a learning and evaluation culture within and outside the Bank.

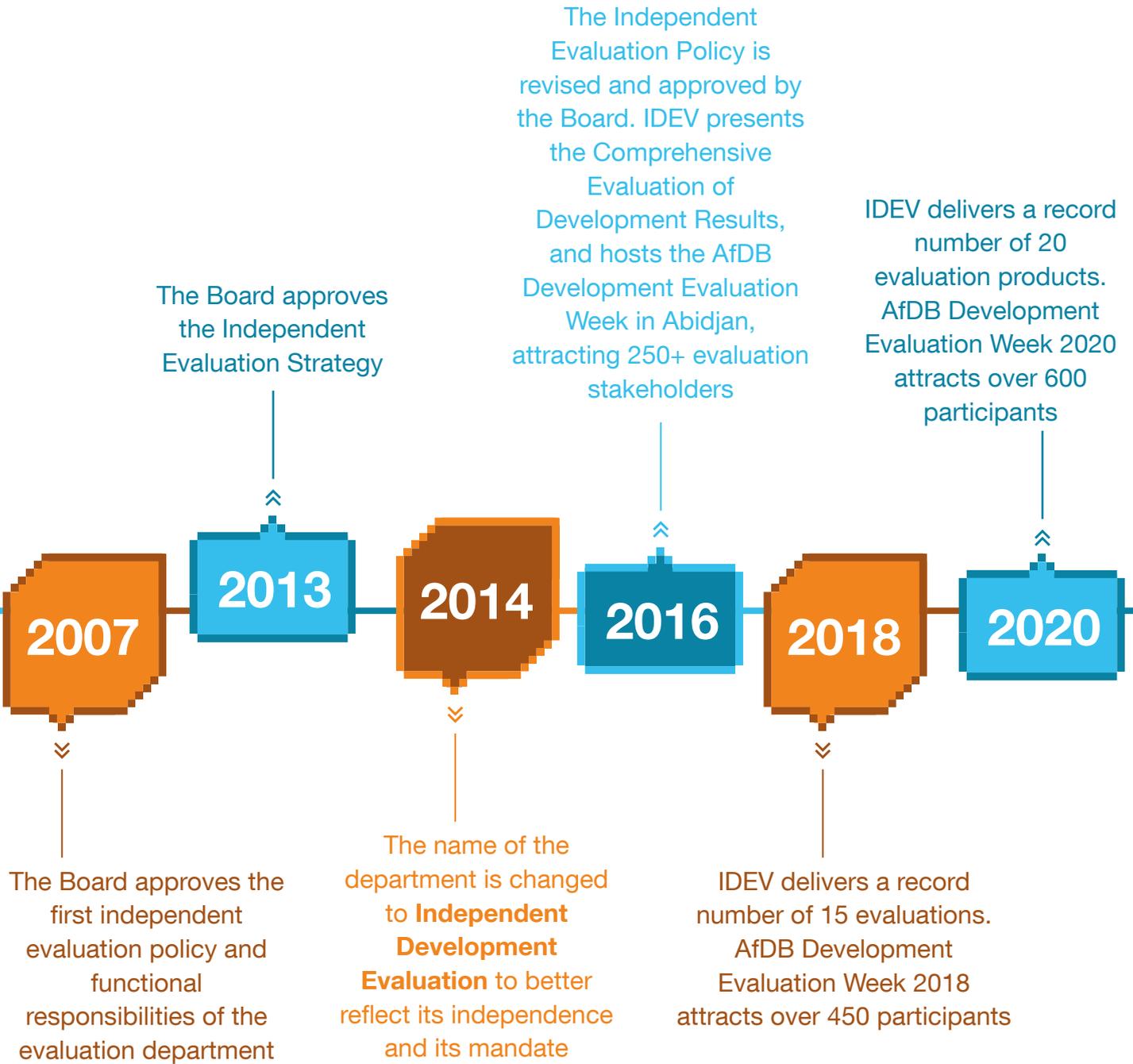
“ Although considerable investments were made by the department in communication, the creation of an evaluation culture within the Bank remains a challenge. Increased action is still needed on the part of the Bank's senior leadership and operations complexes to signal their commitment to effective use of evaluation lessons. The Bank needs to promote evaluative thinking to effectively help countries achieve the SDGs. Strengthening self-evaluation systems and evaluation capacity building activities in addition to increasing real-time evaluations are especially needed during this pandemic, where tight and short feedback loops may overcome difficult lockdown conditions for quality evaluation implementation and use.”

Mohamed Hedi Manai, Former Division Manager, IDEV



40 YEARS OF EVALUATION TIMELINE









LOOKING FORWARD: DEALING WITH THE UNCERTAINTY

For 2020, IDEV set out new strategic directions aimed at: (i) focusing independent evaluations on interventions aligned with commitments under ADF-15, GCI-7, the Bank's Ten-Year Strategy, and the High 5s; (ii) focusing independent evaluations where a gap in evaluative knowledge exists; (iii) increasing the utility of independent evaluations, by focusing more on incorporating knowledge from independent evaluations to inform policies, strategies, programs and processes; and (iv) proactively providing targeted evaluative knowledge to the Bank and its RMCs.

In 2021, this vision will continue to be operationalized by delivering evaluations that contribute to GCI commitments (the evaluations of the Non-Concessional Debt Accumulation Policy and the ADOA Framework), that are expected to inform the ADF-15 MTR (the evaluation of the Transition Support Facility) and the Bank's future strategic directions (the evaluation of the TYS), and that meet specific knowledge needs (the evaluations of counterpart funding and the Bank's support to RMCs in response to COVID-19). With 100 evaluations delivered since 2015, IDEV has a substantial body of evaluative knowledge to make use of, in addition to evaluations, research and analytical work done the world over by other development agencies, academia, think tanks and others. Many evaluations will therefore start with an evidence gap analysis, to focus efforts on areas where evidence is weak or missing.

With new staff coming on board in 2021, IDEV will strengthen its engagement with stakeholders throughout the evaluation cycle and will better map and meet their knowledge needs. In collaboration with stakeholders, it will strengthen its efforts to promote learning from evaluations and to enhance the feedback loop by which evaluative knowledge informs new policies, strategies, processes and projects. With the COVID-19 pandemic not yet abating, the demand for knowledge is expected to remain high, although the focus may shift from crisis response to “building back better”. IDEV will focus on helping the Bank to deal with the uncertainty by equipping it with critical knowledge that supports it in strategically planning for a volatile and uncertain future. At the same time, with little perspective of going back to the office or resuming traditional data collection and face-to-face contact with stakeholders, IDEV will likely need to maintain the ways of working remotely it developed in 2020.

2021 is the last year of IDEV’s 2019-2021 work program. IDEV will therefore organize comprehensive consultations internally and externally to prepare, scope, and prioritize its next work program (2022-2024) in line with the Bank’s needs, for discussion and approval by the Board of Directors. 2020 was a year of tremendous change for the entire world, and the future dictates a “new normal.” Looking ahead, IDEV will have to reflect on, and factor in, both the direct and indirect effects of COVID-19 in many of its country, sector and thematic evaluations. Where needed, IDEV will continue to adjust the conduct of the ongoing evaluations to the circumstances. We believe that 2021 will prompt broader and positive changes as part of lessons learned from 2020. Hopefully, IDEV’s new way of working will help to sustain these positive changes.

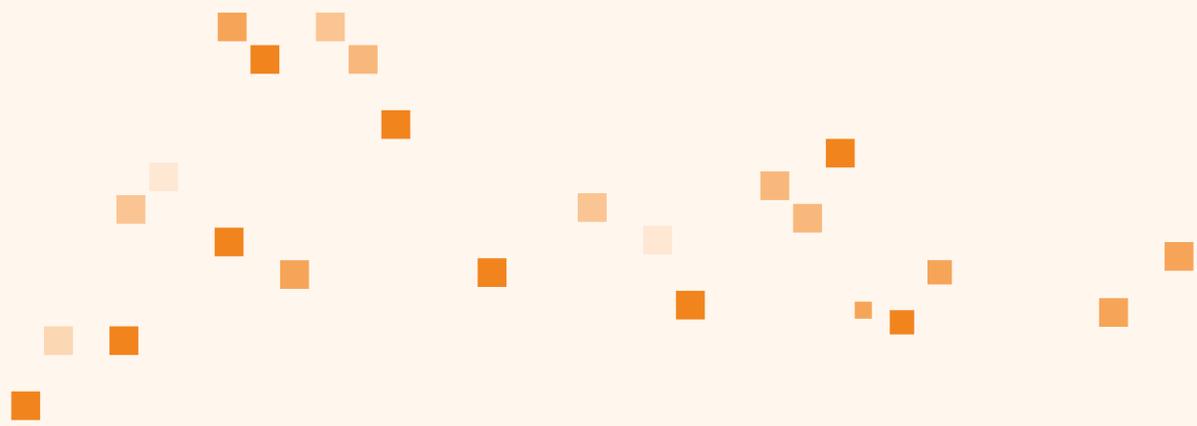
STAFF COMINGS AND GOINGS

COMINGS

1. **Roland Akabzaa** - *Research Assistant*
2. **Imelda Aniambossou** - *Junior Consultant*
3. **Racky Balde** - *Junior Consultant*
4. **Alassane Diakite** - *Junior Consultant*
5. **Sandra Gomez Paradela** - *Junior Consultant*
6. **Mohammed Khoali** - *Consultant*
7. **David Nyarige** - *Junior Consultant*
8. **Emma Tenlep** - *Junior Consultant*
9. **Stephanie Yoboue** - *Evaluation Officer*

GOINGS

1. **Rita Effah** - *Young Professional*
2. **Eneas Gakusi** - *Chief Evaluation Officer (Retired)*
3. **Roland Michelitsch** - *Evaluator-General*
4. **Svetlana Negroustoueva** - *Principal Evaluation Officer*
5. **Agnes Rasupu** - *Intern*
6. **Foday Turay** - *Chief Evaluation Officer (Retired)*
7. **Eric Yai** - *Consultant*



Evaluation



40 years of evaluation at the AfDB
40 ans d'évaluation à la BAD





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IDEV 2019 – 2021 Work Program, updated in December 2020

Type of evaluation	Work program year	Status at 31 December 2020
Validation		
2018 PCR validations: 65	2019	Completed
2018 PCR validation synthesis report	2019	Completed
2014-2019 XSR validations	2019-2020	Completed
2014-2019 XSR validation synthesis report	2019-2020	Delivered
2019 PCR validations: 65	2020	Ongoing
2019 PCR validation synthesis report	2020	Ongoing
2020 PCR validations: 65	2021	Planned
2020 XSR validations: 15	2021	Planned
2020 PCR Validation Synthesis report	2021	Postponed
2020 XSR Validation Synthesis report	2021	Postponed
Project cluster		
Access to finance in Africa	2018	Completed
Mainstreaming Green Growth and Climate Change into the Bank's Energy and Transport Interventions	2018	Delivered
Transport	2019 (started in 2020)	Ongoing
Management of African Development Fund projects in RMCs	2021	Planned
Impact		
Irrigation projects in Malawi	2018	Completed
Ffulso-Sawla Road Project in Ghana	2018	Completed
Last Mile Connectivity Energy Project - Kenya	2019	Ongoing
Institutional Support to Governance	2020	Ongoing
Support for a Technical, Industrial, Vocational and Entrepreneurship Training Project	2021	Cancelled

Type of evaluation	Work program year	Status at 31 December 2020
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Country and Regional Integration Strategy and Program

Egypt CSPE	2018 (started in 2019)	Completed
Mali CSPE	2018	Completed
Gabon CSPE	2018	Ongoing
Mauritania CSPE	2019 (started in 2020)	Ongoing
Djibouti CSPE	2019 (started in 2020)	Ongoing
Comoros CSP Completion Report Validation	2020	Replaced by a CSP-CRV in the 2021 work program
Uganda CSPE	2020	Ongoing
Rwanda CSPE	2020	Ongoing
Angola CSPE	2020	Ongoing
Benin CSPE	2020	Ongoing
São Tomé and Príncipe CSPE	2021	Planned
A CSP Mid-Term Review validation TBD	2021	Planned
(added) CSP Completion Report Validation TBD	2021	Planned

Sector and thematic

AfDB's support for Access to finance in Africa	2018	Completed
African Water Facility Trust Fund (AWF)	2019	Completed
Private Sector Development Strategy	2019	Completed
AfDB's support to the Energy Sector (1999- 2018)	2019	Completed
Evaluation of the Bank's Partnerships	2019	Delivered
Evaluation of the Bank's Loan Syndication	2019	Delivered
Evaluation of the Bank's Guarantee Instruments	2020	Replaced by ADOA Framework evaluation
(added) ADOA Framework evaluation	2020	Ongoing
Evaluation of Non Sovereign Operations	2020	Ongoing
AfDB's Strategy for Jobs for Youth in Africa (2016–2025)	2021	Planned
AfDB's support to Renewable Energy (Geothermal, Hydro, Solar, Wind, etc.)	2021	Planned
(added) Evaluation of the Transition Support Facility	2021	Planned

Type of evaluation	Work program year	Status at 31 December 2020
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Corporate

AfDB's Fragility Strategy	2018	Completed
Evaluation of Mainstreaming Green Growth and Climate Change into Bank's Interventions	2018	Delivered
Evaluation of the Bank Group Policy on Portfolio Review and Restructuring	2019	Delivered
Evaluation of the AfDB's Civil Society Engagement	2019	Delivered
Evaluation of the Bank's 2014 Amended Credit Policy	2020	Replaced by Evaluation of Non-Concessional Debt Accumulation Policy
(added) Evaluation of the Bank Group Policy on Non-Concessional Debt Accumulation (2011)	2020	Ongoing
Mid-Term Evaluation of the Bank's Results Measurement Framework 2016- 2025	2020	Ongoing
Bank's Strategy for 2013–2022	2021	Planned
Bank's crisis response support to RMCs in the face of COVID-19	2021	Planned
(added) Evaluation of Counterpart Funding	2021	Planned

Evaluation synthesis

Gender Mainstreaming	2019	Completed
Response to Inclusive Growth	2020	Ongoing
Support for Agriculture and Agribusiness Growth and Productivity	2021	Planned

IDEV MARS Report

IDEV MARS Report 2019	2019	Completed
IDEV MARS Report 2020	2020	Ongoing
IDEV MARS Report 2021	2021	Planned

Summary of IDEV Evaluations Delivered in 2020

PCR AND XSR VALIDATION SYNTHESSES

Synthesis Report on the Validation of 2018 Project Completion Reports



What did IDEV evaluate?

The AfDB undertakes self-evaluations of its public sector projects through Project Completion Reports (PCRs) prepared by the appropriate operations departments at the end of the project cycle. IDEV subsequently reviews a sample of these PCRs on an annual basis and produces a Project Completion Report Evaluation Note (PCREN) for each PCR reviewed as well as a synthesis report on the yearly PCREN cohort. The 2018 PCR synthesis report validated findings from 65 PCRs, and summarizes: (i) the key results of the 2018 PCRENS, focusing on PCR quality and the performance of the projects, Bank and borrowers; and (ii) the key lessons for improving the quality of PCRs and project results performance.

What did IDEV find?

- **Quality of the Bank's 2018 PCRs: Satisfactory quality, with scope for improvement.** 78% (51) of the 65 PCRs assessed were considered satisfactory and the remainder (22%) unsatisfactory. The overall PCR quality score averaged 2.8 out of a maximum of 4. Certain aspects require improvement, including PCR ratings, lessons, recommendations, M&E, and compliance with the Bank's PCR guidance. Overall PCR quality improved over the period 2016-2018.
- **Performance of the 2018 PCR projects: Overall project performance was satisfactory** for the combined criteria of the relevance of project development objectives and design, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability. It, however, slightly decreased from 77% in 2015 to 74% in 2018.

What lessons did IDEV draw?

Project preparation and design:

- Ensuring wider stakeholder consultations is important to effectively capture the views of local communities during the design and formulation stage of projects.
- Integrating operations and maintenance and associated budget into project design is important for successful project implementation and results.

Implementation arrangements and performance:

- Continuity of the same implementing Task Manager and the team is a significant factor in a project's success.
- Inadequate implementation of a project's M&E framework can critically limit the available project information for evaluating performance and for learning from experience.
- Development of knowledge products and their effective dissemination are necessary to facilitate behavioral change and to guide the design and successful execution of future projects.

Institution and capacity building, and ownership:

- Involvement of relevant government agencies and national civil society organizations early in the project cycle is critical for improving the sustainability of project outcomes.
- Effective community participation (in design and implementation) is essential for sustaining project benefits, particularly in highly challenging operating environments.

What did IDEV recommend?

This report does not include recommendations. The recommendations made in the [2016](#) and [2017](#) PCREN synthesis reports are still valid and being implemented, and are yet to have discernible effects on PCR quality.

Evaluation Task Manager

Clement Banse, Chief Evaluation Officer

Synthesis Report on the Validation of 2014-2019 Expanded Supervision Reports

What did IDEV evaluate?

The AfDB undertakes self-evaluation of its non-sovereign operations (NSOs) through Expanded Supervision Reports (XSRs) produced by the designated Bank departments for projects that reach Early Operating Maturity. IDEV subsequently reviews a sample of the XSRs and produces an XSR Evaluation Note (XSR-EN) for each XSR reviewed, as well as a synthesis report for the period under study, in this case 2014-2019. This report synthesizes findings from the validations of 46 of the 73 XSRs produced over the period, which represents 63% coverage by volume.

What did IDEV find?

Selected findings:

- **Compliance with the Bank's XSR Process:** Monitoring for Early Operating Maturity by project type and self-evaluating all projects reaching operating maturity has not systematically occurred. Over the past decade, the Bank has been successful in internalizing the process of undertaking XSRs, improving the quality of XSRs, but not the process of selecting projects for the XSR exercise.
- **Quality Assessment of XSRs:** IDEV's assessment rated 43 of the 46 XSRs (93.5%) Highly satisfactory or Satisfactory.
- **Overall Development Outcome of Bank Interventions:** Overall, the operations reviewed resulted in a positive development outcome. The synthesis found that 34 of the 46 evaluated interventions realized positive results that, on balance, met or exceeded specified financial, economic, environmental, and social performance benchmarks and standards.
- **The Bank's Investment Profitability:** This dimension was rated satisfactory or higher for 31 of the 46 projects (67%).
- **The Bank's Work Quality:** The Bank's front-end work quality was largely rated positively. The Bank's screening, appraisal, and structuring work were rated satisfactory or higher in 36 projects (78%).
- **The Bank's Additionality:** This dimension was rated satisfactory or higher in 89% of the 41 projects reviewed.
- **Rating Disconnect:** The overall disconnect between Management's and IDEV's ratings for the share of projects with positive outcome ratings was 8 percentage points.

What lessons did IDEV draw?

- Working with good sponsors is the most deterministic factor in overall project success.
- Good front-end work is instrumental to the assessment and achievement of targeted development results.
- Non-lending assistance is correlated with higher rates of project success.
- There is an element of innovation in the Bank's use of instruments.

What did IDEV recommend?

- Ensure that Non-Sovereign Operations reaching early operating maturity are systematically self-evaluated. The process covering the entire project results cycle should be better aligned with the Bank's guidelines between the relevant parties.
- Do more to collect credible information on development results. This is more important in financial intermediary operations. Such information should include some of the basic variables (turnover, employment, exports, gender profile, etc.), which are key for measuring and tracking of project economic and financial indicators.
- Place more emphasis on reporting the outcomes of its Technical Assistance and advisory operations. Specific frameworks, guidance and templates for reporting on Bank TA operations, which take into consideration the specificities of these interventions, should be developed.
- Improve the quality of XSR preparation. There is a strong need to improve the Bank's capacity for identifying and formulating lessons in XSRs, since refining them at the validation stage is sub-optimal and could result in the loss of valuable lessons of experience.

What did Management respond?

Management welcomed the report. It found its analysis and conclusions timely, given the recent revision of the Guidelines for the Preparation of XSRs for Private Sector Operations, which will serve as a basis for the Bank to evaluate its NSOs going forward. The Bank has streamlined the process for conducting good XSRs and it is continuing to strengthen results measurement and reporting; going forward, it will place more emphasis on reporting the outcomes of its technical assistance.

Evaluation Task Manager

Khaled Samir Hussein, Principal Evaluation Officer



PROJECT CLUSTER EVALUATIONS

Evaluation of the AfDB's Role in Increasing Access to Finance in Africa: cluster evaluation

What did IDEV evaluate?

IDEV evaluated a cluster of 32 financial sector development operations valued at USD 3.3 billion extended by the AfDB over the 2011-2018 period, to financial institutions and governments in seven countries selected from the five African regions.

What did IDEV find?

- Access to finance remains a key constraint to private sector development and the economic inclusion of low-income populations.
- The Bank's operations were in line with the Financial Sector Development Policy and Strategy and relevant to their respective country contexts. However, the high priority given to access to finance in the Policy and Strategy and in partner countries was not reflected in the Bank's Country Strategy Papers for selected countries.
- There was no evidence that the operations evaluated were part of a coherent Bank strategy toward financial sector development in these countries.
- Insufficient definition of target groups and intended development outcomes limited the Bank's role in advancing access to finance for the underserved.
- The efficiency of the AfDB's financial sector development operations was partially satisfactory: more than half of the evaluated operations were efficiently prepared and implemented, but others faced time overruns which, in some cases, led to additional costs for clients or missed lending opportunities.
- The Bank's operations tend to provide temporary solutions to financial sector development barriers, rather than addressing the root causes.

What did IDEV take away?

IDEV made the following suggestions for the consideration of AfDB Management:

Strategic considerations

- Conduct sector diagnostics that identify barriers to access to finance;
- Define intended financial sector development outcomes at the country and regional levels;
- Provide more explicit information on how operations should contribute to address financial sector development constraints in the long run.

Improve the benefits for intended target groups

- Better define and measure the project development outcomes and the benefits for target groups;
- Clearly define what constitutes a small and medium-sized enterprise, so as to include this in project appraisal reports and in CSPs;
- Take a more deliberate approach to narrow the gender gap in access to finance;

Range of instruments and their use in FSD

- The AfDB should increase awareness and usage of its partial credit guarantees among investees;
- Technical assistance should be used to strengthen institutions that drive sector development;
- Lending in local currencies should be considered.

AfDB's positioning as a key player in FSD

- Improve outreach and deepen relationships with sector stakeholders, including clients ;
- Leverage the AfDB's policy influence and expertise to facilitate policy dialogue;
- Consider increasing the resources for regional integration operations aimed at fostering regional integration around access to finance.

Evaluation Task Manager

Albert Eneas Gakusi, Chief Evaluation Officer

Evaluation of Mainstreaming Green Growth and Climate Change into the AfDB's Interventions: Energy and Transport Cluster

What did IDEV evaluate?

This project cluster evaluation of the AfDB's support for and mainstreaming of Green Growth and Climate Change (GG-CC) into its energy and transport interventions is a building block in the overall corporate evaluation of mainstreaming GG-CC into the AfDB's interventions. It covers seven energy and transport projects in five countries: Cameroon, Morocco, Mozambique, Rwanda and Senegal, for a total value of USD 500 million.

What did IDEV find?

- The Bank has increasingly enhanced the integration of GG-CC principles into its sectoral policies and strategies, particularly in the energy sector, more so than in the transport sector. The lack of a strategic framework and specific policies and guidance to support the practical integration of GG-CC considerations within transport sector interventions is a challenge.
- The Bank has successfully mobilized and leveraged climate funds to finance major energy infrastructure projects. The leveraging of additional finance supports member countries to address GG-CC issues through their infrastructure programming and is consistent with the greater engagement of the Bank's energy and transport policies on GG-CC.
- Energy sector Program Based Operations (PBOs) have ensured more mainstreaming of GG-CC in the energy sector than in the transport sector, with no PBOs identified in the transport sector over the evaluation period.
- The projects were found relevant in terms of the alignment of their design with policies, strategies and beneficiaries' needs, and effective in achieving their intended GG-CC mainstreaming results (outputs and outcomes), but efficiency was deemed unsatisfactory. The sustainability of project benefits was seen as likely.
- Success factors included project design clearly targeted to achieve GG-CC objectives, a high standard of technical verification, engaging stakeholders at all levels of decision-making, strong institutional ownership, and ensuring that environmental considerations are explicitly addressed in delivery.
- The lack of a coherent theory of change or log frame to support GG-CC, unrealistic assumptions in project design, implementation delays, and a failure to demonstrate and document clear outcomes related to GG-CC were flagged as areas for improvement.

What lessons did IDEV draw?

- Establishing a clear strategic sector framework supported by complementary policies and strategies can support the mainstreaming of GG-CC considerations in sector interventions.
- Designing interventions with clear alignment to GG-CC objectives is more challenging for projects in the transport sector.
- The best-performing projects assessed in the cluster analysis were those projects that combined engagement at a sector policy level with project interventions.
- Successful GG-CC-aligned energy sector projects occur in countries that already have a strong commitment to GG-CC objectives in their energy mix.
- A lack of coherence in regional responsibilities across Africa is a barrier to developing appropriate GG-CC solutions, particularly regarding harmonised technical standards in the transport sector.
- Projects that have clear alignment with government priorities, build on long-term sector commitment and country engagement, establish robust institutional mechanisms to support financial sustainability, and effectively engage with end-users from the start have the greatest likelihood of sustainability.
- It takes time, in-country resources, and extensive consultation to develop effective and appropriate GG-CC strategies and solutions.

Evaluation Task Manager

Mabarakissa Diomande, Senior Evaluation Officer



IMPACT EVALUATIONS

Impact Evaluation of the AfDB-supported Small-scale Irrigation Projects in Malawi

What did IDEV evaluate?

IDEV evaluated the impact of two irrigation infrastructure development projects in Malawi of USD 21 million each, completed in 2014 and 2017, respectively. This impact evaluation, which used a counterfactual approach (comparing the project beneficiaries with a control group, to measure and attribute the effects of the interventions), allowed to determine with statistical significance which effects were actually due to the Bank's projects. The evaluation aimed to generate knowledge and provide lessons to maximize the impact of ongoing and future irrigation development interventions.

What did IDEV find?

- The evaluation found the irrigation projects to have had a positive impact on crop productivity and crop diversity, including a substantial revenue increase of participating farmers, but crop intensity did not change as expected.
- Despite improved food security there where effective local leadership and markets existed, and reductions in poverty, no evidence of impact on child nutrition was found.
- A small, unexpected negative impact on health was also indicated, and male-headed households were found to have better intermediate development outcomes than female-headed households.
- The benefits of the interventions are highly unlikely to be sustained, due to weak organizational capacity at local level, poor scheme design, inadequate markets for agricultural products, conflicts among beneficiaries on land and water resource management (upstream and downstream), and beneficiaries' sense of dependency for inputs and maintenance.

What lessons did IDEV draw?

- Inadequate attention to the capacity and governance systems of local institutions undermines achievement of sustainable outcomes from irrigation development.
- Building market infrastructure is necessary but not a sufficient condition to create markets for farmers.
- Technical quality of the construction designs of irrigation schemes should be ensured to enhance the effectiveness of the projects' outcomes.
- Irrigated farming and resultant improved food security and food diversity may not necessarily lead to improvement in child nutrition.
- Empowering women to participate in irrigated farming can improve ultimate development outcomes, i.e., poverty reduction and household welfare.

What did IDEV recommend?

The Bank should:

- Support institutional capacity building, including the governance systems of Water User Associations or Water User Groups, who are the direct beneficiaries of the irrigation schemes and entrusted with the responsibility of maintaining and operating the irrigation schemes.
- Support agricultural market access by going beyond building marketing infrastructures to linking them to the wider agricultural market for farm produce.
- Engage quickly in policy dialogue with governments and other stakeholders on sector policy issues including: i) land tenure; ii) knowledge and support services systems in irrigated farming; and iii) gender equality.

What did Management respond?

Overall, Management agreed with the evaluation's lessons, conclusions and recommendations. The recommendations were found particularly timely since Management is currently preparing the mid-term review of the Malawi Country Strategy Paper (2018-2022). The evaluation report will also inform new programs/projects in the region including establishment of the Special Agro-Industrial Processing Zone in Malawi.

Evaluation Task Manager

Girma Earo Kumbi, Chief Evaluation Officer

Impact Evaluation of the AfDB-funded Ghana Ffulso-Sawla Road Project

What did IDEV evaluate?

IDEV conducted an impact evaluation of an integrated infrastructure project - the Ffulso-Sawla Road Project (FSRP) in Ghana, approved in 2010 and completed in 2015. The project had an inclusive and integrated design, which provided a holistic response to the socio-economic needs of the beneficiary districts by not only constructing a 147.5km road but also ancillary works including a hospital, health centers, education facilities, a water treatment plant and market centers, for a total sum of USD 156 million. The objectives of the impact evaluation, which applied a counterfactual approach (comparing the project beneficiaries with a control group, to measure and attribute the effects of the intervention) were: (i) to estimate the impacts of AfDB-supported integrated infrastructure projects on key intermediate and long-term outcomes; (ii) to identify explanatory factors that affect the development outcomes of the project; and (iii) to generate lessons and provide recommendations for improving the impacts of integrated infrastructure interventions.

What did IDEV find?

- The evaluation found a positive impact of the FSRP on improved transportation conditions in beneficiary communities, such as a reduction in commuting time by 33%, and on household incomes: a monthly increase of around US\$68 (84%) in 2019 as compared to 2012.
- Health and education outcomes also improved, and multidimensional poverty decreased by 2.16% among beneficiary households in 2015, and by 2.59% in 2019.
- The ancillary works were found to have generated a proportionately greater additional effect than their additional costs (8.2 percent of the total project cost). The intervention benefited women and girls specifically, albeit to a lesser degree than men.
- The project promoted greater social cohesion among beneficiary communities and helped to catalyze investments from other development partners to build on its outputs and outcomes. At the same time, qualitative interviews point to a negative impact on environmental degradation.
- The positive development outcomes were highly unlikely to be sustained, due to deficiencies in design, capacity, maintenance, and community engagement and ownership.

What lessons did IDEV draw?

- Integrating community development interventions into road transport infrastructure brings an added value to, and fast tracks, the Bank's poverty reduction, job creation, and inclusive development efforts.
- Relational factors are key to the sustainability of integrated road interventions such as the FSRP, as they can amplify or jeopardize a project's impact.
- Coupling road projects with community development interventions can increase the likelihood of benefits accruing to women and girls.

What did IDEV recommend?

- Enhance the Bank's integrated approach to its road investments to foster development impact in terms of poverty reduction.
- Improve the quality of road projects' design and results focus.
- Strengthen the human and institutional capacity to sustain development gains.

What did Management respond?

Management welcomed IDEV's Impact Evaluation of the Bank's Ghana Ffulso-Sawla Road Project using an integrated approach. Management agreed with the report's outcomes and defined actions that will ensure the lessons learned will help improve project preparation, implementation, and delivery by the sector.

Evaluation Task Manager

Joseph Mouanda - Chief Evaluation Officer



COUNTRY STRATEGY AND PROGRAM EVALUATIONS

Mali : Evaluation of the AfDB Country Strategy and Program (2005-2019)

What did IDEV evaluate?

IDEV evaluated the strategy and program of the AfDB in Mali over the period 2005-2019, with the aim of presenting the results achieved and informing the development of the next Country Strategy Paper, for the period 2020-2024. The evaluation covered 109 operations with a total net value of USD 1 billion.

What did IDEV find?

- The evaluation found that the Bank's CSPs were explicitly aligned with national development policies, but greater involvement of civil society and the private sector could have provided additional strategic leverage to stimulate inclusive growth.
- Effectiveness was found unsatisfactory: only 34% of operations delivered all their expected outputs, and less than half of the outcome indicator targets were met or exceeded.
- Efficiency was found satisfactory overall, supported by increasing demand from the authorities and project officers for multi-sectoral operations, but significant efforts need to be made in terms of on-budget performance and compliance with implementation schedules.
- CSPs and operations were found to have explicit objectives on cross-cutting issues. The Bank also involved beneficiaries, built local capacity, and introduced mechanisms to sustain the gains of its operations, and ensured overall compliance with its environmental and social safeguards.
- Although fragility was taken into account in all CSPs, progress in strengthening resilience has been unsatisfactory. The Bank's strategies and programs also failed to achieve inclusive growth.
- The Bank's institutional performance and self-assessment system were also deemed unsatisfactory, with recurrent problems of portfolio management and poor communication.
- In contrast, the institutional performance of the Government of Mali was found satisfactory.

What lessons did IDEV draw?

- In the configuration of Bank assistance, it is possible to maintain selectivity while showing the necessary flexibility to a country's changing needs.
- The Bank can achieve substantial and tangible outcomes, even in difficult contexts, by (i) developing strategies and operations in a participatory manner with the Government and civil society; (ii) developing projects in synergy with other technical and financial partners; (iii) establishing clear results frameworks to monitor and measure results; (iv) adopting more flexible approaches in situations of fragility; and (v) being more responsive to emergencies.
- Effective collaboration between the Bank and other technical and financial partners is crucial.
- Building the capacity of the State, which is seen as the sole actor, is not enough to contribute decisively to inclusive growth in Mali.
- It is not enough to identify bottlenecks and formulate a plan to improve portfolio performance - sufficient human and financial resources need to be allocated to the country team.

What did IDEV recommend?

- Increase the share of the private sector in the portfolio.
- Increase the Bank's contribution to knowledge and build data collection capacity.
- Develop and implement within the Country Office a communication and civil society involvement plan.
- Conduct a review of current practices in the design and implementation of plans to improve portfolio performance, and if possible involve an independent facilitator.
- Encourage project officers to take full advantage of the lessons of the Operations Academy, with a view to improving quality at entry of operations.

What did Management respond?

Management welcomed the results of the evaluation and took into account the recommendations in the combined CSP 2015-2019 Completion and Country Portfolio Performance Review Report presented to CODE on 8 June 2020, as well as in the formulation of the pillars of the CSP 2020-2024.

Evaluation Task Manager

Debazou Y. Yantio, Principal Evaluation Officer

Egypt: Country Strategy and Program Evaluation (2009-2018)

What did IDEV evaluate?

IDEV has evaluated the Country Strategy and Program of the AfDB in Egypt over the period 2009-2018. The evaluation covers a crucial period, namely pre-revolution, revolution, and post-revolution, during which the Bank supported the country with 53 projects focusing on infrastructure development (mainly energy and water & sanitation), macroeconomic stabilization, and inclusive growth. At nearly USD 2.5 billion, Egypt was among the top five recipients of the AfDB's lending over the period.

The purpose of the evaluation was to account for the Bank's operations in Egypt and to foster learning to help improve the Bank's future performance.

What did IDEV find?

- The Bank delivered a highly focused and selective program that adapted to the country's needs - although CSPs promised to do more than the Bank was ultimately able to deliver on.
- The Bank was not able to achieve a critical mass of funding for private sector operations, having only a low volume of private sector operations (12%) in its portfolio as compared to public sector operations (88%). Non-lending operations' results were not at full potential.
- The strategy and program was deemed highly relevant to the priorities and needs of the Government, to clients, and to the target beneficiaries as well as the Bank's strategies and priorities. However, some planned areas were hardly addressed due to the Bank's selectivity.
- The effectiveness of the Bank's assistance was assessed to be satisfactory. The interventions mostly achieved their intended outputs, and outcomes were mainly noted in the energy, water and agriculture sectors and in macroeconomic stability.
- Efficiency was assessed as satisfactory for resource use, portfolio quality, disbursement rates and cost benefit analysis. While most projects faced long delays, timeliness was noted for recent investment projects and technical assistance operations.
- The sustainability of the Bank's operations' results was deemed satisfactory for the three focus areas of energy, water and economic governance. Project cost recovery was good over the evaluation period, and the projects were designed and implemented with sustainability considerations in mind. It is expected that the benefits of the Bank's support will be maintained.
- The Bank developed a working relationship with the Egyptian Ministry of International Cooperation. While there was enhanced coordination with other development partners around policy dialogue and technical assistance, there was little evidence of coordination around social development operations.

What lessons did IDEV draw?

- A strong country ownership and relationship with the country, and flexibility in the design and delivery of Bank support, is essential when the country is undergoing rapid transition.
- Focusing and becoming deeply involved in strategic investments, institutional development and policy reform in key sectors is essential to the delivery of results over time.
- A coordinated, multi-partner approach to budget support works well, particularly when partners support common reforms, and have their own areas of focus to concentrate on.
- Linking dialogue and knowledge products to lending operations and complementing this with demand-driven policy reform support is an effective way of using non-lending resources.

What did IDEV recommend?

- The Bank's pipeline and next Egypt CSP should strike an appropriate balance between budget support and investment operations, underpinned by its comparative advantage.
- The Bank should strengthen the balance in its program and project portfolio, with an increased private sector focus and greater integration and synergies across the portfolio.
- The Bank should enhance its role as a knowledge broker and strengthen program implementation.

What did Management respond?

Management welcomed the evaluation. Overall, Management agreed with the evaluation's lessons, conclusions and recommendations, many of which are consistent with its findings from regular monitoring, follow ups and portfolio reviews. The evaluation findings and recommendations will be used as a basis for dialogue with the Authorities and the design of the new CSP (2022-2026) as well as guiding the implementation of the ongoing operations and the design of future programs.

Evaluation Task Manager

Akua Arthur-Kissi, Senior Evaluation Officer



SECTOR AND THEMATIC EVALUATIONS

Mobilizing Resources for a Water Secure Africa: An Independent Evaluation of the African Water Facility (2005-2018)

What did IDEV evaluate?

The evaluation covered all African Water Facility (AWF) work from 2005 through to 2018. During the evaluation period, the AWF developed a portfolio of grants for 118 national and multinational projects worth USD 195.6 million in 52 of the 54 countries in Africa. The AWF addressed project preparation, water governance, and water knowledge issues. The evaluation had a dual objective of accountability (by looking at the organizational and development effectiveness of the AWF) and learning (by identifying the lessons on what has worked, what has not worked and why) and aimed to make actionable and relevant recommendations to guide future AWF operations.

What did IDEV find?

- The AWF was found to have been a highly relevant instrument for supporting the African continent in addressing its water and sanitation challenges, in line with the African Water Vision 2025.
- The AWF's development effectiveness was deemed satisfactory overall, although there was an indication of a decline in recent years due to shifting strategic priorities. Nevertheless, AWF projects have satisfactorily achieved their outcomes or are on track towards reaching them.
- The AWF's organizational effectiveness has been hampered by the African Ministers' Council on Water's struggle to fulfill its strategic role in the AWF Governing Council, which operates with declining effectiveness. The AWF's declining technical capabilities are partially attributable to diminished staff resources, which corresponds to the limited financial resources at its disposal. AWF operational processes and procedures were found only moderately appropriate and relevant, and suffer from a number of drawbacks.
- The AWF's project efficiency was found unsatisfactory overall, based on timeliness and disbursement challenges.
- It was deemed unlikely that most of the AWF projects will be enduring, particularly their environmental and financial sustainability. The AWF's capacity for mobilizing further resources has declined in recent years. This has negatively impacted the sustainability of the Special Fund.
- Cross-cutting issues were not adequately integrated into the design of projects in a systematic way during the first strategic phase of the AWF, but this improved during the second phase.

What did IDEV recommend?

- The AWF should be more flexible, nimble and efficient, to maintain its comparative advantage and fulfill its mandate in collaboration with the AfDB.
- Given the political origins of the AWF, the composition of the Governing Council should be widened to include a broader set of stakeholders to improve strategic guidance, while the AfDB Board of Directors focuses on operational issues.
- The AWF should improve its results reporting and communication (about the AWF as a Facility, its operations, and achievements) to its range of stakeholders.
- The AWF should adopt concrete measures to improve its operational efficiency for optimal delivery on its mandates.
- The AWF should engage more with decision-makers.

What did Management respond?

Management broadly agreed with the evaluation's recommendations, which will be incorporated into the AWF 2017-2025 Strategic Plan under review, and its Operational Manual. Recommendations will also help align the AWF to the new Bank policy and strategy, cognizant of the Bank's strategic outlook for water in the continent.

Evaluation Task Manager

Joseph Mouanda, Chief Evaluation Officer

Evaluation of the AfDB's Role in Increasing Access to Finance in Africa

What did IDEV evaluate?

IDEV evaluated the Bank's 2014-2019 Financial Sector Development Policy and Strategy (FSDPS) to provide credible information on the role of the Bank in increased access to finance and financial inclusion in Africa, and to inform the development of the Bank's next Financial Sector Development (FSD) Strategy. The evaluation examined 226 operations approved by the Bank in support of FSD over the 2011-2018 period for a total value of USD 13.300 billion.

What did IDEV find?

- The evaluation found that the policy and strategy were relevant, and remain critically important to Africa's development. While the document reflected a state-of-the-art in financial sector knowledge, there was limited clarity on the relationship between the policy and the strategy, and the definitions of the concepts used. There were also important gaps in terms of design.
- The high priority given to access to finance in the FSDPS and in partner countries was not reflected in the Bank's CSPs.
- The structure and the evolution of the portfolio had many positives: the number of countries reached went from 19 to 32, the volume and the number of operations doubled, and local currency operations grew from 2.4 to 10% of the volume. However, there were no targets against which to evaluate these trends.
- AfDB operations were found to be in line with the FSDPS's objectives and relevant to their respective client and country contexts, but the majority did not necessarily serve the underserved. Operations also did not seem to form part of a coherent Bank strategy toward FSD.
- While the operations were found effective in providing resources and services otherwise unavailable to client financial institutions, it was not feasible to track and measure development outcomes for end-beneficiaries. The evaluation also found no evidence on the sustainability of effects on the targeted beneficiaries and underserved populations.
- Although about half of the Bank's FSD operations were found to be efficient in terms of respect of time, overall efficiency was deemed only partially satisfactory due to inefficient communication, the lack of an automated procurement system, and clients' complaints of overly prolonged processes.
- Although the AfDB provided much needed long-term funding to its target markets and has often helped clients access additional funding from other IFIs, the evaluation concluded that its operations tended to provide temporary solutions and did not address the root causes of constraints to FSD.
- Despite increased internal capacity to deliver (human resources more than doubled and administrative resources were increased by 1.5), the evaluation found weak coordination of FSD activities across the AfDB.

What did IDEV recommend?

- Clarify the AfDB's role in financial sector development by focusing more on its strategic priorities, which are broadly defined in the current FSDPS. It can be more explicit on how operations contribute to financial sector development.
- Position the Bank as a key player in financial sector development by better engaging in policy and regulatory dialogue aimed at strengthening the financial sector environment.
- Improve benefits for the intended target groups by moving from a pipeline approach to a portfolio approach, focusing on increasing the relevant target portfolio.

What did Management respond?

Management welcomed the evaluation and agreed with most of its findings and recommendations, which it finds useful in developing a new Financial Sector Development Strategy for 2021-2026. The evaluation lessons and recommendations will also help in shaping the Bank's analytical, strategic, and operational engagement in the financial sector.

Evaluation Task Manager

Albert Eneas Gakusi, Chief Evaluation Officer

Evaluation of the AfDB's Private Sector Development Strategy (2013-2019)

What did IDEV evaluate?

The private sector is considered a key contributor to growth and poverty reduction in Africa, as it creates nine-tenths of jobs, three-fourths of economic output and two-thirds of investments. IDEV conducted an evaluation of the Bank's 2013-2019 PSD Strategy to take stock of its implementation and assess its contribution to the Bank's efficiency and effectiveness, with a view to informing the new PSD Strategy that is currently under preparation. Seven country case studies were undertaken.

What did IDEV find?

- The PSD Strategy was found to be highly relevant to the achievement of the Bank's Ten Year Strategy. However, it could have included an explicit Theory of Change and its design could have been more contextually suitable. Moreover, the strategy could have defined criteria to better balance the Non-Sovereign Operation (NSO) portfolio between operations through financial institutions and real sector operations.
- Sovereign operations (SO) satisfactorily supported improvements in the investment and business climate. However, while SOs addressed an important and necessary condition for private sector growth, they would not in isolation have been able to improve job, investment and growth outcomes. The effectiveness of NSOs varied depending on the sector supported.
- Linkages between SOs and NSOs were found to be important but rare, and there were no clearly designated institutional responsibilities for ensuring linkages within the Bank.
- The Bank does not report on its SO and NSO PSD portfolios in an integrated manner. The Bank's NSO portfolio management focuses significantly on risk capital utilization, and provides more limited attention to risk/return and profitability of individual sector and product lines.

What lessons did IDEV draw?

- Good alignment with institutional strategy is a necessary condition, but the lack of a thorough analysis of financing and capacity constraints led to lack of realism in the ambition of the PSD Strategy.
- In the absence of common guidance for designing PSD programs, there was wide variation in the customization of PSD country/regional programs and High 5 PSD priorities, with lost opportunities to maximize the benefits of combining sovereign and non-sovereign activities.
- Lack of clarity in delivery responsibilities and institutional arrangements for PSD operations generally and NSOs in particular resulted in challenges in the smooth implementation of the PSD Strategy.
- The Bank Group's 2016–2025 Results Measurement Framework was less useful as its PSD indicators were not measured.
- The Bank did not fully understand the balance of sectors and instruments that would best support the needs of target groups of private sector beneficiaries (e.g., Small and Medium Enterprises).

What did IDEV recommend?

- Adapt the institutional arrangements for PSD operations in the Bank to maximize development effectiveness, efficiency and synergies, and ensure there is an overall view of the objectives, activities and results of all PSD activities.
- Strengthen linkages between the Bank's PSD sovereign and non-sovereign operations at the country/regional levels.
- Carry out an in-depth analysis of the effect of NSO operations on Small and Medium Enterprises.
- Increase the Bank's PSD operations in low-income and transition countries.
- Improve the quality of PSD strategy design, management, measurement and reporting of results.

What did Management respond?

Management welcomed IDEV's evaluation. The evaluation's analysis and conclusions are timely as Management is developing the new 2021–2025 PSD Strategy, which will reflect the changes that have occurred in the African PSD landscape as well as the Bank's internal reorganization.

Evaluation Task Managers

Foday Turay, Chief Evaluation Officer; Tesfaye Teklu, Consultant

Evaluation of the AfDB's Assistance to the Energy Sector (1999-2018): Refocusing Support for Improved and Sustained Energy Access in Africa

What did IDEV evaluate?

The evaluation assessed the AfDB's support for the energy sector over the period 1999 – 2018. It covered 306 projects for a total value of USD 18 billion, and took into consideration all physical infrastructure projects, studies and Technical Assistance activities approved during the evaluation period. The evaluation aimed to inform future strategic and operational directions for the Bank's assistance to the energy sector, including its flagship New Deal on Energy for Africa (NDEA), by taking stock of the results of the Bank's assistance and drawing lessons for future work.

What did IDEV find?

- The Bank's support to the energy sector was found to have been relevant for supporting the African continent to address its energy sector challenges. The objectives of the Bank's energy sector policies, strategies, and initiatives mainly focused on enhancing equitable energy access, securing supply, and alleviating the impact of climate change for sustainable, green, and inclusive socio-economic growth and development in Africa.
- Overall, the effectiveness of the Bank's support was assessed as satisfactory, delivering the planned outputs. However, progress has been slow on the high-level objectives that the Bank's support aimed to contribute to. In general, access to energy in Africa remains low and progress towards access-for-all is slow.
- The efficiency of the Bank's project support was found to be unsatisfactory, with delays and cost overruns that compromised the performance of energy sector projects. It is, however, important to note that since 2009, energy sector delays declined substantially.
- The sustainability of achievements of energy sector interventions was overall judged to be satisfactory, although the precarious financial sustainability of the sector threatens the long-term sustainability of results achieved. A significant decline was observed for energy sector interventions approved since 2012.
- The current level of allocation of Bank resources was found insufficient to meet the targets set by the NDEA. The internal organization to deliver the NDEA was also sub-optimal. While development partners are generally aware of the NDEA, this potential is not being fully exploited to achieve the NDEA's goals.
- The early years of the NDEA Strategy implementation have shown that stakeholder awareness of the NDEA, especially at the country-level, is low. Overall, there are shortcomings in the operationalization of the NDEA.

What did IDEV recommend?

- The Bank should improve the quality of NDEA management, measurement, and reporting of results.
- The Bank should strengthen its assistance to Regional Member Countries (RMCs) to enhance their capacity to formulate and implement comprehensive energy policies which encompass long-term power development plans, energy security strategies, and energy efficiency /conservation plans.
- The Bank should increase support to RMCs, through its power utility transformation program, by enhancing the power utilities' performance and ensuring the financial sustainability of the power system.
- The Bank should increase its funding to RMCs and private sector for sustainable energy access in Africa.

What did Management respond?

Management welcomed the evaluation, which is timely given that the Bank is working on the Bank's organizational finetuning for delivering as One Bank following the 7th General Capital Increase (GCI-VII). Management concluded that findings, lessons and recommendations will inform the further development of the Bank's energy sector work, including the review of the NDEA.

Evaluation Task Manager

Joseph Mouanda, Chief Evaluation Officer

Evaluation of the Partnerships of the AfDB (2008-2019)

What did IDEV evaluate?

The AfDB's Ten-Year Strategy considers effective partnerships as one of the key approaches through which the Bank would deliver its development objectives. This evaluation assessed the Bank's approach to and management of development partnerships over the period 2008–2019, examining 75 active partnerships and the Bank's partnership ecosystem. These encompass both Financing Partnerships (Trust Funds and Co-financing agreements) and Non-Financing Partnerships (Coordination and Cooperation, and Knowledge, Advisory Services, and Policy Dialogue partnerships).

What did IDEV find?

- The evaluation found that despite the Bank not having developed a specific partnership and resource mobilization strategy, its partnerships aligned with its strategies and were consistent with international development agendas and continental initiatives.
- Overall, partnerships were considered effective in achieving their intended activities, outputs and outcomes. Financing partnerships, which have been instrumental in strengthening the Bank's lending and non-lending portfolios, appear to be more effective than non-financing partnerships.
- The Bank has not managed its partnerships efficiently, with optimal resources to ensure results delivery in the most cost-effective manner. The Bank has been effective in initiating partnerships and mobilizing additional resources. However, it faces a severe bottleneck in the process of transforming partnership agreements into projects and thereby development results, due to weaknesses in organizational performance.
- The sustainability of a large majority of the partnerships reviewed (73.7 percent) was satisfactory at the project level.

What lessons did IDEV draw?

- A more precise definition of strategic direction contributes to the successful mainstreaming of partnerships.
- Clarification of roles and coordination from Senior Management are essential to achieve efficiency.
- Decentralizing partnership management strengthens the Bank's capacity to mobilize additional resources.
- Formalized and mainstreamed partnerships are likely to be more successful.
- Dedicated resources are an essential contributing factor to the success of partnerships.
- Investing in adequate systems is expected to have a cross-cutting impact for partnerships and more Trust Funds.
- Effective M&E, transparency, and accountability promote strong alliances.

What did IDEV recommend?⁵

- Define and set out the strategic directions for partnerships and resource mobilization, clarifying priorities and ensuring coherence.
- Review the current partnerships framework and institutional arrangements with a view to achieving strong coordination, greater efficiency and better results.
- Provide adequate resources, KPIs and incentives for the management of partnerships.

What did Management respond?

At the time of preparing this report, the Management Response had not been finalized yet.

Evaluation Task Manager

Oswald Agbadome, Principal Evaluation Officer

⁵ At the time of writing, the evaluation has not been presented to CODE yet. The recommendations will only be final following CODE's endorsement.

Evaluation of Loan Syndication at the AfDB (2008-2019)

What did IDEV evaluate?

As part of the evaluation of partnerships at the AfDB, IDEV sought to assess the performance of the Bank in mobilizing resources from the private sector through loan syndication. This report presents the findings, lessons and recommendations of that assessment over the period 2008–2019. It is a distinct component of the evaluation of the AfDB's partnerships that presents additional evidence on how the Bank is mobilizing resources and partners to further its development agenda for Africa.

What did IDEV find?

- The evaluation concluded that the Bank's approach to syndicating loans is relevant and coherent with the approaches of similar organizations. It is aligned with the Bank's key policies and strategies, and the Bank's syndication program is considered a useful and adequate instrument that fits both the needs of the Bank's clients, regional member countries and potential investors.
- The effectiveness of the syndication function of the Bank was found unsatisfactory. The implementation of syndication and the achievement of results thereof have not met expectations, mainly due to the low level of mobilization and the limited number of deals that the Bank led and brought to financial closure over a decade.
- The syndication function was not deemed efficient, mainly due to the multiple implementation challenges, among which weaknesses in internal coordination and the inadequacy of the incentives in place, notably the Key Performance Indicators and the staffing.

What lessons did IDEV draw?

- Deals are likely to be more successful and closed relatively faster when processes are efficient.
- Reducing the average size of syndicated deals could increase the Bank's activity.
- Coordination and cooperation between Investment Officers and Syndication Experts are essential factors for success.
- Building a strong network of lenders is another key to success.
- Adequate delegation of authority empowers Investment Officers and Syndication Experts to close deals.
- Concentration could boost syndicated loan performance and the Bank's additionality.

What did IDEV recommend?⁶

- Develop a five-year strategic framework to establish syndication as a cost-covering and revenue-generating business function, with a sharper focus on business development.
- Strengthen the syndication processes and delegation of authority in line with the One Bank Approach.
- Provide additional incentives to promote syndication.
- Build a team of industry specialists to support the syndication and business development capacity.
- Improve innovation, reporting, and learning of co-financing and syndication.

What did Management respond?

At the time of preparing this report, the Management Response had not been finalized yet.

Evaluation Task Manager

Oswald Agbadome, Principal Evaluation Officer

⁶ At the time of writing, the evaluation has not been presented to CODE yet. The recommendations will only be final following CODE's endorsement.



CORPORATE EVALUATIONS

Evaluation of the AfDB's Strategy for Addressing Fragility and Building Resilience in Africa (2014–2019)

What did IDEV evaluate?

IDEV assessed the relevance of the Strategy, the efficiency of its implementation by the Bank and its effectiveness in terms of results. The evaluation covered the assistance provided to 22 ADF countries classified as transition states (TS) during the period 2014-2019 – including 354 operations representing an overall amount of USD 4.7 billion. It served a double objective of accountability and learning by reporting the Bank's performance in the implementation of the strategy and by drawing lessons that will inform the Bank's future strategy for fragility.

What did IDEV find?

- Overall the Strategy was deemed relevant by the evaluation. It is aligned to the Bank's Ten-Year Strategy and other strategies, and its three pillars are relevant to meet the specific needs of TS.
- The Bank increased the volume of its commitments in TS in the context of declining ADF resources while also increasing by 5% the share of non-sovereign operations in TS. The Bank also demonstrated continuity and flexibility to respond to TS' fluctuating needs, to their great satisfaction. However, the Bank had difficulties reconciling flexibility and selectivity.
- The application of the fragility lens has progressed satisfactorily at the level of regional and country strategy papers, though efforts are still required at the operational level. The Transition State Facility demonstrated its relevance and its flexibility to react in unexpected situations, but was not able to respond adequately to certain difficult situations.
- The Bank produced tangible results in providing access to basic services, though most of these results were insufficient to lift the concerned countries out of their fragile situation. In terms of partnerships and dialogue on fragility issues, the Bank has been active at the international and regional levels.

What lessons did IDEV draw?

- To remain relevant, a fragility strategy must be flexible with timely mid-term reviews to allow for adjustments in rapidly changing contexts.
- Early and preventive intervention targeting identified pockets of fragility make it possible to be more effective and to preserve resources for concrete development actions.
- Allocating significant financial resources to TS is necessary to help meet their immense and changing needs.
- Having a partnership framework with technical and financial partners, CSOs, or private sector actors with a comparative advantage in specific areas such as Politics or security helps maximize Bank interventions' development impact.
- Promoting private sector development in TS requires greater consideration of the fragility of non-sovereign operations (fragility lens) and better synergy with sovereign operations while adapting the ADB window's business model to local SMEs' realities.
- Mainstreaming gender and employment (youth), in Bank strategies and operations is essential in a context of fragility.
- The quasi-systematic inclusion of a "Capacity Building" component in Bank operations in a context of fragility helps to ensure their success.

What did IDEV recommend?

- Revise the Strategy to make prevention one of its principles of engagement and strengthen its overall relevance by aligning its fragility dimensions with those of the Country Resilience and Fragility Assessment, while taking into account migration and forcefully displaced persons as potential factors of fragility.
- Strengthen the Bank's presence in TS and the "One Bank" approach in designing and implementing the future strategy while continuing to adapt policies, strategies, instruments, rules, and procedures to fragility situations.
- Create conditions to better mainstream cross-cutting issues such as gender, youth employment, dimensions of natural resources, climate change in the regional and country strategy papers and Bank operations in TS.
- Promote an integrated approach (strong synergy) in TS for investment projects and a structural approach to capacity building while adapting the private sector window's instruments and financing arrangements to Small and medium-sized enterprises (SME) realities in TS.
- Improve the motivation of staff working in TS by further improving living and working conditions while ensuring working in a TS is an advantage for their career development within the Bank.

What did Management respond?

Management welcomed the evaluation and agreed with all of the evaluation's lessons, conclusions and recommendations. These are timely as Management is developing the new Strategy and revamping the Transition Support Facility as guided by the ADF-14 and ADF-15 discussions.

Evaluation Task Manager

Clement Banse, Chief Evaluation Officer

Evaluation of Mainstreaming Green Growth and Climate Change into the AfDB's Interventions

What did IDEV evaluate?

The transition to Green Growth is one of the two overarching objectives of the AfDB's Ten Year Strategy 2013-2022. To help improve the Bank's performance in mainstreaming Green Growth and climate change (GG-CC) considerations into its policies, strategies and operations, IDEV conducted an evaluation of the Bank's efforts in this area between 2008 and 2018. One of the building blocks of the evaluation is a [project cluster evaluation covering the energy and transport sectors](#).

What did IDEV find?

Mainstreaming GG-CC into Bank policies, strategies and operations

- The Bank Ten-Year Strategy and High 5s: The results of GG-CC mainstreaming activities are increasingly evident during the 2008-2018 period after the Bank's approval of key policy and strategy documents, such as the 'Transitioning Towards Green Growth' framework (2014) following the Bank's Ten-Year Strategy (2013).
- Substantive references to GG-CC are now observed in the most recent Country Strategy Papers (CSPs) and Regional Integration Strategy Papers (RISPs) and in sectoral policies, but they have been implemented in a limited way, largely due to capacity constraints at country level, GG not being readily 'actionable', and a high level of uncertainty about "pathways to change."
- GG-CC mainstreaming considerations have been introduced systematically during the design of Bank-funded operations, but are not being adequately measured during implementation. The Bank could also do more to facilitate coordinated cross-sectoral action for effective GG-CC mainstreaming.

Portfolio and Performance of projects evaluated

- From the Bank's portfolio of 873 projects that were identified as mainstreaming GG-CC, 20 projects were selected for in-depth analysis. For these projects, the relevance of project objectives and targets was found satisfactory overall. Efficiency was mixed: satisfactory for budget use, unsatisfactory for time use (implementation delays).
- The sustainability of the projects was found to be unsatisfactory overall. On effectiveness, almost half of the projects couldn't be assessed due to a lack of data, and of the remainder, about one quarter was unsatisfactory.

What lessons did IDEV draw?

- Where specialized GG-CC units are located higher in the structure of a Multilateral Development Bank (MDB), GG-CC results are better achieved.
- An increased role, capability, and GG-CC expertise in Regional and Country Offices tend to enhance the performance of projects and non-lending interventions in the area of GG-CC.
- Monitoring and measuring the Bank's achievement of GG-CC results is essential to ensuring its intentions and approved intervention designs that mainstream GG-CC are being implemented.

What did IDEV recommend?

- Locate the department responsible for GG-CC appropriately in the Bank's hierarchy, so that it provides overall strategic oversight and guidance for all GG-CC activities, including responsibility for appropriate targets that are cascaded throughout the institution.
- Strengthen the technical and institutional capacities of the Bank's GG-CC specialized unit, the Climate Change and Green Growth Department, to provide quality and timely hands-on support to the Bank's Regional and Country Offices for effective GG-CC mainstreaming throughout the project cycle.
- Establish a clear theory of change (particularly for GG, but also CC) and an integrated GG-CC results framework, with clear definitions that follow the recently strengthened and agreed GG-CC definitions of MDBs.
- Clarify focus areas for GG-CC interventions for the AfDB that appropriately consider the Bank's comparative advantage and expertise across sectors.
- Put in place adequate mechanisms to monitor and track GG-CC results throughout the project cycle, to (i) promote continued attention for GG-CC during project implementation, (ii) enable the Bank to address potential barriers to the uptake and effectiveness of GG-CC mainstreaming, and (iii) improve reporting on the results achieved.

What did Management respond?

Management agreed with most of IDEV's findings and recommendations and will draw on them as it continues to develop the Bank's new climate change and green growth policy framework.

Evaluation Task Manager

Mabarakissa Diomande, Senior Evaluation Officer

Evaluation of the AfDB's Portfolio Review and Restructuring Policy

What did IDEV evaluate?

The evaluation assessed the relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the Bank's 1995 portfolio review and restructuring policy and subsequent guidelines over the period of 2011 – 2019, with a view to informing the revision of the policy and its guidelines.

What did IDEV find?

- The Bank's Country Portfolio Reviews (CPRs) were found relevant as a dialogue tool to assist member countries in meeting current project management obligations to the Bank. However, the CPRs have not been relevant to project or portfolio restructuring and the guidelines are less relevant today compared to ten years ago.
- The current CPR guidelines focus on process rather than results and do not articulate how the CPR would complement and reinforce project supervision.
- The CPRs succeed in aggregating the implementation problems identified in the Implementation Progress Reports. However, portfolio ratings did not reflect the performance of the whole portfolio and the practice of averaging project ratings leads to misleading portfolio ratings.
- CPRs have not been an effective tool in rectifying the consequences of weak project design and poor project supervision, and there is little evidence that the CPR has been effectively used as a tool for Management to take proactive decisions to address portfolio bottlenecks.
- The CPR/Regional Portfolio Review has not been an effective instrument in contributing to the design and implementation of the Country and Regional Integration Strategy Papers.
- While the country reviews found that the CPRs generally followed the guidelines on process and content, frequency was less than 50% of what was specified in the guidelines.

What lessons did IDEV draw?

- Designing a policy instrument with too many objectives and multiple target audiences risks a loss of focus and effectiveness.
- Defining clear and simple processes and providing incentives to contribute to development results can improve the usefulness and effectiveness of the portfolio management and restructuring policy / guideline.
- A well-designed, results-oriented Country Portfolio Improvement Plan (CPIP) has the potential of becoming an effective tool for portfolio dialogue and monitoring.
- Institutionalizing a culture of quality and results can make an important contribution to project success.

What did IDEV recommend?

- Refocus the CPR on the analysis of portfolio problems, with a view to problem-solving and promoting progress towards a country's development results.
- Systematize and enhance support to the Country Offices in the management of their country portfolio by clarifying the implementation support managers' roles and improve coordination and cross-fertilization.
- Strengthen the CPIP to encourage follow-up actions to improve the health of the portfolio and track result targets. It should also be prepared in parallel to the Country Strategy Paper, with annual interim updates where needed to maintain the health of the portfolio.
- Prepare a policy or guidelines on project restructuring with appropriate incentives for staff to engage in project restructuring when needed.
- Enhance the CSP/ Regional Integration Strategy Paper results monitoring in the CPR/RPR, in particular for the stand-alone CPR/RPR.

What did Management respond?

Management welcomed IDEV's evaluation which identified several areas for improving CPR/RPR processes. IDEV's evaluation is timely, as Management is planning to overhaul the country/regional portfolio review process to improve its relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency.

Evaluation Task Managers

Girma Earo Kumbi, Chief Evaluation Officer and Samson K. Houetohossou, Evaluation Officer

Evaluation of the AfDB's Engagement with Civil Society

What did IDEV evaluate?

The AfDB adopted a [Civil Society Engagement \(CSE\) Framework](#) in 2012, complemented by a CSE Action Plan (2019–2021). The purpose of this evaluation is to facilitate effective implementation of the Action Plan and to inform the design of a new CSE Strategy. Its objectives are to: (i) Review the type and extent of engagement between the Bank and civil society, including processes and outcomes, and the Bank's strengths and weaknesses; (ii) Explore the nature, type and capacities of civil society partners, and their needs vis-à-vis the Bank's priorities and capacities related to CSE; and (iii) Generate lessons and recommendations for effective engagement with Civil Society Organizations.

What did IDEV find?

- Although the Bank's existing guiding documents for CSE (Civil Society Policy, CSE Framework and Action Plan) are well-defined and valid, they are scattered, and not well known or understood by the Bank's staff and civil society. What the Bank aims to achieve by engaging with CSE has not yet been made clear.
- The Bank's CSE-related interventions were found to be more efficient and effective at the corporate and project levels, compared with the RMC and Regional Office level.
- At the corporate level, the evaluation found progress with respect to disclosure and access to information, but communication remains one-way between the Bank and CSOs.
- The most sustained example of corporate-level dialogue is the CSO Forum. At country and regional levels, AfDB Offices do not systematically engage with CSOs.
- The evaluation found internal and external collaboration to be a significant driver in enhancing meaningful CSE.

What lessons did IDEV draw?

- Inadequate internal awareness limited the use of existing CSE mechanisms and institutional structures (CSO database, CSO Officers, CSE Framework) aimed at enhancing CSE. This in turn hindered the achievement of the desired outcomes.
- The lack of a proper monitoring, evaluation, and learning framework deterred the sharing of lessons learned, and reduced the opportunities to build the business case for CSE. Learning is also hindered by limited discussion of competencies versus capacities. Since the CSE results were not measured, the Bank missed the opportunity to learn from CSE implementation at the project and RMC levels.
- Lessons from the Bank and development partners point toward the potential usefulness of a credible and reliable accreditation system for Africa-based CSOs. Such a system could enhance selectivity and mitigate reputational and operational risks for Bank staff in partnering with civil society.
- Conducting country- or region-specific mapping of civil society in line with the Bank's mandate and development priorities would help to contextualize the Bank's CSE and foster an enabling environment for CSOs.
- The lack of sustained and systemized two-way communication mechanisms between civil society and the Bank across all levels (corporate, RMC and project) impeded meaningful engagement.

What did IDEV recommend?

- Enhance awareness and common understanding of the purpose and potential value-added of CSE to the Bank's mandate.
- Enhance the resourcing approach for effective implementation of CSE.
- Strengthen CSE in policy dialogue at the country and regional levels to contribute to the Bank's agenda of inclusive growth and good governance.

What did Management respond?

Management welcomed IDEV's evaluation and acknowledged the related recommendations. The evaluation is timely, as Management will soon begin designing a CSE strategy that will outline the trajectory of the Bank's engagement with civil society and articulate ways to better mainstream CSE into Bank policies and operations. The strategy will be aligned to GCI-VII and ADF-15 commitments and will lay the groundwork for making CSE a Bank-wide mandate, helping the institution practise CSE more systematically as it delivers on the High 5s.

Evaluation Task Managers

[Svetlana Negroustoueva, Principal Evaluation Officer; Girma Earo Kumbi, Chief Evaluation Officer](#)



EVALUATION SYNTHESIS

Evaluation Synthesis of Gender Mainstreaming at the AfDB

What did IDEV evaluate?

IDEV's evaluation synthesis on Gender Mainstreaming (GM) at the AfDB covered the period since the beginning of the Bank's 2014- 2018 Gender Strategy and included an update of the [evaluation synthesis on gender equality mainstreaming undertaken by IDEV in 2012](#). The purpose was to draw lessons for the AfDB's new Gender Strategy. The evaluation exercise examined the Bank's GM approaches, mechanisms and results in light of institutional, regional and global priorities for Gender Equality and Women's Empowerment in Africa. As part of the evaluation, a synthesis of evaluative evidence from similar institutions was conducted.

What did IDEV find?

- The Bank's GM approaches are somewhat consistent with its mandate and internal priorities. Internal and external relevance were hampered by a wide spectrum of understanding of gender equality and gender mainstreaming among staff.
- The most significant difference for GM at the Bank has been brought through: (i) gender-informed Country Strategy Papers, (ii) integration of gender in the operational business processes, and (iii) additional financial resources for gender obtained through special initiatives and leveraging internal and external partnerships.
- A Gender Equality Special Fund has been conceptualized, and bilateral trust funds have been skillfully utilized to address the perceived inadequacy of financial and human resources for comprehensive GM.
- The evidence of results with actual or high potential for a catalytic effect on the Bank's GM efforts is limited to the Bank's progress towards the Economic Dividends of Gender Equality Certification, joint products with UN Women, financial commitments for the Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa initiative and the Global Gender Summit.

What lessons did IDEV draw?

- Building on existing strengths and comparative advantages, while applying a sharper scope, would help AfDB mitigate weaknesses and better leverage its mandate.
- The Bank can strategically leverage its development and business delivery model processes and align the Bank's gender agenda to the SDGs.
- A clear senior management commitment to the gender agenda at the corporate and sectoral levels should be supported by an internal accountability system, adequate resourcing, and the agenda's visibility.
- All entry points for gender mainstreaming in the AfDB project cycle need to be strategically used for maximum impact.
- Marketing and internal/external use of Country Gender Profiles should be enhanced.
- Resource mobilization efforts should be increased, including through formalized funding arrangements.
- There is a need to strengthen and formalize the internal partnerships.

What points for consideration did IDEV suggest for the next Gender Strategy?

- A combined Gender Policy and Strategy would enable a clear and consistent understanding of gender mainstreaming.
- Mapping the pillars and interventions in the gender strategy to the Bank's Ten-Year Strategy, its High 5 priorities and the SDGs, and internal corporate policies and processes, would enhance relevance and usefulness of the Strategy.
- The new gender strategy should maintain the structure of the previous gender strategy (2014-2018), with both internal and external components, and a more streamlined and sharper focus.
- Consistent with the gender strategy (2014-2018), knowledge management should be more strategic and deliberate.
- Consideration for lessons and recommendations should be accompanied by a focused consultation process among key departments.

Evaluation Task Manager

[Svetlana Negroustoueva – Principal Evaluation Officer](#)

Capacity Development, Knowledge Sharing and Learning



Webinar on Rapid Evaluation

This webinar held on 3 June aimed to strengthen IDEV capacities and covered the following: (i) Introduction to rapid evaluations, and their general purpose amongst other approaches to evaluation; (ii) The approach and methodology of rapid evaluations; (iii) The benefits and limitations of rapid evaluations, and the general value offering of rapid evaluations; (iv) Two case studies of recent (2019-2020) rapid evaluation approaches.



Implementing the UN 2030 Agenda and its SDGs: What are African parliaments doing?

This webinar held on 5 June aimed to share parliaments' experiences in identifying national priorities and providing guidance on their implementation to ensure that national actions reflect and address specific national needs and circumstances. The main challenges to meeting the SDG targets and efforts undertaken by parliaments to mitigate these challenges, were also discussed. It also explored success factors and good practices for tracking progress towards the SDGs, with examples from the Uganda and Zambia parliaments.



Integrating Lessons Learned from IDEV Water Evaluations in Feed Africa & WASH Operations

In the first half of 2020, IDEV presented 5 evaluations of the AfDB's work in the water sector (water supply & sanitation and agricultural water management). To capitalize on the knowledge from these evaluations, it organized a learning session together with the Bank's Vice Presidency for Agriculture, Human and Social Development on 30 July. Participants exchanged ideas on the issues that emerged from the evaluations to inform the ongoing development of a new Bank Water Sector Strategy, and discussed the interconnectedness between nutrition, water management and sanitation.



Towards Better Design and Implementation of Irrigation Interventions: The Case of Malawi

Together with the Bank's Country Office in Malawi, two learning webinars were organized on [30 October](#) and [8 December](#) for approximately 80 AfDB staff and 40 Malawi Government officials, respectively, to discuss the outcomes of IDEV's impact evaluation of irrigation schemes.



Tools and methods (good practices) of evaluation for effective decision-making by parliamentarians

This event kicked-off an APNODE webinar series on 16 November, organized in collaboration with the APNODE National Chapter of Cameroon. It focused on Cameroonian members of parliament's lessons and experiences regarding the use and benefits of evaluation in their daily activities and the associated challenges.



Factors promoting and hampering the evaluation of public policies: Experience from Zimbabwe

Jointly organized with the APNODE Zimbabwe National Chapter on 11 December, the learning event focused on the role evaluation plays in shaping public policies in Zimbabwe. It was an opportunity for Zimbabwean parliamentarians to highlight experiences with factors that have influenced the uptake of utilizing evaluation to shape public policies.

Implementation of Management actions in response to IDEV recommendations

After an evaluation is presented to CODE accompanied by its Management Response, IDEV uploads the evaluation together with its individual recommendations into the Management Action Record System (MARS). Management subsequently enters the actions to which it commits in response to each recommendation, identifying the lead implementing department and the target completion date of each action. Every six months, Bank Management reports to the AfDB Board of Directors on the status of implementation of the actions. For its part, IDEV undertakes an annual assessment of the level of adoption (implementation) of the recommendations, thereby aggregating all the actions per recommendation. IDEV and Management regularly review the actions and recommendations in the MARS and retire those which have been fully implemented, have been overtaken by events or have become redundant.

Evaluations, Recommendations and Actions Recorded in the MARS in Recent Years

Evaluation Type	2016			2017			2018			2019			2020			Evaluations 2016-2020
	Evaluations	Recommendations	Actions													
Corporate & Process	1	12	22	1	6	24	-	-	-	3	45	57	2	11	22	7
CSPE	7	40	131	3	18	52	4	23	83	2	10	25	2	9	18	18
RISPE	-	-	-	1	5	31	1	7	26	-	-	-	-	-	-	2
Impact	2	4	39	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	2	6	14	4
Sector	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	15	31	3
Thematic	-	-	-	-	-	-	3	16	49	1	8	8	2	8	25	6
PCR and XSR Validations	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	14	-	-	-	1
Other (MARS 2019 Assessment Report)	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	3	3	1

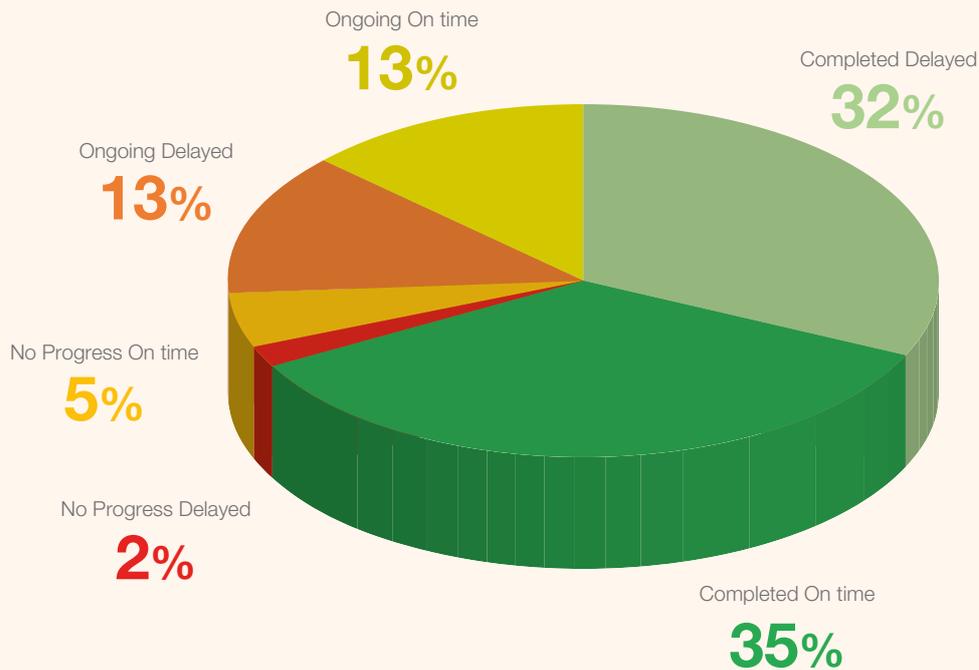
Source: Data from the MARS

Note:

- CSPE : Country Strategy and Program Evaluation
- RISPE : Regional Integration Strategy paper Evaluation
- PCR: Project Completion Report
- XSR: Expanded Supervision Report

As of 31 December 2020, 62 evaluations, 254 recommendations and 771 actions were recorded in the MARS⁷. Management was implementing 738 of these actions (from 247 recommendations in 59 evaluations). The graph below shows that 67% of the actions have been completed, while 26% are ongoing. Delays to implementation, both in the completed as well as the ongoing actions, remains a challenge.

Status of Management Actions Implementation as at 31 December 2020

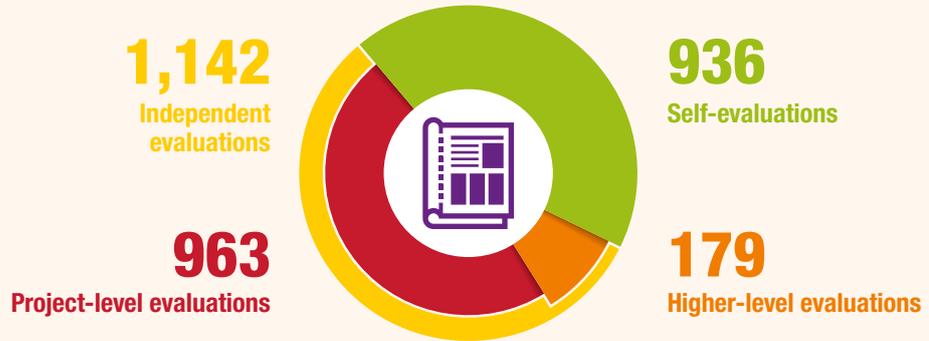


Source: Data from the MARS

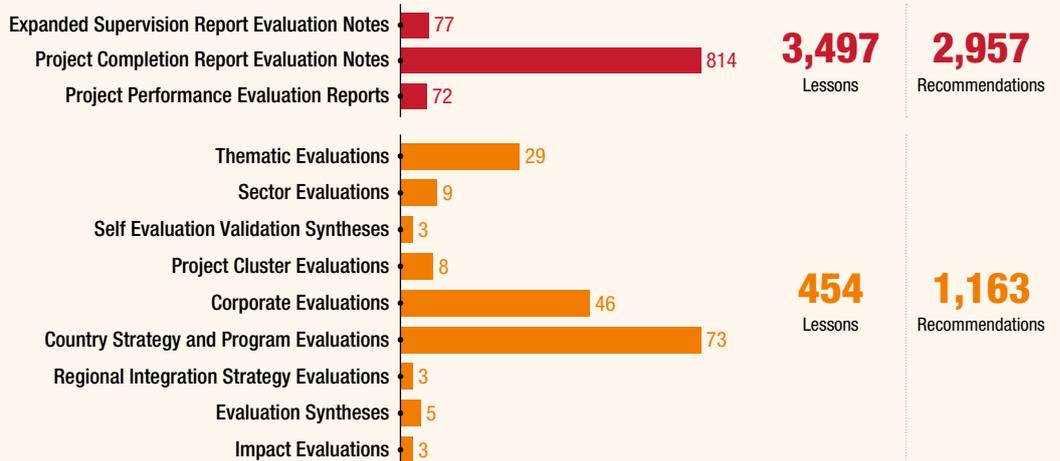
⁷ This takes into account the 116 recommendations and 306 corresponding actions which were retired in 2020 following IDEV's annual MARS assessment for 2019.

40 Years of Evaluation at the AfDB

2,078 Evaluation reports



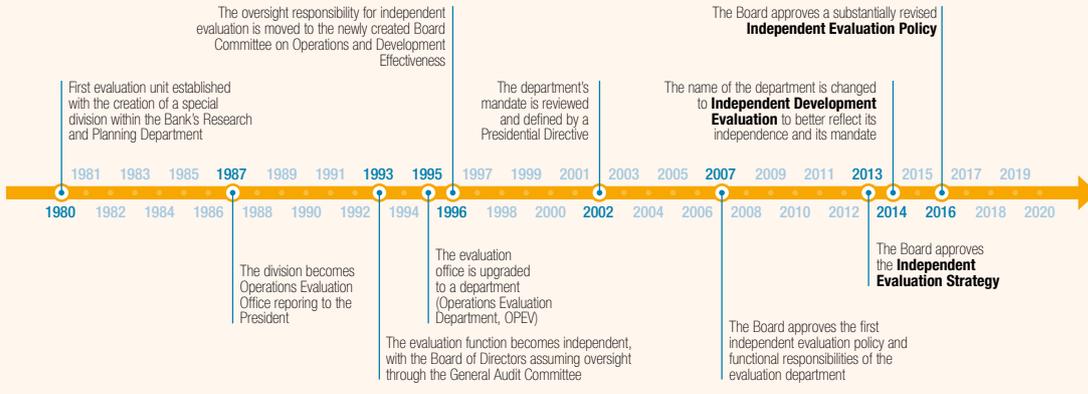
963 Project-level evaluations
179 Higher-level evaluations



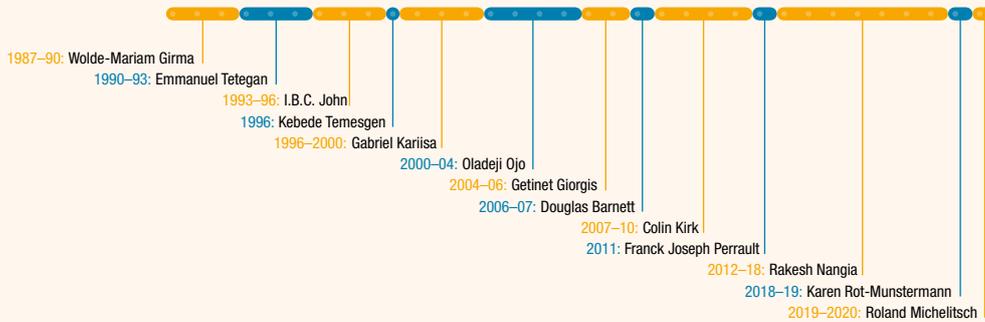
Note: All data as of November 17, 2020

Key dates

Evaluation at the African Development Bank dates back 40 years



Former (acting) Directors of Independent Evaluation



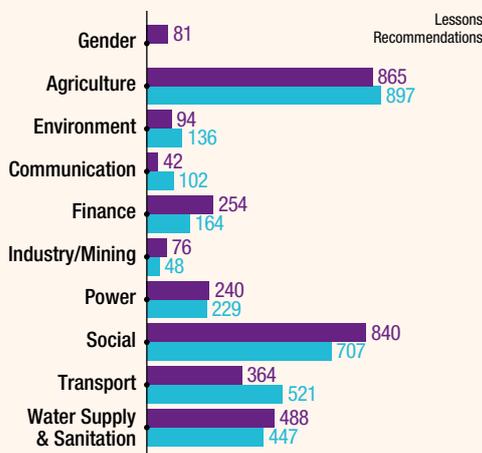
Key IDEV e-Resources

EVRD: Evaluation Results Database

Launched in 2012



Sectors/themes



Management Action Record System

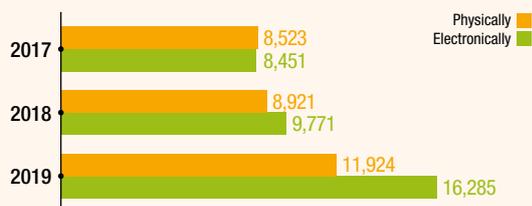
Launched in 2015



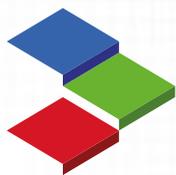
IDEV website audience over the last four years



Number of products disseminated



1. Refers to independent, higher-level evaluations to which Management has provided a formal response in which it commits to actions.



IDEV

Independent Development Evaluation
African Development Bank



40 years of evaluation at the AfDB
40 ans d'évaluation à la BAD

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