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Evaluation Synthesis on Technical Assistance

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ADF	African Development Fund
AfDB	African Development Bank Group
AI	Artificial Intelligence
AsDB	Asian Development Bank
BERTopic	Bidirectional Encoder Representations from Transformers for Topic Modeling
CODE	Committee on Operations and Development Effectiveness
CPF	Country Partnership Framework
CPS	Country Partnership Strategy
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
CSPE	Country Strategy and Program Evaluation
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
ECGF	Governance and Public Financial Management Coordination Office
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EIB	European Investment Bank
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
ESW	Economic and Sector Work
FAPA	Fund for African Private Sector Assistance
FAO	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations
GPT	Generative Pre-trained Transformer
IADB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDEV	Independent Development Evaluation
IMF	International Monetary Fund
MIC-TAF	Middle Income Countries -Technical Assistance Fund
NLP	Natural Language Processing
LLM	Large Language Model
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC)
RMC	Regional Member Country
RoBERTa	Robustly Optimized BERT Pretraining Approach
SIDA	Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency
STM	Structural Topic Modelling
TA	Technical Assistance
TSF	Transition Support Facility
TYS	Ten-Year Strategy
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme

1. INTRODUCTION

Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV) is launching an Evaluation Synthesis of Technical Assistance (TA) as part of its 2024 Work Program approved by the African Development Bank Group's ("AfDB" or "the Bank") Board of Directors. The evaluation synthesis is intended to inform the implementation and possible revision of the Bank Group's Capacity Development Strategy (2021 - 2025), which is coming to an end. The synthesis will also provide the AfDB with lessons from other development partners such as the International Monetary Fund (IMF), the World Bank Group, the Asian Development Bank (AsDB), the International Fund for Agriculture Development (IFAD), the United Nations (UN), etc. on the scope, good practices, and new developments associated with their TA activities. These lessons will inform the implementation of the current Ten-Year Strategy (2024-2033) under which the Bank intends to build up its capacity for TA, policy dialogue and knowledge brokerage across Africa over the next decade. Through these efforts, the Bank seeks to ensure that investments are anchored in appropriate policy and institutional frameworks, to enhance impact and sustainability.

This Approach Paper presents the conceptual framework for preparing an evaluation synthesis report on TA. The synthesis will take stock of current knowledge and lessons on undertaking effective TA to inform the Bank's Board, Management, and staff on common evaluation findings. The synthesis will focus on the design, implementation and results of TA interventions, critical factors enabling and hampering success, and good practices and lessons that may inform the AfDB's approach going forward. The synthesis will entail a review of evaluative evidence available both inside and outside the AfDB, as well as a broader literature review on the topic. The synthesis report will present lessons and good practices for future consideration.

The following section (Section 2) of the Approach Paper presents the background and context on the topic. Section 3 highlights the objectives, scope, evaluation synthesis questions and audience of the evaluation synthesis. Section 4 presents the methodology and limitations of the evaluation synthesis. The subsequent Section 5 presents the evaluation team and tentative timeline; while the final section (Section 6) presents the proposed communication and dissemination plan of the findings and conclusions of the evaluation synthesis.

2. BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

2.1. Background

Technical Assistance is a significant component of the work of International Financial Institutions (IFIs) and other Development Partners (DPs). Unlike lending, TA is mainly used to provide the client country governments with the knowledge, skills and institutional support needed for successful development interventions. According to the Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's (OECD) Development Assistance Committee (DAC), TA comprises both: (i) activities that augment the level of knowledge, skills, technical expertise, or productive aptitudes in developing countries; and (ii) services such as consultancies, technical support, or the provision of expertise that contribute to the execution of an investment project. In this perspective, Table 1 below provides a summary of how selected development partners define TA.

Table 1: Definition of Technical Assistance by Selected Institutions

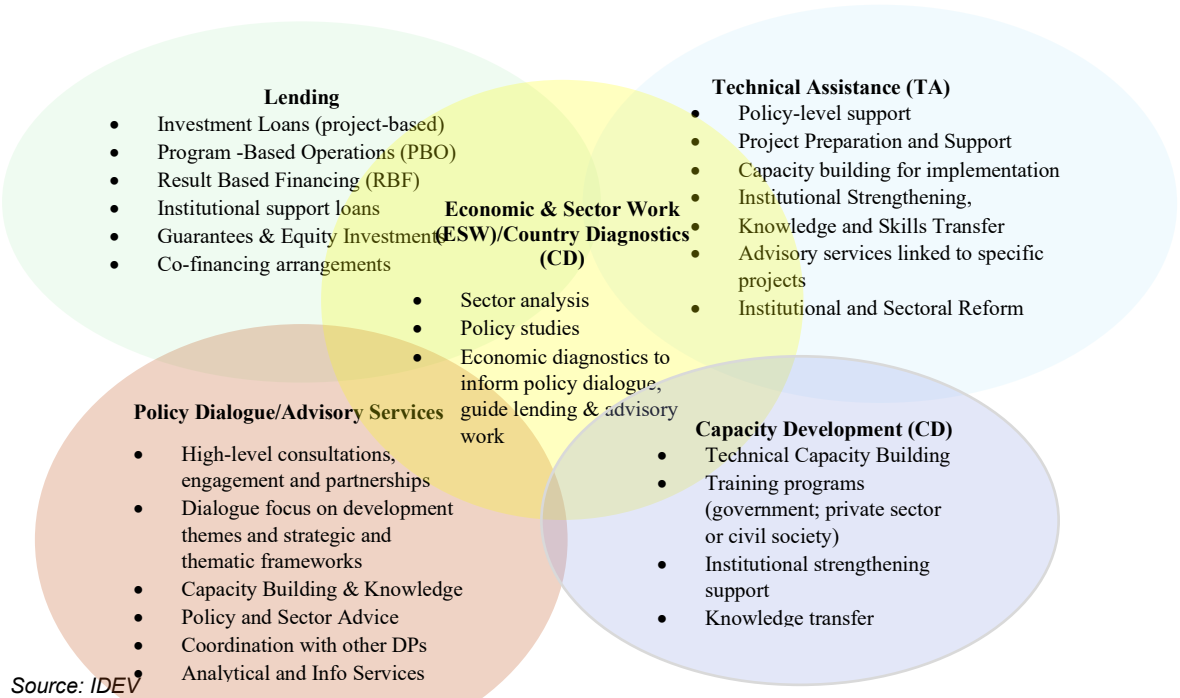
Institution	Definition/Approach to TA	Key Elements/ Activities
World Bank	TA is the transfer or adaptation of ideas, knowledge, practices, technologies, or skills to foster economic development through policy development, institutional development, capacity building, and project/program support.	Conferences, advice, and other activities to support reforms and strengthen institutions.
Asian Development Bank (AsDB)	TA facilitates the preparation, financing, and execution of development projects and programs, helping developing member countries improve capacities and better use resources.	Project/program preparation and implementation, capacity development, policy advice, research, and development.
Inter-American Development Bank (IADB)	Technical cooperation facilitates the transfer of expertise and qualified experience to strengthen national and regional capacities, supporting IADB's purpose of accelerating economic and social development.	Complementing national/regional technical capacity, supporting reforms, and development programs.
European Investment Bank (EIB)	In Sub-Saharan Africa, TA operations often accompany lending, assisting promoters, authorities, and intermediaries to improve institutional/regulatory set-ups, investment projects, and risk management.	Project identification and assessment, institutional strengthening, regulatory support, financial and risk management (
International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD)	TA focuses on strengthening technical and institutional capacity essential for agricultural development. Under reimbursable TA: operational assistance, advisory services, and learning/knowledge sharing.	Operational assistance (design, supervision, implementation support), analytical/advisory assistance, knowledge and learning.
International Monetary Fund (IMF)	TA helps countries strengthen policymaking capacity (human skills, institutions, procedures) and assists in designing particular policies, including reforms.	Capacity building in policy design, institutional strengthening, and reform implementation.
DANIDA (Denmark)	TA is the transfer, adaptation, mobilization, and utilization of services, skills, knowledge, and technology. It stresses ownership, alignment with national procedures, and harmonization.	Long-/short-term advisers and consultants, training, study tours, seminars, institutional cooperation.

Source IDEV

. A comparative analysis between definitions/approach to TA by the selected institutions points to some converging characteristics. Indeed, TA is consistently seen as a mechanism of knowledge, expertise, and skills transfer, with a strong emphasis on institutional strengthening and capacity development. At the same time, specificities related to institutional mandate and priorities are apparent. This suggests that, while TA serves as a common vehicle for knowledge transfer and institutional development, its modalities may differ according to institutional mandates and sectoral priorities. In this context, the World Bank and AsDB highlight TA's role in policy reform, project preparation, and implementation. The IADB focuses on complementing and reinforcing local capacities in member states. The EIB ties TA closely to its lending operations, stressing investment support and financial risk management. The IFAD stresses agricultural and rural capacity building, often linked to operational support and reimbursable TA services. The IMF emphasizes TA in policy reform, macroeconomic management, and institutional design. DANIDA underscores alignment, harmonization, and national ownership, reflecting its bilateral cooperation mandate.

For the African Development Bank, TA is positioned as a non-lending activity[1] designed to support and enhance the capacity of projects and programs, as well as that of institutions, thus complementing investment lending, policy dialogue and advisory services (Figure 1). The AfDB undertakes TA in diverse forms, both as stand-alone operations and as components of Program-Based Operations (PBOs), Results-Based Financing (RBF), and Investment Lending. As such, TA and capacity development elements are commonly embedded in country, regional integration, and sector strategies, as well as in most of projects and programs designed by operations departments; reflecting the Bank's recognition that financing without capacity support is insufficient for lasting results.

Figure 1: AfDB's Lending and Non-Lending Instruments



Source: IDEV

While the term "technical assistance" is widely used by the Bank, there is a lack of an overall unified and corporate-level definition. The existing definition mainly applied to private sector or non-sovereign operations. In this context, TA is defined as "*a non-lending activity that*

[1] It should be noted that TA does not cover all non-lending activities of the Bank, such as policy dialogue, although it may include advisory services linked to specific projects or reforms.

consists of advisory services, capacity building programs, and business linkages that help mitigate the risks of a transaction and aim to build the capacity of sponsors." (AfDB website, 2021) [2] Without clarifying the boundaries among them, this framing suggests "advisory services" and "capacity building programs" as integral components of TA.

To guide its institutional capacity development activities in its Regional Member Countries (RMCs), the Bank approved a Capacity Development Strategy (CDS, 2021-2025) in July 2021. This Strategy aims to mainstream capacity development in all the Bank Group's operations and strengthen institutional capacity for inclusive growth and sustainable development in Africa. The CDS outlines three strategic pillars: (i) Capacity Development for Project Management; (ii) Capacity Development for Policy Management; and (iii) Capacity Development for Knowledge Brokerage and Policy Dialogue. The same strategy also aims to position the AfDB as the leading regional partner for capacity development across Africa.

Unlike for TA, the former CDS clearly defines "capacity development" as a "*transversal activity underpinning the design and implementation of development programs, projects, and policies"* (AfDB, 2022, p.13). Related concepts such as "technical assistance", "advisory services", "capacity building", and "training" are instead presented as separate notions without detailing their scope or interconnections. The CDS 2021-2025 mid-term review further introduced expressions such as "capacity-building training" and referred to "technical assistance" without clarifying their meaning, underscoring the inconsistency in usage. This suggests the need for caution in distinguishing between "capacity building" and "training", as well as in clarifying overlaps between TA and other institutional strengthening instruments deployed by the Bank in its RMCs.

The conceptual inconsistency and inconsistent use extend to several Bank initiatives and corporate strategies. For instance, the Fund for African Private Sector Assistance (FAPA) (2005) is designed to provide grant funding for "technical assistance" and "capacity building" for the Bank's public and private sector clients, thus distinguishing them. By contrast, other initiatives such as the Middle-Income Country Technical Assistance Fund (MIC-TAF) (2002), the Technical Assistance of Africa Water Facility (2004)[3], and the Africa Energy Sector Technical Assistance Program launched in 2022 in partnership with the International Renewable Energy Agency, are by designation, focused on TA; and clearly outline the respective purposes of the funds. Similarly, facilities like the Youth Entrepreneurship and Innovation Multi-Donor Trust Fund (YE-MDTF) [4] often uses "capacity building" and "technical assistance" interchangeably; although the Transition Support Facility (TSF) and the African Legal Support Facility (ALSF), treat them as distinct albeit complementary.

2.2. Context to the Evaluation Synthesis

The evaluation synthesis of TA at the African Development Bank reflects an increasing need to address complex development challenges across the continent. Its inclusion in IDEV's

[2] https://www.afdb.org/en/technical-assistance-solutions

[3] The AWF is a demand-driven, African-led facility that is focused on Project Preparation, Water Knowledge and Water Governance, providing grants and technical assistance to ensure that projects are bankable, viable and future-proofed, with a clear opportunity for effective implementation.

[4] The implementation of YEI MDTF activities spans across three major components: i) Business Development Services (BDS) to youth-led start-ups and Micro, Small, Medium Enterprises (MSMEs) to strengthen their capacity and improve their access to financial services through Enterprise Support Organizations (ESOs) such as incubators, accelerators, financial intermediaries and entrepreneurship networks that mentor and support youth-led start-ups and MSMEs; (ii) Research and project preparation funding in preparation for Bank projects with high employment impact on youth, to expand knowledge and policy advisory tools on what works to create youth employment; (iii) Technical assistance to countries to strengthen the enabling policy and regulatory reforms to enhance job creation, skills and youth employability including support to Micro, Small and Medium Enterprises and private sector development.

2022–2024 Work Program was shaped by Bank-wide consultations, where stakeholders expressed strong interest in assessing non-lending activities, alongside lending. Given the breadth of non-lending activities, IDEV divided the workstream into complementary evaluations covering Economic and Sector Work (ESW), Policy Dialogue (PD), Public Financial Management (PFM), and Technical Assistance (TA). Together, these provide a comprehensive picture of how non-lending activities contribute to the Bank's mandate, filling critical knowledge gaps rather than duplicating past evaluations. The TA synthesis specifically examines how the AfDB's TA interventions have contributed to strengthening absorptive capacity, supporting policy reform, and enhancing the sustainability of operations.

The rationale for this evaluation synthesis is grounded in decades of evidence. Evaluations by IDEV and other DPs, including the AsDB, EIB, and World Bank, have consistently highlighted that limited institutional and implementation capacity remains one of the most unceasing constraints to development impact (EIB, 2021; IDEV, 2016). Even well-financed projects risk underperformance or short-lived results unless national absorptive and institutional capacity is strengthened. This recurring finding has led to repeated recommendations that development partners invest not only in financial resources but also in the capacity required to utilize them effectively.

The urgency of strengthening institutional capacity is enhanced by Africa's evolving development context. The continent faces increasing challenges such as climate change, food insecurity, infrastructure deficits, conflicts, and economic vulnerabilities exacerbated by global shocks, including the COVID-19 pandemic and geopolitical disruptions. These pressures were prominently highlighted at the recent "Finance in Common Summit" held in Cape Town from February 26 to 28, 2025[5]. The Summit recognized TA as essential for bridging Africa's infrastructure gap, catalyzing private investment and enabling governments to design and implement structural reforms. It particularly emphasized the urgent need for substantial investments in infrastructure and industrialization, as well as the critical role of Development Finance Institutions (DFIs), multilateral partners, public development banks, philanthropies, and the private sector in leveraging TA for long-term economic transformation. It underlined that TA should be both catalytic and strategically designed to maximize private sector participation, strengthen institutional capacities, and enhance the effectiveness of development financing[6].

Despite these needs, weak institutional and technical capacities continue to pose considerable challenges for several countries in accessing and managing financial resources. For example, despite being one of the most climate-vulnerable regions, Sub-Saharan Africa received only 3.3% of total climate finance flows to non-OECD countries in 2017-2018 (AfDB, 2022). Limited absorption capacity grounded in limited capacity for project origination, preparation and implementation, has been cited as a key barrier to scaling climate finance (EIB, 2021; Climate Positive Initiative, 2024). To address these challenges, Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) are prioritizing Technical Assistance for lower-income countries[7], selecting target nations based on demand, and supporting them in developing and implementing climate policies under the Policy Support and Joint MDB Long-term Strategies (LTS) Program.

In this context, TA has therefore emerged as a multidimensional instrument serving several interconnected functions at different stages of the project cycle, including:

[5] The session was entitled "Innovative Technical Assistance: Bridging Africa's Infrastructure Gap. https://www.afdb.org/en/news-and-events/innovative-technical-assistance-driving-impact-through-global-cooperation-81413

[6] Regarding TA, the African Development Bank Vice-President for Private Sector, Infrastructure & Industrialization, Solomon Quaynor, called for a shift toward accelerating development of bankable green infrastructure projects, by stating: "Innovative technical assistance mechanisms allow us to bridge financing gaps, strengthen institutional capacity, and accelerate the implementation of transformative projects. We need to rethink how we deploy TA to ensure that it leads to sustainable and scalable investment outcomes."

[7] At COP29, the Bank launched a third call for proposals under the USD 56 million CAW Technical Assistance sub-window, to support countries in developing climate action projects and strengthening national climate policies.

- **Enhancing absorptive capacity**: enabling countries to better utilize development resources and implement reforms;
- **Strengthening project preparation**: supporting the design of bankable, well-structured projects;
- **Catalyzing finance**: improving readiness and helping governments and private actors leverage additional funding;
- **Supporting implementation**: ensuring effective execution of projects and resource use and delivery of results (IDEV, 2020; EIB, 2021); and
- **Sustaining interventions**: building long-term institutional capacity and ensuring that reforms are embedded within national systems.

These functions respond directly to recurring findings from IDEV and other development partners' evaluations, that limited national capacity is the most persistent bottleneck to sustainable development outcomes. In this perspective, Development Partners such as the IMF, World Bank Group, the AsDB, IFAD, the UN, etc. have been instrumental in shaping and delivering TA. These institutions engage directly with client countries to design and implement demand-driven and cross-sectoral TA programs, often aimed at enhancing policy formulation, operational efficiency, and sustainable development outcomes.

However, a persistent challenge lies in the lack of comprehensive data on the volume of TA operations. Available information is limited to scattered and fragmented data points across public and online sources. Cox and Norrington-Davies (2019) estimate that TA industry generates tens of billions of dollars each year, while highlighting the difficulty to identify TA-specific spending from other aid modalities. Furthermore, the design and focus of TA might vary greatly, depending on a funder's priorities, the participants' needs, or both, with a funder opting for individualized TA that addresses a specific problem at a single organization, or providing TA to a group of grantees or stakeholders engaged in similar work (Lyons et al., 2016). In most cases, however, TA programs seek to contribute to the achievement of goals and objectives defined in country strategies (Vinokurov et al., 2022).

Classification and Strategic Integration of TA

TA programs vary widely in scope and objectives, making classification somewhat challenging. According to Vinokurov et al. (2022), five TA modalities have been in use since the 1970s:

(i) Integrating technical experts in government agencies to help develop their capacity and/or facilitate organizational change;

(ii) embedding technical specialists into assistance projects to help design and implement the projects;

(iii) providing policy advice and advisory services, often in conjunction with ODA;

(iv) providing guidance on the impact assessment for government legislation and regulations; and

(v) supporting capacity building and training, promoting knowledge sharing and analytical work, and strengthening project preparation and implementation.

IFIs, and other development agencies provide TA at different stages of the project cycle, including preparation, implementation, and institutional strengthening (IPC, 2024; AsDB, 2024) as well as sectoral TA, policy support or peer-learning and networking (IPC, 2024). For instance, the AsDB distinguishes between Transaction TA (TRTA) and Knowledge & Support

TA (KSTA). TRTA is linked to ADB-financed project or program, while KSTA is not. The latter prepares and enhances the implementation readiness of a specific ensuing project, develops capacity, and provides policy advice; while the latter includes capacity development, policy advice and research & development.

The Inter-American Development Bank (IDB) separates TA into three categories: (i) operational support; (ii) client support; and (iii) research & dissemination. Each category of TA serves unique but interconnected purposes. Similarly, the World Bank group divides TA under: (i) lending operations support; (ii) analytical work; (iii) and institutional capacity-building. The latter two fall under Analytical & Advisory Services. These classifications indicate a shared commitment to technical cooperation, which goes beyond financial assistance to include knowledge dissemination and institutional development.

At the country level, IFIs and other DPs include TA into their strategic frameworks to varied degrees (AsDB, 2024). The AsDB incorporates TA into its Country Partnership Strategy (CPS) guidelines, ensuring that it appears in pre-CPS assessments, results frameworks, annual portfolio reviews, and CPS completion reports. It also requires the preparation of a Country Knowledge Plan (CKP) to guide TA initiatives systematically. By contrast, the IDB integrates technical cooperation programming into country strategy processes through an annual portfolio update and regular dialogue with stakeholders, which ensures alignment with shifting national priorities. The World Bank, by contrast, does not explicitly refer to TA in its country's strategy guidance. It rather incorporates analytical and advisory work within its Systematic Country Diagnostic (SCD) and Country Partnership Framework (CPF), which align these efforts with larger development goals.

Sectoral Applications of TA

Technical Assistance is deployed both for cross-sectional purposes and within various sectors, depending on the needs of countries and institutional capacities. For economic governance, for instance, MDBs and the IMF provide TA alongside policy advice, capacity building, and financial support to: (i) enhance domestic resources mobilization; (ii) facilitate effective government spending; and (iii) meet budgetary and balance of payments needs, supporting macroeconomic stability and growth (AfDB et al., 2015).

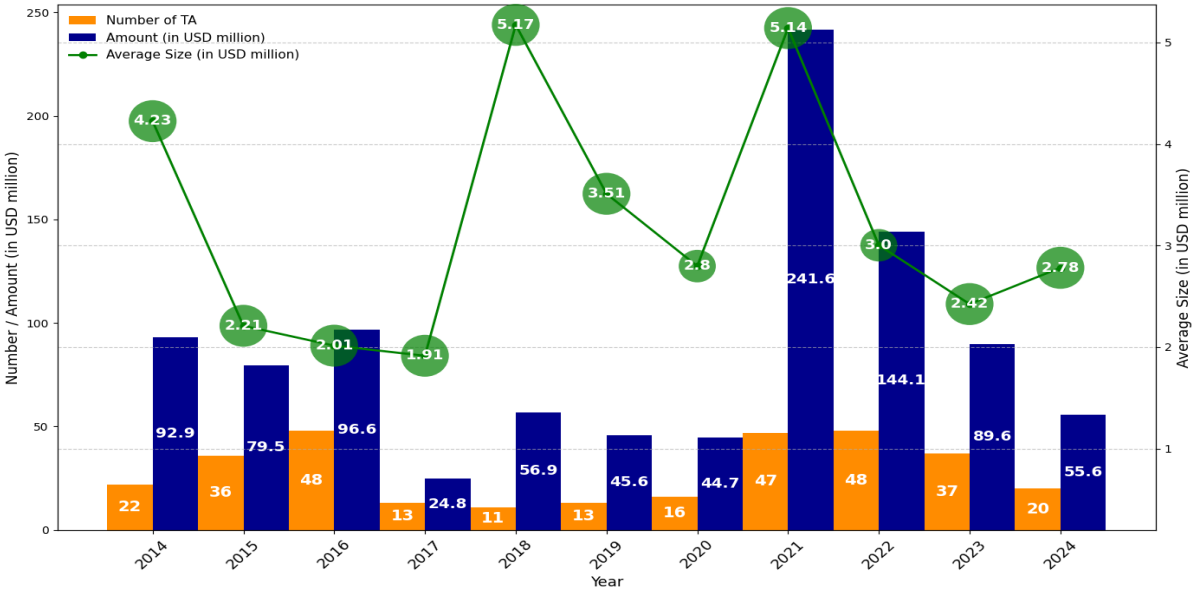
For the private sector development, DFIs sometimes provide their clients with Technical Assistance to strengthen their capacity in governance, management and financial administration (PROPARCO, 2011). They also seek to help grow the private sector in emerging markets by improving the investment climate, increasing access to finance and basic infrastructure, and promoting sustainable businesses. In the agro-processing sector, for instance, the AfDB provides Technical Assistance to help set up Special Economic Zones and develop requisite skills and agricultural value-chain capacity to ensure competitiveness, productivity, and inclusiveness in agro-industrial development (AfDB, 2022).

With respect to gender mainstreaming, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA) provided Technical Assistance to Banks in Ethiopia to facilitate Women-led businesses' Access to Capital (SIDA, 2023). According to the AfDB annual report of 2021, in the context of the Affirmative Finance Action for Women in Africa (AFAWA), a TA program has also been approved in 2020 to enhance women's finance and business managerial skills, as well as increase financial institutions' gender sensitivity and ability to develop women-centric solutions for their access to finance needs (AfDB, 2021). TA is also important to transition and conflict-affected states, where technical support is often more crucial than financial resources in the initial recovery stages (SDC, 2012) and for which strong and sustained Technical Assistance is critical to project implementation and building capacity (World Bank, 2018).

Trends in TA Operations[8]

On a wider scale, the trajectory of TA operations within the AfDB highlights both progress and areas requiring further examination. Between 2014 and 2024, according to the annual reports, the Bank committed USD 972.51 million (UA 692.57 million) to 311 TA operations[9], leveraging resources from ordinary capital (ADB and ADF) as well as special funds such as the Transition Support Facility (TSF). However, the annual approval size for TA operations has fluctuated significantly, falling from USD 92.95 million in 2014 to USD 24.89 million in 2017 before peaking at USD 241.67 million in 2021 (post-COVID-19); before lowering to USD 89.68 million in 2023 and USD 55.62 million in 2024. Similarly, the average amount of TA commitment has varied over the years, reflecting shifting priorities and funding dynamics.

Figure 2: AfDB Technical Assistance Operations (2014-2024)



Source: IDEV (AfDB data)

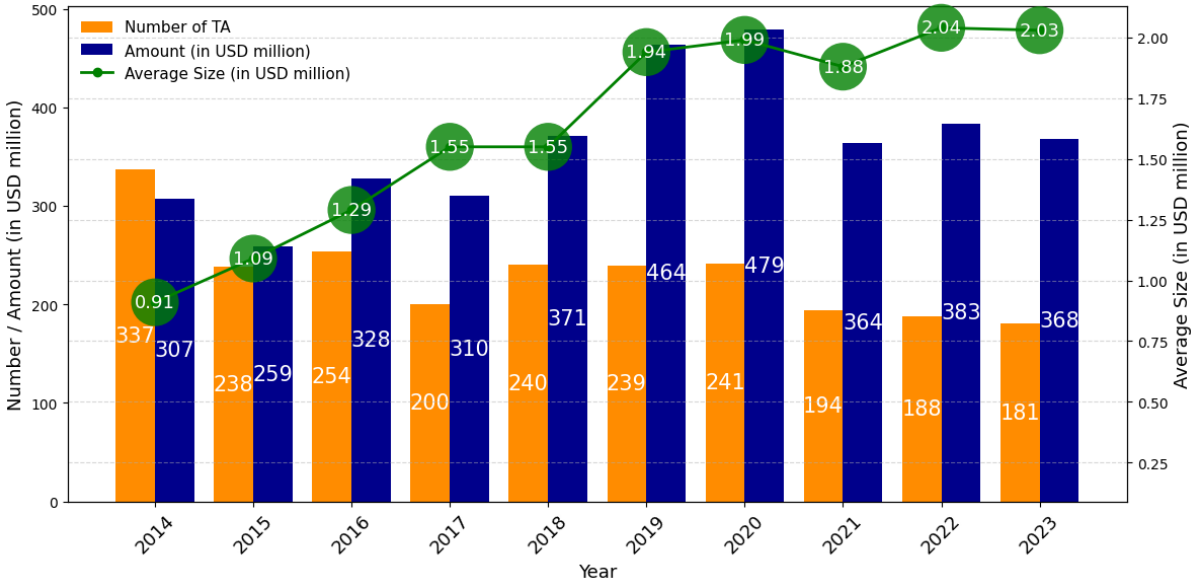
By comparison, the AsDB committed USD 3.63 billion across 2,312 TA projects between 2014 and 2022. While the number of TA commitments[10] declined over time, funding allocation peaked in 2020, indicating a shift towards higher-value interventions. The average approval size of TA operations within the AsDB increased from USD 1.08 million (2014–2016) to USD 1.82 million (2017–2022), but the number of projects approved annually decreased from 276 (2014–2016) to 217 (2017–2022).

[8] Due to differences in scope, comparisons between AfDB and AsDB TA operations—both in number and financing volume—should be treated with caution. For ease of interpretation, AfDB figures originally expressed in Units of Account (UA) have been converted into U.S. dollars.

[9] While the Bank's annual reports did not clearly specify the nature of TA operations or their components, the reported statistics likely underestimate the actual scope and financial trends of TA activities. They capture only TA operations financed through the Bank's dedicated grants (SO), without further disaggregation or detail.

[10] TA is financed from a combination of sources: the Asian Development Fund (ADF), transfers from ADB ordinary capital resources (OCR) income, and external cofinancing through ADB administered trust funds or project-specific contributions (Figure 3). The principal funding sources of the Technical Assistance Special Fund (TASF) are ADF replenishments, which are referred to as TASF (donor contribution); and OCR net income transfers, which are referred to as TASF (income transfer). (AsDB, 2024).

Figure 3: AsDB Technical Assistance Operations (2014-2023)



Source: Asian Development Bank (2024)

Figures 2 and 3 also depict the diverse financial approaches in meeting TA needs in RMCs. Particularly, the average cost per TA operation appears higher at the AfDB (USD 3.13 million) compared to the AsDB (USD 2.03 million), indicating a possibility of variation in design, scale, or resource efficiency.

In addition, according to Vinokurov et al. (2022) in their working paper on "Eurasian Fund for Stabilization and Development Working Paper", about 1,872 TA projects were implemented between 2009 and 2021 with the three major IFIs — the IMF (720), World Bank[11] (624), and AsDB (388) — accounting for 92.5% of TAs implemented by IFIs. The remaining was handled by other IFIs including the Eurasian Development Bank, the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), the EIB, and the New Development Bank — representing 7.5% of the TA operations.

Revisiting the AfDB's context, despite significant TA commitments, the Bank has not conducted a dedicated, Bank-wide thematic evaluation of its TA portfolio. Nevertheless, evidence on the relevance and effectiveness of TA within the AfDB Group does exist across multiple evaluative products. These include project completions reports (PCRs), Project Completion Report Evaluation Notes (PCRENs), Country Strategy Paper Completion Reports (CSP CRs), Country Strategy and Program Evaluations (CSPEs), sector evaluations, and the evaluation of the TSF, the MIC-TAF, among others. Together, these evaluative works point to the importance of TA, while also identifying persistent challenges such as limited country capacity, weak monitoring and evaluation frameworks, insufficient integration of capacity-building dimensions into project operations, and inconsistencies in documenting results

By contrast, the AsDB has carried out two dedicated corporate evaluations on TA within a decade (2014 and 2024), providing consolidated insights on performance, challenges and good practices. The AfDB 2019 evaluation of the MIC-TAF provided valuable lessons but was limited in scope, focusing only on a special fund rather than the Bank's broader TA support. Therefore, what remains missing for the AfDB is not evaluative evidence per se, but a synthesis that brings together the breadth of insights across different evaluative products and complements them with comparative learning from peer institutions such as the AsDB.

[11] In fiscal 2024, the World Bank provided advisory services and analytics products to over 130 countries, focusing on global issues like climate change, economic growth, public sector data development, public administration, pandemic response, and jobs. It also signed 64 reimbursable advisory services agreements for a total amount of USD173 million in 24 countries, providing technical assistance and implementation support [World Bank, 2024].

This evaluation synthesis therefore aims to bridge some of these knowledge gaps by bringing together existing common findings on relevance, effectiveness, and efficiency of TA support provided by the AfDB and other development partners. Drawing on internal AfDB evaluation reports, external evaluations, and comparative analyses with peer institutions, this synthesis will provide critical insights into what works, what does not work, and why, in pursuing TA's contribution to institutional strengthening and development effectiveness within developing countries. It will also draw lessons and identify good practices that the AfDB may benefit from as it seeks to enhance its own provision of TA to its RMCs.

3. SYNTHESIS OBJECTIVE AND SCOPE, QUESTIONS, AND AUDIENCE

3.1. Synthesis Objectives and Scope

The objective of this evaluation synthesis is to assemble findings, generate actionable lessons and identity good practices on TA interventions, as drawn from existing evaluative evidence from the AfDB, other International Financial Institutions, UN agencies, bilateral agencies, and other development agencies, as well as RMCs, that can directly inform AfDB's policy, strategic, and operational decisions on TA. It will provide the African Development Bank's Board of Directors, Management, and operational staff with evidence-based insights on enhancing the design and implementation of TA interventions across the project cycle in RMCs. This includes supporting and strengthening absorptive capacity, improving project and programs preparation, catalyzing finance, supporting implementation, and sustaining institutional reforms, thereby improving development effectiveness. Ultimately, this will inform the implementation and possible revision of the Bank Group Capacity Development Strategy (2021 - 2025), which is coming to an end in December 2025.

While the application of TA is broad, this evaluation synthesis will focus on priority areas as identified through literature review and consultation with key departments within the Bank. Broadly, these priority areas cover sectors (such as energy, agriculture, etc.), themes (for instance, gender, fragility, private sector development including small and medium enterprises (SMEs), climate resilience, and sustainable development), and projects or programs (including their preparation, design, implementation, and monitoring).

The TA evaluation synthesis complements other IDEV evaluations including the Development Partnerships Evaluation Synthesis which focused on the AfDB's collaboration with other development partners, focusing on infrastructure, climate change, private sector development, and fragile states, the Public Financial Management (PFM) evaluation synthesis, which was concentrated on the Bank's interventions in public financial management reforms, , focusing on budget support, institutional reforms, transparency, accountability, and domestic resource mobilization, and the ESW Phase 2 evaluation, which reviews the Bank's non-lending knowledge work across various countries, in informing country strategies, guiding investment operations, and supporting policy dialogue, with a cross-cutting emphasis on fragility, gender, and climate resilience.

Together, these evaluations demonstrate that IDEV has already covered a wide range of countries, governance-related reforms, partnerships, and knowledge work. To avoid duplication and add value beyond some of these existing evaluations, this TA evaluation synthesis will concentrate on operational-level capacity support, project preparation, catalytic role of TA financing, and institutional sustainability and ownership, without excluding thematic priorities like climate resilience, gender mainstreaming, fragility and conflict-affected states, private sector and SME development.

The synthesis will be based on TA experiences in low- and middle-income countries in Africa and other parts of the world. The period covered will be from 2014 to 2024.

3.2. Synthesis Questions

The evaluation synthesis will center on the following indicative questions, which may be adjusted (based on discussions with the relevant internal stakeholders).

Table 2: Questions and Sub-questions

Synthesis Questions	Sub-questions
SQ1: How well are the Technical Assistance interventions designed and fit for purpose?	*SQ1.1*: To what extent have TA interventions been aligned with the corporate policies, strategic objectives, and priorities of the institutions providing them?
	SQ1.2: To what extent have Technical Assistance interventions been tailored and responsive to the needs and priorities for different countries, sectors, and groups of beneficiaries?
	SQ1.3: To what extent were Technical Assistance interventions adapted over time in response to evolving circumstances/contexts?
	SQ1.4. How was the quality of design of the TA interventions?
SQ2: To what extent are Technical Assistance interventions coherent at country level?	*SQ2.1:* How internally coherent were TA interventions with the broader country support and programs and the other interventions by the institution undertaking them?
	SQ2.2: How were TA interventions consistent with the efforts of other development partners and involved collaboration with key stakeholders across country-level operations?
	SQ2.3: What effect did this collaboration have, and what roles did various stakeholders play in shaping and participating in Technical Assistance processes?
SQ3: To what extent were Technical Assistance interventions successful in achieving the desired results?	*SQ3.1:* To what extent were Technical Assistance interventions able to achieve the expected results across different countries' contexts?
	SQ3.2: How did Technical Assistance adapt to the specific needs of countries, including countries in transition?
	SQ3.3: What factors enabled or hindered the effectiveness of Technical Assistance support? How were these challenges and barriers addressed or mitigated?
SQ4: Were Technical Assistance interventions able to achieve impacts in different national contexts?	*SQ4.1:* To what extent have TA interventions contributed to long-term changes in institutional performance, systems, norms and development outcomes in different national contexts?
	SQ4.2: How catalytic have TA interventions been in delivering tangible benefits to end users, mobilizing finance, leveraging partnerships, and stimulating private sector participation??
	SQ4.3: To what extent can these development outcomes be attributed to TA interventions?
SQ5: Were the management processes for designing and delivering Technical Assistance—such as quality at entry, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and funding—adequately designed and executed to address the demand and ensure effective delivery?	SQ5.1: How well was the quality at entry processes carried out to ensure the relevance and operational readiness of Technical Assistance interventions?
	SQ5.2: How efficiently were Technical Assistance interventions processes implemented in line with their intended objectives?
	SQ5.3: How efficient were the monitoring and evaluation processes of Technical Assistance interventions in tracking progress and informing decision-making during TA implementation?
	SQ5.4: How well were the funding processes of Technical Assistance interventions executed or managed to support timely and responsive delivery?
SQ6: To what extent were the outcomes of Technical Assistance interventions sustainable in the medium and long term, and ensured strong ownership of the operations by the beneficiaries?	SQ6.1: To what extent were the outcomes of Technical Assistance interventions sustainable in the medium and long term?
	SQ6.2: To what extent did Technical Assistance interventions ensure strong ownership of the operations by the beneficiaries?
SQ7: What are some of the emerging good practices and lessons that could strengthen the effectiveness	*SQ7.1***:** What examples of good practices from previous interventions could be applied to strengthen the effectiveness of future Technical Assistance interventions?

of future Technical Assistance interventions?	*SQ7.2*: What lessons can guide the design and implementation of more effective Technical Assistance interventions?

A detailed evaluation synthesis design matrix is attached as Annex 1.

3.3. Audiences

The primary audience of the evaluation synthesis is the Bank's Board of Directors through the Committee on Operations and Development Effectiveness (CODE), Bank Management and staff, Regional Member Countries, and other Development Partners who provide TA. Within the Bank, the audience includes the African Development Institute (ECAD), other departments such as Development Impact and Results (SNDR), Procurement and Fiduciary Inspection (SNFI), Governance and Economic Reforms (ECGF), Macroeconomic Research and Forecasting (ECMR), and Country Economics (ECCE), the Transition States Coordination Office (RDTS) and all operational departments that include TA components in their operations. Within the RMCs, the findings of the synthesis will be of interest to Governments, Civil Society Organizations, private sector actors, and continental and national capacity development institutions, including the African Economic Research Consortium, the African Capacity Building Foundation, the African Union Commission, and other DPs.

4. METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

4.1. Synthesis Approach

A *Synthesis Approach* will be used to systematically compile existing evidence (findings, lessons, and good practices) from Technical Assistance interventions and programs that have already been subject to monitoring, reporting, and evaluations. Indeed, Evaluation *Synthesis* is a systematic procedure for organizing findings from several (sometimes disparate) evaluation studies to answer specific policy and/or program questions; with the ultimate objective of contributing to learning and improvements in policies, programs, and interventions. It brings them together, assesses them, and uses them as a database for addressing questions that can be satisfactorily answered without conducting primary data collection.

Synthesis is a useful approach when many evaluations of similar interventions have already been conducted. It enables the evaluator to gather results from different evaluation reports, performed by different people at different locations and at different times, and to ask several questions about this group of Reports. An *Evaluation Synthesis* can answer various kinds of questions – such as those concerning overall program effectiveness, identifying specific versions of the program that work especially well or poorly, and how future evaluation studies can be organized to provide even more useful insights. Through the *Synthesis Approach*, evidence from the data sources will be triangulated to provide synthetized findings and lessons that are aligned with the synthesis questions and sub-questions.

Some specific advantages of the Evaluation Synthesis include:

- The identification and capture of evaluative knowledge and lessons learned on a certain topic from a variety of evaluations produced by IDEV, the evaluation units of other organizations, the academic literature to promote learning and the use of evaluation findings. These syntheses could be supplemented by targeted interviews used to help contextualize the lessons;
- Enhancing the general understanding and knowledge of a particular topic;
- The facilitation of a wider use of evaluation findings by identifying and capturing accumulated knowledge, lessons learned and good practices on common themes across a variety of contexts and sources;
- The contribution to decision-making processes in an effective way, especially when there is neither adequate time nor resources to undertake a full-fledged evaluation;
- Integration into various corporate or strategic processes or products where knowledge and lessons on a specific topic at a specific moment is needed.

4.2. Theory of Change

The team developed a Theory of Change (ToC) for TA, constructed based on review of TA literature, brief consultation with internal stakeholders and institutional frameworks such as the African Development Bank's Capacity Development Strategy (CDS), the Asian Development Bank's approach paper for the evaluation of TA (2014-2024) [12]and relevant experiences of from FAO and other IFIs. While institution-wide ToCs for TA remain relatively rare, these references provide a basis for reconstructing an impact pathway.

[12] Asian Development Bank (ADB), *Corporate Evaluation: ADB's Technical Assistance Operations, 2014–2023*, Independent Evaluation Department, 2024, available at: https://www.adb.org/sites/default/files/Evaluation%20Document/913421/files/ce_ta-ops_2014-2023.pdf?

As previously highlighted, the scope of TA varies across agencies. The reconstructed ToC developed informs the Evaluation Synthesis by understanding of the general outcomes expected because of TA interventions and by clarifying how TA inputs and activities lead to outputs, intermediate outcomes, and long-term and sustainable impacts. Drawing on relevant elements of a TA (as described in section 2.1.), the ToC intends to capture both immediate project-cycle functions (e.g., enhancing absorptive capacity, strengthening project preparation, catalyzing finance, supporting implementation) and broader institutional and systemic changes. It explicitly distinguishes intermediate outcomes, such as improved institutional capacity and policy alignment, from ultimate impacts, including sustainable development, institutional transformation, and development effectiveness. (see Annex 1 for the graphic representation of the ToC).

Consequently, the ToC provides a comprehensive view of the outputs and outcomes that can be expected if TA interventions were to address the entire system. Moreover, by mapping a logical sequence from well-aligned inputs to systemic, sustainable impacts, the reconstructed ToC aligns with the synthesis questions. It addresses the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, impact, and sustainability of TA interventions, and incorporates both public financial management and sectoral dimensions, emphasizing design quality, implementation adaptability, and TA's catalytic role.

Inputs and Activities: TA interventions can be funded by a range of financial resources, including TA special funds, grants, trust funds such as the Transition Support Facility (TSF), the Middle-Income Country Technical Assistance Fund (MIC-TAF), and the Africa Water Facility at the Bank. Interventions also mobilize regional, national and sector-specific expertise from the Bank specialists, consultants, and advisors with deep contextual knowledge as well as knowledge and research resources, such as diagnostics, sector studies, and reform frameworks, and lessons from priori interventions. Stakeholder engagement, political commitment, and partnerships with governments, IFIs and other DPs, private sector actors, academia, and civil society enhance relevance, ownership and alignment, serving an important monitoring important monitoring purpose on expenditure and service delivery.

Outputs : The TA interventions generate a set of outputs, including (i) technical and policy reports, diagnostics, reform roadmaps and advisory notes, (ii) strengthened institutional systems, planning processes, operational frameworks, digital tools, and sector-specific solutions; (iii) trained public and private sector stakeholders with enhanced technical, functional and policy skills; and (iv) established or reinforced coordination mechanisms, evidence-based decision-making platforms, and monitoring tools.

Outcomes: The TA outcomes highlight its interconnected functions across the project cycle. They translate into changes in behavior, capabilities, and system performance, such as among others, (i) improved institutional capacity to design, implement and monitor policies and reforms, (ii) enhanced functional competencies and systems across ministries, agencies, civil society, and private sector actors lead to better policy formulation, efficiency, and service delivery; (iii) more effective stakeholder coordination and alignment with national and regional priorities, and partner efforts (iv) increased absorptive capacity, enabling better mobilization and use of financial and human resources, and (v) improved responsiveness and adaptability in fragile, complex or transitioning contexts.

Impact: TA intermediate outcomes are expected to generate medium and long-term impacts that reflect shared development goals among IFIs for sustainable and transformative change. These outcomes contribute to: (i) sustained institutional performance and resilience; (ii) strengthened public financial management and economic governance systems; (iii) effective, inclusive, and equitable service delivery; (iv) accelerated structural transformation and private sector participation; (v) enhanced progress toward national strategies, the SDGs, and the African Union's Agenda 2063, enhancing socio- economic development and resilience to shocks. By aligning TA with broader development outcomes, the ToC recognizes sustainability enablers—such as quality-at-entry, adaptive management, timely funding and

long-term stakeholder commitment and how TA can be catalytic, scalable, and transformative across diverse national contexts.

ToC Assumptions: The effectiveness and sustainability of TA interventions outcomes depend on a set of interrelated assumptions that shape each stage of the ToC. TA is assumed to be demand-driven and context-specific, responding to clearly identified national needs and priorities, not imposed externally. However, a critical risk is the misalignment between TA focus and actual institutional needs, particularly if initial assessments are superficial or outdated.

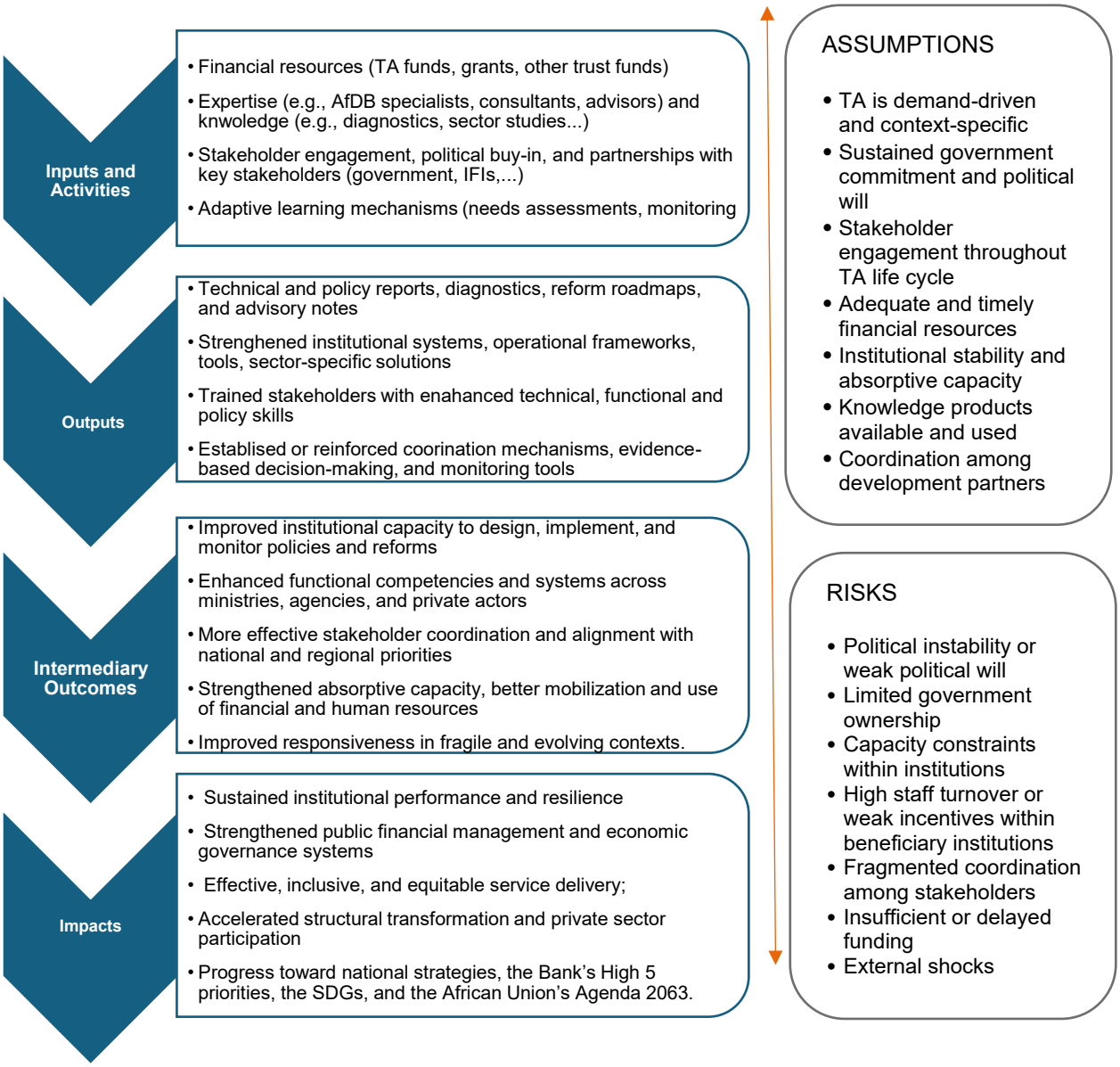
Strong government commitment and political will and stability are essential to ensure high-level buy-in for reforms and support implementation of TA recommendations. In the absence of this, there is a real risk of weak ownership or outright resistance to reform, especially where vested interests oppose change. Similarly, sustained stakeholder engagement is assumed, including openness to learning, collaboration, and behavioral change. Yet, high staff turnover in partner institutions, lack of continuity, and low absorptive capacity often undermine the institutionalization of gains.

The ToC also assumes adequate and predictable funding throughout the TA lifecycle, which facilitates adaptive implementation and long-term support and avoid fragmentation. In practice, funding unpredictability can lead to fragmented activities, delayed outputs, or premature closure. Likewise, a conducive policy and regulatory environment is also essential to enable TA-backed reforms and adaptative approaches. This is not always certain, particularly in fragile contexts.

Furthermore, well-coordinated TA efforts with broader development initiatives and other development partners are required to ensure coherence and help avoid duplication. However, poor coordination can lead to fragmented results, inefficiencies, or stakeholder lassitude, particularly in sectors crowded with donor activity. Finally, limited absorptive capacity can constrain the ability to implement or sustain reforms.

Overall, by recognizing these assumptions and risks, the ToC for highlights that TA interventions effectiveness is grounded in strategic logic and operational experience. Their success depends not only on the quality of design and delivery but also on the enabling environment and contextual realities in which they operate. The validity of these assumptions and proactive management of the associated risks could significantly influence the sustainability and developmental impact of TA in diverse national settings.

Figure 4: Reconstructed ToC for Technical Assistance



Source: IDEV

4.3. Scope of the Synthesis

To define the scope of the synthesis, a thorough literature review on TA interventions was conducted focusing on AfDB's approach and the practices of other stakeholders including IFIs, and other development agencies. Concurrently, initial consultations have been conducted with internal stakeholders including experts from ECAD (EADI), ECGF, Macroeconomic Research and Forecasting (ECMR), Country Economics (ECCE), the Transition States Coordination Office (RDTS), Development Impact and Results (SNDR), Procurement and Fiduciary Inspection (SNFI), Resource Mobilization and Partnership (FIRM) and other operational departments involved in the design and implementation of TA programs in RMCs.

These initial discussions, including with the Evaluation Reference Group (ERG)[13] and the preliminary literature review help highlight knowledge gaps and areas of interest for synthesis.

They also helped shape the focus of the synthesis and informed the identification of the following key thematic areas for consideration, each potentially linked to critical dimensions of the ToC aligned with the synthesis questions:

- Design, targeting and relevance of TA for capacity building and institutional strengthening. This area may encompass support in areas like policy formulation, planning and implementation with the perspective of targeted TA to country contexts.

- TA support for the program and project cycle, including contributions to the preparation, design, implementation, and monitoring of projects or programs, with a focus on increasing operational readiness, implementation efficiency and absorptive capacity;

- Sector-specific technical assistance outlines interest in examining TA delivered in key sectors such as energy, agriculture, and others, addressing country needs and contributing to sector outcomes and service delivery;

- Cross-cutting and thematic TA (for instance, gender, fragility, Private Sector Development including Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs), climate resilience and sustainable development);

- Effectiveness, attribution, and contribution to development outcomes. The measurement focuses on the extent to which TA interventions achieved their intended results and the degree to which these outcomes can be attributed to the support provided, while identifying enabling and constraining factors; and

- Readiness and ownership of TAs, as well as the sustainability of TA outcomes involve examining enabling conditions that support long-term outcomes such as quality-at-entry, institutional engagement, and the degree of beneficiary ownership and commitment to sustaining and embedding TA benefits within systems and reforms over time.

The synthesis will focus on the country level perspective, with regional context considered where applicable. This fosters stronger national ownership, building institutional capacity, and aligning national policies with global frameworks such as the SDGs.

The evaluation synthesis will address these areas, while leveraging evidence on the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, efficiency, impact, and sustainability of TA interventions by the Bank and other international development organizations. This includes drawing lessons, identifying good practices, examining institutional setups, complementarity of TA with other instruments, and adequacy of design, implementation arrangements, tools, and resources for TA.

4.4. Documents Selection

The evaluation synthesis will draw on evidence from a variety of documents to generate responses to the above evaluation questions. These will include:

[13] The overall purpose of the ERG is to support a credible, transparent, impartial and quality evaluation process in accordance with the AfDB Independent Evaluation Policy and the Evaluation Cooperation Group norms and standards.

- **Evaluations and Evaluation Synthesis reports** and learning products on TA published by the Bank and other key IFIs, UN and other multilateral agencies, bilateral institutions, and other development institutions. These documents have been carefully selected with a focus on those that will provide relevant and credible evidence.

- **Development research outputs** on TA interventions produced by leading global institutions, academia, and think tanks to identify the latest trends and research on effective practices across different developing contexts.

- **TA guidance, policies and strategies or study reports** of a selected number of agencies will be reviewed to identify different approaches to TA interventions and changes over time.

The selection of documents was then directed by criteria applied across different stages to identify the most pertinent ones with limited bias. Only documents that met all criteria were defined as relevant and selected to be part of the evaluation synthesis. Documents were selected based on the criteria in Table 3:

Table 3: Selection Criteria for Document Reviewed

Criteria	Description
Type of reports	1. Evaluation reports 2. Research Documents 3. Other Study Reports
Document themes	Themes include various topics related to the ToC including: 1. Design, targeting and relevance of TA for capacity building/development and institutional strengthening. 2. TA support for program and project cycle support. 3. Sector-specific technical assistance. 4. Cross-cutting and thematic TA. 5. Effectiveness, attribution, and contribution to development outcomes Measurement. 6. Readiness, ownership, and sustainability of TA outcomes.
Quality	Evaluations produced independently and research papers presented in selected development journals and studies reports within targeted institutions that are assumed to adhere to an internal and/or external peer review process. 1. Independent evaluation. 2. Methodology described. 3. Evidence of primary and/or secondary data sources.
Participants: Country Income group	low income, middle income, transition states (and fragility situations).
Geographical areas	Africa, Asia, Latin America, East Europe, Global analysis
Source of publications	Publicly available literature on Technical Assistance.
Time	Publication period i.e., 2014-2024 to align with the reference period of the evaluation.

The search for documents was conducted in selected scholarly databases (EBSCO and Google Scholar, ResearchGate, Google) and institutional databases (i.e., the DAC Evaluation Resource Center, bilateral and multilateral institution evaluation websites). Table 4 below displays the list of these agencies. Key words used included: “technical assistance”, “technical support”, “technical cooperation”, “capacity development”, “capacity building”, “technical advisory services”, “institutional strengthening”, “capacity strengthening”, “advisory support”, “technical expertise”.

Table 4: List of International Development Agencies for Report Research

International Financial Institutions	Other Multilateral Institutions	Bilateral agencies	Global institutions	Development research agencies	Peer reviewed journals
• AfDB/IDEV • AsDB • CDB • EBRD • EIB • IADB • IFAD • IMF • Islamic Development Bank • World Bank /IEG	• EU • FAO • ILO • UNECA • UNDP • UNCDF • UNCTAD • WTO • UNIDO • WHO	• AFD • BMZ • BZ • DANIDA • Australia/ AusAID • DFID • Finland (MFA) • Germany (GIZ and KfW) • Japan/JICA • SDC • SIDA • USAID	• OECD • World Economic Forum	• Brookings Institute • Overseas Development Institute • J-Pal • 3ie	• Journal of African Economics • Review of Development Finance • African Development Review • Journal of Political Economy • Others

Source: IDEV

The initial document search yielded 292 documents. The first-level screening removed duplicates, excluded brief notes lacking depth, filtered out documents on themes not relevant to the Bank (e.g., TA on HIV/AIDS in Eastern Europe and Central Asia). In addition, many documents were PCRENs from the Bank, which were not retained as core references, although could be used to support specific findings if needed. This first level of screening was completed using a set of key words generated from the criteria described above and thereafter adapted for each intervention to enable a selection of relevant documents.

These documents were then organized around the key document types or TA intervention topics or geographical distribution. This exercise resulted in the selection of 120 documents. Of these, 72.5% are evaluation reports, 14.2% are other study reports and 13.3% are research documents. In addition, most of these documents (49.2 %) are focused on Africa (i.e., continent wide, regional or focused on individual countries), 30.8% cover global analysis or programs, and the remaining 20.0% focused on experiences from Asia and Latin America or Caribbean and Eastern Europe.

A final clean-up exercise was then carried out by selecting the more relevant documents based on 3-categories (highly relevant, relevant, and partially relevant)[14] regarding the preliminary synthesis questions and selection criteria of quality (Independent evaluation/peer-reviewed journals, methodology described, evidence of primary and/or secondary data sources) to come up with the final list of documents (75). Of these, 81.3% are evaluation reports, 8.0% are research documents and 10.7% are other study reports. The geographical distribution has shifted with 30.7% focused on Africa, 36.0% on global analysis or programs, and the rest 33.3% reflecting experiences from Asia and Latin America or Caribbean and Eastern Europe.

Overall, from the initial 292 reports in the long list, 75 reports were retained in the final selection (See references in Annex 4). These selected reports cover a broad spectrum of technical

[14] The classification of documents was based on a comprehensive review, including keyword searches, abstracts, and full-text reading, all aligned with the scope of the preliminary synthesis. Each document was manually assessed and categorized into three levels of relevance: (i) Highly relevant – focused on technical assistance, evidence-based, within the synthesis period, and offering transferable lessons or strategic insights; (ii) Relevant – partially focused on technical assistance or limited to specific sectors or countries, yet analytically valuable; and (iii) Partially relevant – indirectly related or covering earlier periods, but offering conceptual or contextual elements useful to the synthesis.

assistance areas and align with most of the synthesis questions on the relevance, coherence, effectiveness, and sustainability of results of technical assistance interventions. Specifically, they address: (i) Design, targeting and relevance of TA for capacity building and institutional strengthening (e.g., for Policy Formulation and Implementation); (ii) TA support for Program and projects cycle support (preparation, Design, Implementation, and monitoring); (iii) Sector-Specific Technical Assistance (energy, agriculture, …); (iv) TA for cross-cutting issues (for instance, gender, fragility, Private Sector Development , Climate Resilience and Sustainable Development), (v) Effectiveness, attribution, and contribution to development outcomes measurement, and (vi) Readiness, national ownership, and sustainability of TA outcomes. The area that has received less coverage is the efficiency of technical assistance interventions.

As for institutional origins, these documents break down as follows: 17.3% from AfDB, 45.3% from other IFIs (AsDB, World Bank, EIB, EBRD, IMF, IFAD, IADB, CDB), 16.0% from bilateral development agencies, 10.7% from Academic/Research Institutions/Think Tank, and 10.7% from Multilateral Institutions.

Table 5: Number of Document Collected by Types and Institutions

Document Type	African Development Bank	Other IFIs	Bilateral Agencies	Other agencies (Academic/ Research Institutions / Think Tank)	Other Multilateral Institutions	Overall Total	
						Total	%
Evaluation reports	13	30	8	2	8	61	81.3%
Research Documents	-	1	-	5	-	6	8.0%
Other study reports	-	3	4	1	-	8	10.7%
Total	13	34	12	8	8	75	100.0%
%	17.3%	45.3%	16.0%	10.7%	10.7%	100.0%	

Source: IDEV

With respect to TA topics, the documents' breakdown was somewhat challenging, as many documents could fall into more than one category. Nonetheless, the main focus areas -among others - are as follows: 21.3% focus on capacity building and institutional strengthening, 21.3% on TA support for program preparation, design, implementation, and monitoring, 18.7% on TA effectiveness, learning, and contribution to development outcomes, 17.3% on TA for cross-cutting issues, 16.3% on sector-specific TA and 5.3% on readiness, ownership, and sustainability of TA outcomes.

Table 6: Breakdown of Synthesis Documents per type and topics

Thematic areas	Evaluation reports	Research Documents	Other study reports	Overall Total	
				Total	%
Design, targeting and relevance of TA for capacity building and institutional strengthening	14	-	2	16	**21.3%**
TA support for program and project cycle support	15	-	1	16	**21.3%**
Sector-Specific Technical Assistance	9	2	1	12	**16.3%**
Cross-cutting and thematic TA	9	2	2	13	**17.3%**

Thematic areas	Evaluation reports	Research Documents	Other study reports	Overall Total	
				Total	%
Effectiveness, attribution and contribution to development Outcomes	10	2	2	14	**18.7%**
Readiness and national ownership, as well as sustainability of TA outcomes	4	-	-	4	**5.3%**
Total	**61**	**6**	**8**	**75**	**100.0%**
%	**81.3%**	**8.9%**	**10.7%**	**100.0%**	

Source: IDEV

4.5. Evidence Extraction and Synthesis

The evaluation team will use AI, specifically Natural Language Processing (NLP) and Large Language Models (LLMs), to analyze documents: identify relevant evidence for each synthesis question, map key themes and identify common evidence or findings, as well as common factors. The analysis draws on existing literature[15], as well as guidance[16] produced by the World Bank Group's Independent Evaluation Group (IEG) and the International Fund for Agricultural Development's (IFAD) Independent Office of Evaluation (IOE). Large language models (LLMs), such as GPT and Microsoft Copilot, offer significant advantages in qualitative data analysis. Unlike traditional tools such as NVivo and ATLAS.ti, which rely on manual coding and predefined thematic grids, LLMs offer a more flexible, contextual approach.

They can read and comprehend entire documents, considering context, linguistic nuances and complex syntactic structures. When applied to text corpora, these models can identify and extract evidence directly related to evaluation questions, saving considerable time. Furthermore, they enhance analysis by identifying common evidence or findings, key themes and common factors across a wide range of sources. This approach significantly reduces analysis timescales by automating the review of large document sets, while ensuring full traceability of the original sources (including citations and references). As part of the evaluation synthesis on Technical Assistance, the evaluation team will use artificial intelligence alongside human validation to identify and extract evidence or findings related to the synthesis questions. Artificial intelligence[17] will also be leveraged to analyze large volumes of evidence, map key themes, and detect common evidence or findings, as well as enabling, hindering, and cross-cutting factors. The evaluation team will carry out a quality assurance process at each stage of their application to ensure the coherence, relevance and reliability of the results produced by artificial intelligence.

The methodological approach is structured around three main steps. The first two steps focus on document analysis, combining artificial intelligence with human validation. The third step involves drafting the synthesis, which is carried out by the evaluation team based on evidence extracted and analyzed during the first two phases.

The first step uses artificial intelligence techniques to identify and extract relevant evidence or findings in relation to each synthesis question, while also assessing the probability of their association. This extraction process is based on semantic analysis and the use of Large

[15] See the work done for the World Bank by Bravo et al. (2023) or Franzen et al. (2022).

[16] See the work done for World Bank – Independent Evaluation Group & IFAD – Independent Office of Evaluation. (2025). *Guidance Note: Balancing Innovation and Rigor – Guidance for the Thoughtful Integration of Artificial Intelligence for Evaluation*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank Group.

[17] The evaluation team will use artificial intelligence to process large number of evidence or finding. For smaller numbers of evidence or finding, the team will manually process them to identify common themes, factors, findings or lessons.

Language Models (LLMs), guided by a tailored prompt designed to: (i) identify paragraphs associated with each synthesis question; (ii) assign an association probability to each paragraph to indicate the likelihood that its content responds to a specific question; and (iii) rank the extracted content according to its estimated level of relevance. The evaluation team will retain paragraphs with a probability between 0.9 and 1[18]. For each paragraph, the following metadata will also be recorded: the full document reference and the page number where the paragraph appears. The extracted content consists of original, unaltered quotations taken directly from the source documents. Once the LLMs have extracted the evidence, the evaluation team will manually review each paragraph to assess its coherence with the corresponding synthesis question as part of a quality assurance process. This quality control process will involve manually verifying that each extracted piece of evidence or finding is present in the original document, ensuring that the citation is accurate, properly attributed, and contextually aligned with the synthesis question.

The second step involves analyzing large volumes[19] of evidence or findings by mapping key themes and identifying common evidence or findings, as well as enabling, hindering, and common cross-cutting factors. This will be achieved through a triangulation process involving two distinct techniques. Firstly, unsupervised machine learning methods such as BERTopic and Structural Topic Modelling (STM) — both of which are approaches to topic modelling — will be applied to identify the main themes emerging from the evidence in response to each synthesis question. These Topic Modelling techniques allow underlying topics to be discovered in large sets of evidence, helping to capture patterns and structures in evidence that may not be immediately apparent. AI tools such as Copilot and GPT-5 will also be used to conduct complementary thematic analysis, identifying recurring themes across the evidence. AI will also help to identify common factors, such as recurring elements and cross-cutting or enabling/hindering factors. The results generated by LLMs and NLP techniques (BERTopic and STM) will be triangulated to ensure consistency and coherence with the overall evaluation framework. The evaluation team will manually validate all insights generated by AI by triangulating them based on at least three named sources. The team will then review and refine the insights to confirm their relevance and accuracy.

The third step, carried out by the evaluation team, will consist of drafting the evaluation synthesis on technical assistance, based on common findings and lessons identified in existing studies and evaluations of technical assistance. This synthesis will be based on the elements and findings identified during the first two stages, including the evidence, themes, and common factors specifically related to technical assistance interventions. The insights will encompass the evidence relating to each synthesis question, the identified themes, common evidence or findings, as well as the enabling, hindering, and common cross-cutting factors observed in technical assistance contexts. Text boxes will highlight key findings and draw attention to context-specific lessons or issues in technical assistance that have not been fully addressed across the different evaluations. They will also identify areas that warrant further investigation or future evaluation. The synthesis will provide a summary of the key insights derived from the analysis, emphasizing the most important takeaways for the evaluation of technical assistance. These findings will be integrated into a coherent narrative that aligns the identified themes and factors with the broader technical assistance evaluation framework, providing a clear overview of lessons learned and recommendations.

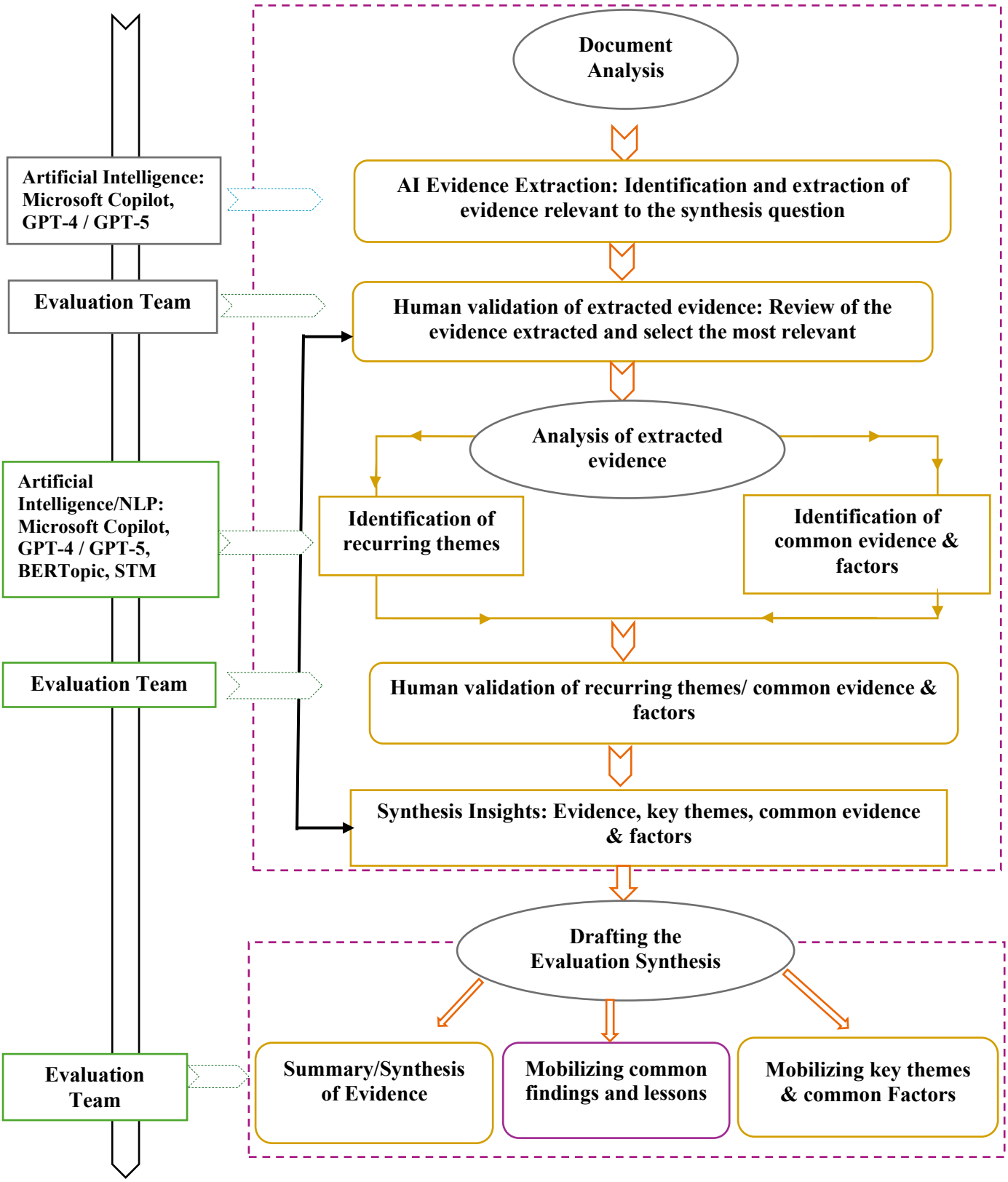
This analysis relies on a combination of advanced artificial intelligence (AI) tools, natural language processing (NLP) techniques and programming languages. Key tools include GPT and Microsoft Copilot. These tools are used to analyze and interpret unstructured text data. The approach also leverages the Python and R programming environments. Access to GPT

[18] If there is insufficient evidence with probabilities between 0.9 and 1, the team will lower the threshold to 0.8. If this is still inadequate, the process will continue, adjusting the threshold as necessary.

[19] The evaluation team will use artificial intelligence to process large number of evidence or finding. For smaller numbers of evidence or finding, the team will manually process them to identify common themes, factors, findings or lessons.

models is secured via an API key, enabling the automation of key text-processing tasks such as identification, extraction and synthesis of relevant information, with the aim of automating the overall analysis process.

Figure 5: The main method steps



4.6. Quality Assurance

The evaluation synthesis will be governed by IDEV's standard quality assurance processes and measures, to ensure the production of credible and useful evidence to inform decision-making. All synthesis products will be reviewed by both external and internal peer review teams to ensure methodological soundness and operational relevance. An Evaluation Reference Group, comprising staff representing relevant Bank complexes and departments, has been established. It will provide feedback and guidance on methodological soundness, the quality and relevance of findings, and the usefulness of lessons for future operations.

The synthesis will be peer-reviewed by other IDEV staff with expertise and experience of undertaking similar evaluation syntheses. An External Peer Reviewer has been recruited to provide independent quality assurance support during the synthesis and peer review analytical outputs produced in the context of the evaluation synthesis, validate the list of selected documents, suggest additional relevant documents and verify literature findings based on his/her expertise.

The ERG will review key deliverables — including the Concept Note, Approach Paper, and draft synthesis reports — before submission to IDEV Management for final approval.

4.7. Limitations and Mitigation measures

The evaluation synthesis is generally conducted through desk review in a shorter period, compared to other types of evaluations that include fieldwork across multiple countries. Numerous challenges could affect the comparability, comprehensiveness, and credibility of the synthesis findings. These pertain to heterogeneity in TA definitions, differences in scope and areas of focus (country, sector, theme or project, institutional, policy, or beneficiary level), variations in quality, and methodological consistency and the extensive timeframe (2014-2024) and extent or level of TA may impact their comparability and comprehensiveness.

In addition, given the reliance on secondary data (evaluation reports, studies, and research papers of different quality) as well as a risk of sampling and selection bias, particularly due to keyword filtering further undermine the ability to fully assess the methodological rigor of each source entirely. Additionally, due to time and resource constraints, not all elements of TA (e.g. intensity, duration, mode of delivery) will be explored in the same way.

To mitigate these challenges, the synthesis documents and contextualizes differences in cope, methodology, and level of analysis. Findings are triangulated multiple sources, including stakeholder consultations during the inception phase and analysis stages to deeply understand knowledge gaps, and areas of interest for the synthesis as well as to validate and enrich evidence, and reconcile inconsistencies. The team also adjusted the scope and depth of the analysis based on the profundity and relevance of available information.

Simple quality screening is applied to assess methodological clarity, while peer review of document selection mitigates biases. Scope and depth are adjusted based on the richness and relevance of information. These measures ensure that the synthesis findings are accurate, transparent, credible, and useful, while acknowledging limitations and lessons for future evaluations.

5. TEAM AND PROPOSED TIMELINE

5.1. Evaluation Synthesis Team

The evaluation synthesis team will be led by Boubacar Ly (Principal Evaluation Officer, IDEV.1). The team will also be comprised of Yaya Koloma (Evaluation Officer, IDEV.1) and Daouda Drabo (Consultant Data Scientist, IDEV.0). The internal peer-review team will be comprised of Clement Banse (Chief Evaluation Officer, IDEV.1), Leticia Taimo Jansen (Senior Evaluation Officer, IDEV.2) and AbdulKareem Lawal (Consultant Quality and Methods Advisor, IDEV.0). The external peer review will be conducted by Stephen Kester (International Consultant). Raky Gassama (Principal Knowledge Management Officer, IDEV.3), and Rogers Ssekubwa, (Knowledge Management Consultant, IDEV.3) will lead knowledge and communications. The process will be overseen by Rufael Fassil (Division Manager, IDEV.1), under the overall guidance of Karen Rot-Münstermann (Evaluator General, IDEV).

5.2. Proposed timetable

The indicative timeframe is provided in Table 3 below.

Table 7: Proposed Timeline

Milestones	Timeline
Concept Note	February 2025
Consultation with key stakeholders in the Bank including ERG	April 2025
External peer reviewer recruitment	April 2025
Draft Approach Paper	May 2025
Final Approach Paper	September 2025
Document collection, documents and literature review and analysis, interviews	March 2025- September 2025
Draft Synthesis Report	October 2025
Final Synthesis Report for Management (for capitalization workshop)	October/November 2025

6. COMMUNICATION AND DISSEMINATION

The objective of the communication and dissemination plan is to ensure that pertinent information and knowledge are available to the targeted stakeholders who have been identified based on the stakeholder mapping, in a timely and efficient manner, and that they are given the opportunity to provide feedback and interact with the evaluation synthesis team throughout the synthesis process and beyond.

A set of communication and dissemination activities will be undertaken before, during and after the evaluation synthesis. During the synthesis process, the evaluation synthesis team will: (i) involve the main stakeholders in discussions regarding the evaluation synthesis design and implementation; (ii) inform about the synthesis activities and progress; and (iii) communicate the preliminary findings. At the end of the evaluation synthesis, the final findings and lessons will be disseminated through various communication channels. The objective is to share this knowledge in a manner that optimizes the learning on what works, what doesn't work and why, when it comes to technical assistance within the Bank and other sister development institutions.

The audience for the communication and dissemination include the AfDB Board of Directors, Senior Management, and Bank staff involved in the design, implementation, or oversight of Technical Assistance across both operational and non-operational complexes such as , ECVP, RDVP (KMC), SNVP , AHVP, FIVP, PEVP, PIVP, FIRM, the Bank regional and country offices, RMCs authorities, other IFIs, multilateral agencies , bilateral agencies, other development agencies , academia, research institutes, think tanks, private sector beneficiaries, and civil society in RMCs, the evaluation community and general audiences.

An overview of a preliminary communication and dissemination plan is given in the matrix below, which maps out the key stakeholders, their needs and communication modalities. A subsequent detailed communication and dissemination plan will be ready at the final synthesis report stage.

7. ANNEXES

Annex 1: Synthesis Matrix

Synthesis Questions	Sub-questions	Indicators/Measures	Data Analysis
SQ1: How well are the Technical Assistance interventions designed and fit for purpose?	*SQ1.1*: To what extent have TA interventions been aligned with the corporate policies, strategic objectives, and priorities of the institutions providing them?	• Degree to which TA objectives explicitly refer to the institution's corporate- or sector-level strategies and thematic priorities. • Extent to which TA interventions are embedded in the institution's strategic frameworks at the corporate/sector level (e.g., corporate scorecards, sector/thematic strategies). • Evidence that TA interventions contribute to advancing the institution's overall strategic vision across its portfolio.	• Analysis of alignment between TA interventions objectives and the institution's policies and strategic objectives, priorities • Assessment of evidence of TA interventions inserted into the institution's strategic frameworks at the corporate/sector level • Thematic/Comparative analysis of types and size of TA interventions/operations across time and country contexts
	SQ1.2: To what extent have Technical Assistance interventions been tailored and responsive to the needs and priorities for different countries, sectors, and groups of beneficiaries?	• Extent to which the objectives and scope of TA interventions were clearly defined, realistic, and appropriately scaled to context. • Evidence of customization of TA design to reflect country-specific or sector-specific needs, capacities, and institutional contexts.	• Analysis of TA interventions with clearly defined, realistic, and appropriately scaled to context as reported • Analysis of TA interventions design and potential adjustments to reflect sector and/or country-specific contexts.
	SQ1.3: To what extent were Technical Assistance interventions adapted over time in response to evolving circumstances/contexts?	• Evidence of TA interventions adjusted over time in response to emerging challenges, risks, or opportunities.	• Analysis of the evolution of TA interventions over time and conditions as reported in the literature
	SQ1.4. How was the quality of design of the TA interventions?	• Evidence of intervention design of quality	• Analysis of quality as reported in literature
SQ2: To what extent are Technical Assistance interventions coherent at country level?	*SQ2.1:* How internally coherent were TA interventions with the broader country's support and programs and the other interventions by the institution undertaking them?	• Extent to which TA interventions share complementary objectives and approaches with the institution's country strategy and lending/non-lending operations. • Degree of operational synergies between TA and other interventions by the institution in the same country/sector (e.g., joint sequencing, cross-support). • Evidence that TA interventions were coordinated with the institution's country programs and operational planning tools.	• Assessment of TA interventions sharing complementary objectives, strategies, and methodologies with other interventions by the institution within the same country. • Analysis of degree of coordination or synergy of TA and other interventions
	SQ2.2: How were TA interventions consistent with the efforts of other development partners and involved collaboration with key stakeholders across country-level operations?	• Evidence of TA interventions complementing, reinforcing the activities of other development partners at country level. • Extent and diversity of participation by government, civil society, private sector, academia, and development partners in planning, implementing, and monitoring TA interventions.	• Analysis of complementarity and harmonization • Analysis of presence and functionality of coordination mechanisms

	SQ2.3: What effect did this collaboration have, and what roles did various stakeholders play in shaping and participating in Technical Assistance processes?	• Extent to which stakeholders' engagement influenced the design, implementation, or adaptation of TA interventions.	• Analysis of quality as reported in literature
SQ3: To what extent were Technical Assistance interventions successful in achieving the desired results?	*SQ3.1:* To what extent were Technical Assistance interventions able to achieve the expected results across different countries' contexts?	• Evidence of TA interventions that achieved their stated objectives across different countries and regions. • Degree of variation in results achieved by TA interventions in different country contexts (e.g., low-income vs. middle-income, fragile vs. stable states). • Evidence of how TA design and delivery were customized to address the specific needs, priorities, and institutional capacities of each country	• Analysis of interventions displaying results aligned to desired objectives across countries and regions • Comparison of results across interventions, country contexts (e.g., low-income vs. middle-income, fragile vs. stable states) • Analysis of how TA design and delivery were tailored to specific country needs, priorities and institutional capacities
	SQ3.2: How did Technical Assistance adapt to the specific needs of countries, including countries in transition?	• Extent to which TA interventions in fragile or conflict-affected states achieved results, adapted to constraints, or contributed to resilience-building.	• Analysis of results of TA interventions in fragile context
	SQ3.3: What factors enabled or hindered the effectiveness of Technical Assistance support? How were these challenges and barriers addressed or mitigated?	• Degree to which institutional capacity, governance structures, and political commitment supported or hindered TA design and implementation. • Extend to which economic conditions and financial resource availability influenced TA delivery and sustainability. • Evidence of adaptive strategies (e.g., design modifications, real-time learning, flexible delivery mechanisms) used to overcome challenges and enhance effectiveness.	• Assessment of factors that enabled or constrained the effectiveness of TA interventions • Analysis evidence of strategies and actions taken to address implementation challenges (e.g., absorptive capacity, funding, coordination,)
SQ4: Were Technical Assistance interventions able to achieve impacts in different national contexts?	*SQ4.1:* To what extent have TA interventions contributed to long-term changes in institutional performance, systems, norms and development outcomes in different national contexts?	• Evidence of TA interventions that achieved stated medium- and long-term outcomes across different national contexts, disaggregated by country typology (e.g., fragile vs. stable). • Degree to which TA contributed to sustained improvements in institutional processes, decision-making, governance quality, policies, regulatory frameworks, or sectoral norms. • Evidence of contextual barriers or enablers identified as influencing TA success or failure, documented in project evaluations or stakeholder interviews.	• Analysis of TA interventions achieving stated medium- and long-term outcomes across different national contexts • Analysis of contextual factors influencing the impact of TA interventions across countries/regional contexts
	SQ4.2: How catalytic have TA interventions been in delivering tangible benefits to end users, mobilizing finance, leveraging partnerships, and stimulating private sector participation?	• Extent to which TA interventions have triggered or supported downstream benefits, including tangible gains for end users, mobilization of additional financing, partnerships, and private sector engagement.	• Analysis of the catalytic effects of TA interventions
	SQ4.3: To what extent can these development outcomes be attributed to TA interventions?	• Evidence linking TA support to observable improvements in institutional performance, service delivery, or end-user outcomes	• Analysis of the contribution of TA to end-user outcomes
SQ5: Were the management processes for designing and delivering Technical	SQ5.1: How well was the quality at entry processes carried out to ensure the relevance and operational readiness of Technical Assistance interventions?	• Degree of alignment between TA intervention objectives and institutional/country strategic frameworks at entry • Evidence of TA interventions approved through a demand-driven or stakeholder-consultative process.	• Analysis of TA selection, design, and approval processes alignment to strategic priorities and beneficiary needs at entry • Assessment of TA interventions approval over a demand-driven or consultative process.

Assistance—such as quality at entry, implementation, monitoring and evaluation, and funding—adequately designed and executed to address the demand and ensure effective delivery?	SQ5.2: How efficiently were Technical Assistance interventions processes implemented in line with their intended objectives?	• Clarity and completeness of TA implementation plans, including defined objectives, roles, responsibilities, and timelines. • Alignment between implementation arrangements and country's institutional, sectoral, and operational context. • Timeliness of TA implementation and use of allocated human and technical resources during TA delivery.	• Assessment of the appropriateness of TA implementation plans and institutional arrangements • Assessment of TA implementation arrangements and context • Analysis of the effectiveness of human and technical resources and timelines management during the implementation of TA
	SQ5.3: How efficient were the monitoring and evaluation processes of Technical Assistance interventions in tracking progress and informing decision-making during TA implementation?	• Clarity and completeness of the monitoring and evaluation frameworks developed at the design stage • Evidence of monitoring reports produced and used during implementation.	• Assessment of the clarity and completeness of the monitoring and evaluation processes and evidence of reporting on TA interventions
	SQ5.4: How well were the funding processes of Technical Assistance interventions executed or managed to support timely and responsive delivery?	• Evidence of TA interventions with pre-defined, approved, and timely funding arrangements at design stage. • Evidence of alignment between allocated funding and planned TA activities.	• Analysis of the financial resources arrangements to support TA interventions
SQ6: To what extent were the outcomes of Technical Assistance interventions sustainable in the medium and long term, and ensured strong ownership of the operations by the beneficiaries?	SQ6.1: To what extent were the outcomes of Technical Assistance interventions sustainable in the medium and long term?	• Evidence of lasting benefits and continued application or institutionalization of TA-supported practices, processes, or capacities beyond the intervention period.	• Analysis of the potential institutionalization of TA-supported activities or reforms after project completion
	SQ6.2: To what extent did Technical Assistance interventions ensure strong ownership of the operations by the beneficiaries?	• Evidence of beneficiary engagement and leadership in planning, implementation, and post-intervention activities. • Extent of capacity development outcomes, such as improved institutional skills, systems, or structures attributed to the TA. • Evidence of interventions that have successfully addressed sustainability risk factors in diverse contexts	• Analysis of TA interventions promoting local ownership and capacity among beneficiaries to maintain and scale results • Analysis of context-specific risk factors affecting the sustainability of interventions
SQ7: What are some of the emerging good practices and lessons that could strengthen the effectiveness of future Technical Assistance interventions?	*SQ7.1*: What examples of good practices from previous interventions could be applied to strengthen the effectiveness of future Technical Assistance interventions?	• Examples good practices in different TA intervention areas across completed TA interventions that have contributed to improved outcomes	• Thematic analysis of lessons and good practices
	SQ7.2: What lessons can guide the design and implementation of more effective Technical Assistance interventions?	• Lessons learned on enabling and hindering factors of successful TA interventions across contexts, types of interventions, collaborations	• Analysis of TA intervention implementation lessons

Annex 2: Proposed Outline

1. INTRODUCTION

1.1. Context and Background
1.2. Evaluation Objectives, Scope, Audience

2. METHODOLOGY

2.1. Evaluation Questions
2.2. Methodological Approach
2.3. Source of Evidence
2.4. Limitations

3. FINDINGS

3.1. Relevance
- Relevance of project objectives
- Relevance of design

3.2. Coherence
- Internal Coherence
- External coherence

3.3. Development Results
- Outputs
- Outcomes
- Impact
- Enabling and Hindering factors

3.4. Sustainability
- Financial Sustainability
- Institutional Sustainability
- Environmental and Social Sustainability
- Sustainability of Partnerships
- Ownership

3.5. Efficiency
- Quality at entry
- Implementation
- Monitoring &Evaluation
- Resource Use efficiency
- Timeliness

4. CONCLUSIONS, LESSONS, AND GOOD PRACTICES

4.1. Conclusion
4.2. Lessons
4.3. Good Practices

5. ANNEXES

6. REFRENCES

Annex 3: List of Documents

#	Type of Docs	Author	Year	Title	Institution name	Type of institutions	Area Coverage
1	Evaluation Reports	David Nyheim	2014	Evaluation of the DFID-AfDB Technical Cooperation Agreement (TCA)	DFID	Billateral Development Agency	Africa
2	Evaluation Reports	EBRD	2024	Moving wheels of change: An evaluation of the EBRD's policy dialogue performance and results	EBRD	Other International Financial Institutions	Global Analysis
3	Evaluation Reports	Danida	2020	Recent Trends and Issues in Use of Personnel and Partnering for Development: Updated synthesis of Evaluations on Technical Assistance Personnel	DANIDA	Billateral Development Agency	Global Analysis
4	Evaluation Reports	Bart DE BRUYNE, Gerda HEYDE	2019	Rapport d'évaluation des résultats de l'assistance technique auprès des organisations bénéficiaires du fonds FEFISOL	SIDI	Other Development Agencies/Academic/Research Institutions/Think Tank	Africa
5	Evaluation Reports	World Bank Group	2014	Data for Development: An Evaluation of World Bank Support for Data and Statistical Capacity	World Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Global Analysis
6	Evaluation Reports	Jones et al.	2023	Evaluation of Guarantee Instrument and Technical Assistance Offered to Enat Bank to Increase Access to Capital For Women-Owned/Managed SMEs in Ethiopia	SIDA	Billateral Development Agency	Africa
7	Evaluation Reports	Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)	2018	Do Lines of Credit Attain their Development Objectives? – An Evaluation Synthesis 2010–2017	African Development Bank	African Development Bank	Africa
8	Evaluation Reports	Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)	2016	Ethiopia: Evaluation of the Bank's Country Strategy and Program 2004–2013	African Development Bank	African Development Bank	Africa
9	Evaluation Reports	Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)	2016	Evaluation of the Bank's Country Strategy and Program in Morocco (2004–2014)	African Development Bank	African Development Bank	Africa
10	Evaluation Reports	Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)	2023	Evaluation of the AfDB's Technology for African Agriculture Transformation (TAAT) Program Phase I	African Development Bank	African Development Bank	Africa
11	Evaluation Reports	Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)	2020	Evaluation of the AfDB's Support to the Water Sector (2005–2016)	African Development Bank	African Development Bank	Africa
12	Evaluation Reports	Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)	2020	Evaluation of the AfDB's Role in Increasing Access to Finance in Africa: Cluster Evaluation Report	African Development Bank	African Development Bank	Africa
13	Evaluation Reports	European Investment Bank	2021	Evaluation of the Eastern Partnership Technical Assistance Trust Fund (2010–2019)	European Investment Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Eastern Europe

14	Evaluation Reports	Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)	2019	Evaluation of the Middle-Income Countries Technical Assistance Fund (MIC-TAF) (2002–2018)	African Development Bank	African Development Bank	Africa
15	Evaluation Reports	Office of Internal Oversight Services – Inspection and Evaluation Division (OIOS–IED)	2024	Evaluation of the Regular Programme of Technical Cooperation (RPTC)	Office of Internal Oversight Services – Inspection and Evaluation Division (OIOS–IED)	Other Multilateral Institutions	Global Analysis
16	Evaluation Reports	Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)	2023	Evaluation Synthesis on Public Financial Management – Summary Report	African Development Bank	African Development Bank	Africa
17	Evaluation Reports	European Investment Bank	2014	Ex-post Evaluation of EIB Technical Assistance Outside the EU, 2003–2013	European Investment Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Global Analysis
18	Evaluation Reports	United Nations development Program(UNDP)	2021	Final Evaluation Report: Technical Assistance for Micro-Enterprise Development Programme for Poverty Alleviation at Sub-National Level (MEDPA-TA)	United Nations development Program (UNDP)	Other Multilateral Institutions	Global Analysis
19	Evaluation Reports	Ecorys & CEPS, for the European Commission – DG ECFIN	2020	Final Report for the Evaluation of the application of the 2014–2020 External Lending Mandate	European Commission	Other Multilateral Institutions	Global Analysis
20	Evaluation Reports	Shamba Pride	2024	Mid-Term Evaluation of the Impact-Linked Fund for Eastern & Southern Africa and the Impact-Linked Fund for Education	Swiss Agency for Development and Cooperation – SDC	Billateral Development Agency	Africa
21	Research Documents	Nicolás Arturo Torres Franco, Eleonora Dávalos, Leonardo Fabio Morales	2021	Heterogeneous Effects of Agricultural Technical Assistance in Colombia	Journal of Agricultural and Applied Economics	Other Development Agencies/Academic/Research Institutions/Think Tank	LAC
22	Evaluation Reports	ICF International	2014	Independent Evaluation of the Climate Investment Funds	World Bank, AfDB, ADB, EBRD, IDB	Other International Financial Institutions	Global Analysis
23	Research Documents	Eduardo Nakasone, Maria Porter, Mywish K. Maredia, Andrew Jones, David Tschirley	2024	A Mixed Methods Assessment of Technical and Financial Assistance to Small- and Medium-Sized Enterprises in Kenya's Food Sector	Applied Economic Perspectives and Policy	Other Development Agencies/Academic/Research Institutions/Think Tank	Africa
24	Evaluation Reports	IFAD	2016	Non-lending Activities in the Context of South-South Cooperation	International Fund for Agricultural Development	Other International Financial Institutions	Global Analysis
25	Evaluation Reports	Bixal, for the U.S. Department of the Treasury, OTA	2024	Government Debt and Infrastructure Project in Kenya – Project Evaluation Report	U.S. Treasury's Office of Technical Assistance (OTA)	Billateral Development Agency	Africa
26	Evaluation Reports	World Bank Group	2016	Program-for-Results: An Early-Stage Assessment of the Process and Effects of a New Lending Instrument	World Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Global Analysis
27	Evaluation Reports	World Bank Group	2016	Reliable and Affordable Off-Grid Electricity Services for the Poor: Lessons from World Bank Group Experience	World Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Global Analysis

28	Evaluation Reports	AsDB	2021	Rapid Response Support for Strategic Reforms – Technical Assistance Completion Report (TA 9445-AZE)	Asian Development Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Asia
29	Evaluation Reports	OIT	2020	Independent Review of the ILO/Flanders Technical Cooperation Fund	International Labour Organization	Other Multilateral Institutions	Global Analysis
30	Evaluation Reports	Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)	2021	Rwanda: Evaluation of the AfDB Country Strategy and Program (2012–2021)	African Development Bank	African Development Bank	Africa
31	Evaluation Reports	Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)	2021	Synthesis Report on the Validation of 2014–2019 Expanded Supervision Reports	African Development Bank	African Development Bank	Africa
32	Evaluation Reports	Annalisa Prizzon, Michael Josten, Hayk Gyuzalyan	2022	Country perspectives on multilateral development banks: a survey analysis	ODI	Other Development Agencies/Academic/Research Institutions/Think Tank	Global Analysis
33	Research Documents	Qiang Wang, Jiaqi Guo, Rongrong Li, Alexey Mikhaylov, Nikita Moiseev	2023	Does technical assistance alleviate energy poverty in sub-Saharan African countries? A new perspective on spatial spillover effects of technical assistance	Energy Strategy Reviews	Other Development Agencies/Academic/Research Institutions/Think Tank	Africa
34	Other study reports	Internationale Projekt Consult GmbH (IPC)	2024	Technical Assistance and Capacity Building for Public Development Banks (PDBs): Mapping and Qualitative Benchmarking	AFD	Bilateral Development Agency	Global Analysis
35	Research Documents	Pamela White	2020	The Go-Betweens – The Role of 'Technical Assistance' in International Development Cooperation	University of Helsinki	Other Development Agencies/Academic/Research Institutions/Think Tank	Global Analysis
36	Evaluation Reports	World Bank	2014	Tunisia Country Program Evaluation, FY2005–13 – Volume I: Main Report	World Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Africa
37	Other study reports	GIZ	2016	Women's Economic Empowerment in Technical Assistance Programmes: Examples of Good Practice in Private Sector Development	GIZ	Bilateral Development Agency	Global Analysis
38	Evaluation Reports	AFRITAC South	2023	External Mid-Term Evaluation of the Regional Technical assistance Center for Southern Africa: AFRITAC South	IMF	Other International Financial Institutions	Africa
39	Evaluation Reports	AsDB	2014	Role of Technical Assistance in ADB Operations	Asian Development Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Asia
40	Evaluation Reports	AsDB	2024	ADB Technical Assistance Operations, 2014–2023	Asian Development Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Asia
41	Evaluation Reports	ADE for the European Commission – DG INTPA	2023	Evaluation of EU Collect More Spend Better	European Commission	Other Multilateral Institutions	Global Analysis
42	Evaluation Reports	Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations	2020	Evaluation of the FAO Technical Cooperation Programme	FAO	Other Multilateral Institutions	Global Analysis
43	Evaluation Reports	World Bank	2019	Grow with the Flow: An Independent Evaluation of World Bank Group Support to Facilitating Trade 2006–17	World Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Global Analysis

44	Evaluation Reports	Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)	2018	Independent Evaluation of the Quality at Entry of African Development Bank Group Operations	African Development Bank	African Development Bank	Africa
45	Evaluation Reports	Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)	2023	Mid-term Evaluation of the African Development Bank's Jobs for Youth in Africa Strategy 2016–2025	African Development Bank	African Development Bank	Africa
46	Evaluation Reports	World Bank Group	2014	The Big Business of Small Enterprises: Evaluation of the World Bank Group Experience with Targeted Support to SMEs 2006–12	World Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Global Analysis
47	Evaluation Reports	Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)	2021	Evaluation of the Partnerships at the African Development Bank Group 2008–2019	African Development Bank	African Development Bank	Africa
48	Other study reports	IBON International	2016	The Reality of Aid Technical cooperation as an aid modality: Demand-led or donor-driven?	IBON International	Other Development Agencies/Academic/Research Institutions/Think Tank	Global Analysis
49	Evaluation Reports	USDS	2023	Evaluation of Technical Assistance Implemented in Caribbean	US Department of State	Bilateral Development Agency	LAC
50	Evaluation Reports	DFAT	2018	Evaluation of the Multilateral Development Bank – Infrastructure Assistance Program	AusAID/DFAT	Bilateral Development Agency	Asia
51	Evaluation Reports	CDB	2020	Evaluation Report Technical Assistance by The Caribbean Development Bank – (2010-2018) Volume 1 and 2	Caribbean Development Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	LAC
52	Evaluation Reports	Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Center	2015	Independent External Mid-Term Evaluation Caribbean Regional Technical Assistance Center	IMF	Other International Financial Institutions	LAC
53	Evaluation Reports	World Bank	2024	Evaluation of the PHRD Technical Assistance Program	World Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Asia
54	Evaluation Reports	AsDB	2022	Lessons from the Validation of Technical Assistance Completion Reports, July 2021–June 2022	Asian Development Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Asia
55	Other study reports	IMF-World Bank	2023	IMF and World Bank Approach to Cross-Border Payments Technical Assistance	IMF-World Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Global Analysis
56	Other study reports	Martin Stadelmann, Angela Falconer	2015	The Role of Technical Assistance in Mobilizing Climate Finance – Insights From GIZ Programs	GIZ	Bilateral Development Agency	Global Analysis
57	Other study reports	World Bank	2018	Maximizing the Impact of the World Bank Group in Fragile and Conflict-Affected Situations	World Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Global Analysis
58	Other study reports	AsDB	2023	Kyrgyz Republic: Enhancing Knowledge and Capacity for Project Management	Asian Development Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Asia
59	Other study reports	Proparco	2021	Private Sector and Development n°36 Technical assistance opening up new horizons	AFB	Bilateral Development Agency	Global Analysis

60	Evaluation Reports	ILO	2023	Final Internal Evaluation of the Project EU-ILO Technical Assistance Facility -Innovation in Youth Employment Policy Through the Youth Guarantee - PHASE I	ILO	Other Multilateral Institutions	Eastern Europe
61	Research Documents	Karina Shyrokykh	2022	European Development Co-operation via Technical Assistance: An Outside-in Perspective	Journal of Common Market Studies	Other Development Agencies/Academic/Research Institutions/Think Tank	Eastern Europe
62	Evaluation Reports	METAC	2021	Phase IV Independent Mid-Term Evaluation: Middle East Regional Technical Assistance Center (METAC). IMF	IMF	Other International Financial Institutions	Eastern Europe
63	Evaluation Reports	EIB	2023	Evaluation of EIB support for the water sector outside the European Union: From 2010 to 2021	European Investment Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Global Analysis
64	Evaluation Reports	Nordic Consulting Group	2023	Impact Evaluation of EBRD's Women in Business Western Balkans and Eastern Partnership countries 2014–2021	SIDA	Bilateral Development Agency	Eastern Europe
65	Evaluation Reports	SARTTAC	2022	External Mid-Term Evaluation of the Regional Technical Assistance Center for South Asia: SARTTAC- Phase I (May 2017 – April 2022) (Volume I)	IMF	Other International Financial Institutions	Asia
66	Evaluation Reports	ILO	2022	High-level independent evaluation of the ILO's Decent Work Country Programme in Central Asia, 2018-22	ILO	Other Multilateral Institutions	Asia
67	Evaluation Reports	Technopolis Group & Nathan Associates London.	2016	Final Evaluation of the Compete Caribbean Program	IADB, UKaid, Canada, CDB	Other International Financial Institutions	LAC
68	Evaluation Reports	IEG	2024	The World Bank Group in Ecuador Country Program Evaluation, Fiscal Years 2008–22.	World Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	LAC
69	Evaluation Reports	AFRITAC South	2015	Independent Mid-Term Evaluation of AFRITAC South Phase I June 2011 to April 2014	IMF	Other International Financial Institutions	Africa
70	Evaluation Reports	AsDB	2017	ADB Support for Social Protection: Responding to Shocks and Risks	Asian Development Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Asia
71	Research Documents	Ralph Chami, Elorm Darkey and Oral H. Williams	2021	A Time to Build: Does Technical Assistance Matter for Revenue Mobilization?	IMF	Other International Financial Institutions	Global Analysis
72	Evaluation Reports	EBRD	2023	Country Evaluation: Moving the needle? The EBRD in Uzbekistan (2017-22)	EBRD	Other International Financial Institutions	Asia
73	Evaluation Reports	IEG	2022	The World Bank Group in Bangladesh, Fiscal Years 2011–20 Country Program Evaluation	World Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Asia
74	Evaluation Reports	IFAD	2020	Federal Democratic Republic of Nepal: Country Strategy and Programme Evaluation	IFAD	Other International Financial Institutions	Asia
75	Evaluation Reports	AsDB	2019	Country Assistance Program Evaluation Indonesia, 2005–2018	Asian Development Bank	Other International Financial Institutions	Asia

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Annex 5 : Preliminary Communication and Dissemination Plan

Knowledge products	Audience	Communication Channels	Communication products	Information needs/interests
Approach paper	IDEV Management Reference Group members and Peer reviewers RDSA, RDVP and ECGF(Focal complex) RDTS SNDR SNSP FIRM Other Operations departments: AHVP, FIVP, PEVP, PIVP KMC Committee Bank Regional & Country offices. RMC authorities International Financial Institutions[20] Regional Development Banks[21] Regional Economic Communities[22] General audience	*Email* *ERG meetings* *Webpage on IDEV Website*	Approach paper document (PDF) Initial web text on the evaluation synthesis	Objectives, scope, questions, methodology, team, and timeline for the technical assistance evaluation synthesis
Draft Synthesis report	IDEV Management Reference Group members and both external and internal peer reviewers	*Email* *Reference groups meeting on emerging findings and lessons.*	Draft synthesis report Presentation	Preliminary findings, factors enabling and hampering success, and the identification of good practices and lessons
Final Synthesis report	AfDB Board / CODE AfDB Senior Management Reference Group and Peer reviewers RDSA, RDVP, ECVP and SNSP AHVP, FIVP, PEVP, PIVP Other IFIs Multilateral and Bilateral agencies,	*Email* *Webpage on IDEV Website* *IDEV social media* *Printed copy of the electronic version*	Laid out synthesis report and executive summary. Final web text on the evaluation synthesis Tweets	Learning to improve Technical assistance in Bank's operations Enhance working approaches and implementation of innovative approaches and strategies in technical assistance. Informing further research

[20] International Monetary Fund, World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
[21] Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), Banque Ouest Africaine de Développement (BOAD), ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID)
[22] ECOWAS, ECCAS, AU, EAC, SADC

	Development agencies[23] Regional NGOs & CSOs, private sector[24] Research Institutions/Academia/Think Tanks[25] Evaluation Community[26] General audience	*Capitalization Workshop*		
Brief or Lessons note that includes key results from the synthesis	IDEV Management Reference Group members and Peer reviewers RDVP (Focal complex) ECGF RDTS SNDR SNSP FIRM AHVP, FIVP, PEVP, PIVP KMC committee Other IFIs Other Operations departments Bank Regional & Country offices. RMC authorities Multilateral and bilateral agencies Development Banks[27]Regional Development Banks[28] Regional Economic Communities[29] Academia, research institutes, think tanks. General audience	*Coordination meetings* *Save the date.* *Email* *Webpage on IDEV Website* *IDEV social media* *Printed copy of the electronic version*	Brief with infographics in English and French	What technical assistance entails within the context of AfDB and its importance in shaping development outcomes Highlighting the most significant findings from the evaluation synthesis, including successes, challenges, and lessons in technical assistance practices. Brief mentions specific instances where technical assistance has led to notable impacts or outcomes. Information on how other institutions and how different stakeholders, including governments, private sectors, and civil society, have been involved in technical assistances.
Key Takeaways Note that presents the main findings,	**IDEV Management** **CODE members** **User départements**	***PDF copy of the electronic version***	**Synthesis report** **Concept note**	**Discuss evaluative evidence on technical assistance (understand the effectiveness of AfDB's technical**

[23] UNICEF, UNDP, UN Women, USAID
[24] Eg: African Foundation for Development (AFFORD)
[25] E.g. African Center for Economic Transformation (ACET), African Capacity Building Foundation (ACBF) , African Economic Research Consortium (AERC), Economic Policy Research Centre (EPRC) Ethiopian Policy Studies Institute (PSI), Kenya Institute for Public Policy Research and Analysis (KIPPRA)
[26] AfrEA, CLEAR AA/FA, GEI. IOCE, ACBF, Twende Mbele, Evaluation Cooperation Group, OECD/ DAC EvalNet
[27] World Bank, Asian Development Bank, Inter-American Development Bank, European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
[28] Development Bank of Southern Africa (DBSA), Banque Ouest Africaine de Développement (BOAD), ECOWAS Bank for Investment and Development (EBID)
[29] ECOWAS, ECCAS, AU, EAC, SADC

lessons, and actions/way forward proposed by capitalization workshop from participants	**Bank's staff**		**PowerPoint presentation** **Key takeaway note**	**assistance practices and guide future efforts in this area) and present lessons for future consideration.** **Tap into the combined knowledge and experience of user departments and Bank staff regarding key issues raised.** **Identify key actions and tools for the Bank going forward to enhance its Technical Assistance intervention.**