Evaluation Week 2020
Semaine de l’évaluation 2020

2 to 4 December 2020
Virtually from Abidjan,
Côte d’Ivoire

From Learning to Transformational
Change in Africa:
Accelerating Africa’s delivery of the
Sustainable Development Goals in the
Decade of Action

Event description and
program overview

October 2020

Twitter:
#AfDBEvalWeek
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1. EVENT DESCRIPTION

From Learning to Transformational Change in Africa: Accelerating Africa’s delivery of the Sustainable Development Goals in the Decade of Action.

Transformational change is the process through which development results are achieved and sustained over time by institutionalizing policies, programs and projects within a country's strategies, development plans and budgets. This edition of the AfDB Evaluation Week will focus on how effective learning from evaluation is linked to the delivery of sustainable development results.

1.1. Background

With 10 years left to go, this year the UN kickstarted an ambitious global effort dubbed the ‘Decade of Action to deliver the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) by 2030’. The UN launched this effort to speed up the delivery of the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. This is in tandem with the AU’s Agenda 2063 and the African Development Bank Group (AfDB)’s High 5 priorities. The AfDB, under its 15th African Development Fund, has committed to prioritize bold and transformative projects with a view to achieving ambitious development results in its High 5 priorities - Light Up and Power Africa; Feed Africa; Integrate Africa; Industrialize Africa; and Improve the quality of life for Africans.

According to the 2020 Global Sustainable Development Report, progress had been made in many areas of the 2030 Agenda, however, it was unlikely that the Agenda’s goals and targets would be met by the year 2030. This is currently compounded by the COVID-19 pandemic, which compelled most countries and development organizations to quickly modify their annual development plans and reallocate resources to carry out programs that respond to the crisis and its effects. The 2020 Global Sustainable Development Report called for improved collection and dissemination of reliable, accessible, disaggregated and timely data, and urged for better evidence-based policymaking to support progress on the SDGs. Gaps in timely data translate into poor planning and, consequently, poor decision-making and weak development results. Hence, the vital role of effective learning from evaluation for transformational change to take place cannot be overstated. More so, learning from evaluations of previous crisis response programs would strengthen the global response to COVID-19 and inform the adaptation of programs to changes due to the pandemic.

1.2. Rationale

Many national governments and development bodies in Africa have a monitoring, evaluation and learning function in their setup. A core part of the evidence base for decision making and development programming is expected to be derived from monitoring and evaluation. There have been efforts by some African governments to mainstream monitoring and evaluation for the national development priorities which are anchored on the SDGs. However, they place more emphasis on monitoring and less on evaluating the interventions funded by domestic resources. For development organizations that conduct evaluations, the evaluations’ findings at times do not make their way into the process of programming for the future - either influencing decision making, or fixing programs that are already under way. In the cases where evaluative evidence is considered, it is mainly for accountability purposes and not enough attention is given to learning.

There is an assumption that the availability of data and evidence, from research and evaluation, automatically leads to effective learning. But this is not usually the case. It is crucial for African governments and development bodies to appreciate the link between learning and program/development effectiveness and put in place mechanisms that will ensure that “effective learning” occurs from the evaluations that are conducted. In addition, the evaluations that are carried out should be tailored to evoke learning. That is, the kind of learning that will assist countries to bring about the transformational change that could speed up the delivery of the SDGs by 2030.
1.3. Objective of the Evaluation Week 2020

AfDB Development Evaluation Week is a biennial event whose aim is to provide a platform for sharing of knowledge, experiences and good practices on development and evaluation in Africa. The focus of this edition of the Evaluation Week is on how effective learning from evaluation is linked to the delivery of sustainable development results/outcomes, against the backdrop of the global COVID-19 pandemic.

The main objective is to provide a forum for discourse about the role of development evaluation in supporting African countries to speed up the delivery of the SDGs. More precisely, about how learning from evaluations can be systematized to enhance the design and implementation of development programs, and thereby pave the way for the attainment of sustainable development outcomes.

Effective learning will be tackled from the perspective of how organizations learn and how the move from learning to action occurs. Evaluations that have made a difference will be explored to get insights into how the learning from evaluations is extended to shape organizational, national and regional policies, strategies, development plans and budgets and lead to transformational change.

Discussions and presentations will focus on the following areas:

- What will it take to quickly and effectively learn from evaluation during and after the COVID-19 crisis?
- Of what value is an evidence and learning culture for sustainable development in Africa?
- Why and how should African countries use data and information from evaluation to enhance achievement of the sustainable development outcomes?
- What does effective learning entail?
- Lessons from evaluations that led to action, evaluations that made a difference.
- Prospects for pooling learning from evaluations carried out in Africa to inform decision-making and programming for the delivery of SDGs.

1.4. Expected Outputs

- Increased resolve by the evaluation offices of African governments and development bodies based in Africa to support learning from evaluations by governments and other development actors.
- Enhanced appreciation of what it takes to get from evaluation to learning, from learning to action, and then from action to transformational change.
- Increased recognition of learning from evaluation, as a key development resource alongside funding, for attainment of development results.
- Increased awareness of the role of evaluation in Africa for enhancing the delivery of the SDGs by 2030.

1.5. Target Audience

The AfDB’s management and operational staff; African government technical officers, policy- and decision-makers; government and non-government SDG officers in Africa and beyond; development partners; research and academic institutions; evaluation institutions and associations; civil society; the private sector; and the media.

1.6. Organization and Structure

The AfDB Evaluation Week 2020 will be delivered online, through a series of 6 two-hour webinars that will feature presentations and panel discussions and a capacity development clinic.
## 2. PROGRAM FOR SERIES OF WEBINARS, 2 TO 4 DECEMBER 2020

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Title and period</th>
<th>Wednesday 2 Dec.</th>
<th>Thursday 3 Dec.</th>
<th>Friday 4 Dec.</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Session Title</strong></td>
<td>IDEV Operations Clinic</td>
<td>How do Organizations Learn?</td>
<td>Evaluations that made a difference</td>
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| **9:30 – 11.30 GMT** | Challenges regarding quality at entry of projects at the AfDB  
- Presentation  
- Q&A Session  
Quality assurance assistance available at design stage of operations  
- Presentations  
Q&A | Opening (9:00 am)  
- Introductory and welcome remarks  
- Key Note Address: The essence of learning by governments and development organizations in Africa to fast-track delivery of the SDGs in the light of COVID-19  
How organizations can become effective and quick learners to achieve better development outcomes:  
- Discussion  
- Q&A | Showcasing evaluations that made a difference.  
- Presentations  
- Reflection on factors and strategies that ensure that evaluations become game-changers.  
- Panel Discussion  
- Q&A |
| **11:30 - 14:00 GMT** | **BREAK** | 40 years of Evaluation at the AfDB |
| **Session Title** | SDG Knowledge Event | From Learning to Action |
| **14:00 - 16:00 GMT** | Learning from Measuring SDG Progress in Africa  
- Presentation – Country Case  
- Discussants  
- Q&A  
Opportunities and challenges in tracking SDGs in Africa  
- Demonstration of the AfDB online Portal  
- Reflection on the problems and viable solutions for data collection now heightened by COVID-19  
- Q&A | Keynote: “Evaluation: What’s in it for me? A user’s perspective”  
The evaluation utility journey  
- Panel Discussion  
- Q&A | Conversation on how IDEV has evolved over time  
Presentation of Key Messages coming out of the Evaluation Week  
Closing Remarks |

END OF SESSIONS