Evaluation of the AfDB’s Support to the Water Sector (2005-2016)
Beyond Infrastructure Development: Toward Service Delivery and Behavioral Change
Executive Summary

January 2020
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Executive Summary

Background

This report summarizes the evidence, findings and lessons learned from an independent evaluation of support provided by the African Development Bank Group (AfDB, or “the Bank”) to the water sector for the period 2005-2016. In this evaluation, the water sector consists of water supply and sanitation (WSS) in both rural and urban contexts, and agricultural water management (AWM). Thus, other water-related activities (water for electricity, transport, industry, tourism, etc.) are excluded. The evaluation covers a period of 12 years, from 2005 to 2016.

This evaluation aims to inform the Bank’s strategies and operational approach to water sector assistance by taking stock of the results of the Bank’s assistance and drawing lessons for future work. It is intended to help the Bank’s Management to: (i) account for the development results of the Bank’s investment in the water sector, by determining the extent to which the Bank has contributed to the development of the water sector in Regional Member Countries (RMCs); and (ii) learn from its operational experience by identifying lessons on how the Bank can contribute most effectively to improving the performance of the water sector in RMCs.

Scope of the Evaluation

The report focuses on two broad areas including (i) results achieved; and (ii) how the Bank manages performance and the factors that influence performance.

Methodology

The evaluation used a Theory of Change (ToC) approach, combined with the standard OECD-DAC evaluation criteria: relevance, effectiveness and efficiency of the Bank’s assistance to the water sector, and the sustainability of the benefits. In the absence of an explicit ToC in the Bank’s policy, strategy and appraisal reports guiding many of the operations reviewed in the evaluation, the evaluation team reconstructed a WSS and AWM ToC. The four OECD-DAC evaluation criteria provide the basis for the evaluation questions.

The evaluation used multiple sources of evidence including: (i) policy and literature review; (ii) portfolio review; (iii) 10 country case studies; and (iv) 41 project evaluation reports (PERs) comprising 16 rural WSS, 15 urban WSS and 9 AWM projects, and a Water Sector Adjustment program. All projects (except for the Morocco Water Sector Adjustment Loan) were clustered into three stand-alone thematic evaluations: (i) Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (RWSS); (ii) Urban Water Supply and Sanitation (UWSS); and (iii) Agricultural Water Management (AWM). The selected country case studies comprise Cameroon, Kenya, Mali, Morocco, Mozambique, Nigeria, Rwanda, Senegal, Uganda and Zambia. In addition to the stakeholder meetings conducted during the project site visits, almost 200 individuals were interviewed through the country case studies. Software for analysis of qualitative data (Atlas.ti) and matrix tables were used in synthesizing the evidence. Further information about the methodology and the rating scale applied can be found in Annexes 2, 3 and 5.

The main limitations faced by the evaluation include: (i) the challenge of capturing the large inventory of contexts with the aim of explaining how the Bank’s interventions performed; and (ii) limited (clusters’ size) and inadequate program/project performance data (in terms of quantity and quality) especially at outcome level, which may have an impact on the comprehensiveness of judgements made. This latter limitation was addressed through the triangulation of evidence from multiple sources and by using mixed methods.
Achievement of the Bank’s Objectives

The Bank’s 2005-2016 water sector interventions are relevant. They delivered substantial outputs, although the output levels fell below what was anticipated for the sample of 41 PERs. The achievement of outcomes is however moderate, leading to overall effectiveness being rated as unsatisfactory. The results achieved are unlikely to be sustained. Multiple factors, both internal and external, account for this results performance.

Relevance

The relevance of the Bank’s support to the water sector was examined at three levels: strategic objectives, the objectives of projects, and the design of projects. The objectives of the Bank’s water sector strategic documents (policies, strategies and initiatives) and water interventions were found to be aligned to its corporate policies and strategies, the priorities of RMCs, and international goals.

The objectives of projects supported by the Bank were aligned with beneficiary needs. However, project design often did not adequately reflect those needs. Thus, despite the Bank-supported water interventions being based on a demand-driven approach with clear objectives, most of their designs were inadequate. Only 44 percent of the sample of 41 projects were rated as satisfactory or higher in terms of the relevance of design (47% for UWSS, 38% for RWSS and 44% for AWM). This may be due to the observation that feasibility studies that normally provide the basis for the Bank’s water projects were sometimes not updated, rushed or skipped important steps, thus contributing to design quality deficiencies. Nonetheless, some innovations in designing Bank projects were identified in the case of Zimbabwe (implementation arrangement) and Rwanda (introduction of public-private partnership, or PPP).

In responding to the RMCs’ Water Sanitation and Hygiene Promotion (WASH) needs, the Bank’s support tended to focus more on water supply, and less on sanitation. This could be due to tight government budget constraints relative to the huge public funding gap. It could also be attributed to the way the demand-driven approach was operationalized, and to the shortcomings of approaches used for sanitation in RMCs. In particular, in line with national policies, support for rural sanitation focused mainly on public toilets and promotional activities and campaigns, with the construction of household latrines being the responsibility of households. This approach led to the construction of a limited number of household latrines compared with the beneficiaries’ needs. This, therefore, affected the achievement of intermediate outcomes, especially in reflecting the fundamental importance of sanitation in addressing the issue of waterborne diseases, a key target of the Bank’s support for the water sector. In addition, although examples of Bank projects specifically targeting private sector development were cited in Morocco, Mali and Nigeria, the support provided to the private sector was insufficient, especially in the area of project design. The policy and literature review revealed that, within the water sector, helping to develop and supporting small and medium-sized enterprises (SMEs) enhances local entrepreneurship for, among others, well and latrine building, repair services, and supply of spare parts. In fact, while the private sector has taken on an increasingly important role in water infrastructure operation and maintenance, more capacity needs to be built. Finally, project design was also found to be weak in terms of beneficiary engagement and risk assessment.

Overall, the relevance of the Bank’s support to the water sector was rated satisfactory.

Effectiveness

The effectiveness of the Bank’s support to the water sector (WSS and AWM) was assessed along three dimensions: achievement of high-level objectives, achievement of outputs, and achievement of outcomes.
Furthermore, in the areas of UWSS and RWSS, a distinction was made between the water and the sanitation components. The assessment of achievement of outcomes was made by investigating change factors related to outcomes. For WSS interventions, the outcomes include: (i) increased access to and use of improved water sources; (ii) improved water services delivery; (iii) increased access to improved sanitation services; and (iv) increased adoption of key hygiene behaviors/practices. Regarding AWM interventions, the outcomes include: (i) increased access to water for irrigation; (ii) improved AWM services delivery; (iii) increased agricultural production and productivity; and (iv) increased income generation for project beneficiaries.

**What worked well**

The Bank’s UWSS and RWSS support was deemed satisfactory at the output level for the construction of water infrastructure, capacity development and awareness promotion.

- UWSS projects delivered a significant number of water supply infrastructure outputs. All the projects, except for Kenya and Senegal, achieved more than 75% of their expected physical infrastructure outputs. The Bank also provided institutional strengthening, although with limited capacity building activities, for improved service delivery, and better operations and maintenance.

- RWSS projects also delivered the essential physical infrastructure for improving access to reliable and affordable water supply in rural areas.

- The RWSS projects also produced substantial outputs in terms of capacity development and awareness. These exceeded their targets (by 12% on average) in the number of people trained on the management of WSS systems and facilities (around 11,600) and masons (more than 3,000).

- Increased access to improved water sources helped to reduce the drudgery of fetching water in rural areas.

- Regarding access to safe drinking water, the RWSS project cluster provided an estimated coverage of 14 million people (83%) out of a target population of 17 million. Around nine of the 15 projects (60%) in the RWSS cluster met or exceeded their expected beneficiaries. In addition, 80% of the cluster projects met at least 75% of expected beneficiaries.

- In terms of the drudgery of water transportation, all 16 RWSS projects, except Zimbabwe, reduced the time required for fetching water.

**What did not work well**

The contribution of the Bank’s WSS support was unsatisfactory at the output level for both urban and rural sanitation components.

- Urban WSS projects delivered low levels of sanitation outputs (including wastewater treatment plants, sewerage networks, sewer pumping stations, public toilets, households’
latrines and hand-washing facilities, etc.) compared with targets. Only 42% (five out of 12 projects) of the UWSS cluster projects achieved more than 75% of the expected sanitation physical outputs.

The physical outputs of RWSS projects’ sanitation components (including public toilets and households’ latrines) were of moderate quantity. Around 64% (nine out of 14 projects) of the RWSS cluster projects achieved more than 75% of the expected sanitation facilities.

The Bank’s RWSS interventions did not significantly increase the number of household latrines for the rural population. The number of household latrines effectively constructed through the RWSS cluster projects was relatively low (90,910 latrines) compared with the real needs and below the target (70% achievement).

The limited number of household latrines could partly be attributed to the approaches used in the Bank-funded sanitation interventions in rural and urban areas, given the relatively small budget allocations of RMCs for sanitation. These different strands of approaches are as follows:

- Community-based behavior change approaches used by six of 17 rural and urban cluster projects (35%), which create demand for sanitation and hygiene behavior. In this case, the Bank financed only hygiene education and sanitation improvement promotion activities to support the construction of improved facilities by households.

- Financing approaches that use specific financing mechanisms (targeting hardware subsidies, loan schemes, etc.) to increase uptake of sanitation mainly among unserved or vulnerable populations. In this group, eight of 17 WSS cluster projects (47%) were concerned.

- Market-based approaches that develop or strengthen the market and supply chain for sanitation products and services (6% of WSS cluster projects).

Some of the Bank’s rural sanitation interventions (12%) combined more than one of the three approaches.

The achievement of the Bank’s AWM support was unsatisfactory at the output level. The overall project cluster delivered 68% of the target outputs (including rural infrastructure such as feeder roads, wells, toilets, storage and drying facilities, rural markets, etc.). This overall AWM output level achievement was adversely affected by incomplete (46% achievement) land development (including irrigation schemes, drainage and flood control and water storage facilities) for water for irrigation.

The overall achievement of the Bank’s support was unsatisfactory at the outcome level for RWSS, AWM and Urban Sanitation. Despite supporting substantial capacity development and awareness campaigns, project service delivery and beneficiary behavior change remained limited, thus contributing to the non-achievement of the expected intermediate outcomes.

- Performance of RWSS interventions in providing effective and sustained access to improved water sources was adversely affected by poor service delivery (on average, around one-third of facilities used to be non-functional, poor water quality, etc.).

- RWSS intermediate outcomes were limited by: (i) insufficient access to sanitation services including insufficient number of household latrines, limited maintenance of institutional latrines; and (ii) poor adoption of hygiene practices, that is modest progress in minimizing open defecation, improving hand-washing, and ensuring the safe storage of water.

- The participatory methods used in RWSS interventions were not as effective as had been expected in fostering the desired behavior change and in sustaining good sanitation and hygiene practices. In addition, the poor sanitary and hygiene state of some facilities posed health
hazards and often led to their abandonment, a situation that could result in a re-emergence of open defecation.

- Urban sanitation intermediate outcomes were adversely affected by limited access to sewerage, and limited treatment capacity of wastewater in urban areas.

- AWM interventions achieved limited outcomes in terms of improved access to water for irrigation, and increased agricultural production and productivity. This was mainly due to: (i) insufficient development of tertiary irrigation canals; (ii) inadequate complementary inputs, such as fertilizer and improved seed and plant; (iii) limited irrigated/developed farm areas (66% of the planned irrigated area was achieved); and (iv) a lack of capacity of water-users’ associations (WUAs) to manage the resources optimally. None of the AWM cluster projects, aiming at increasing farmers’ access to water, achieved its planned targets; around 35% of the targeted smallholder farmers gained access to water for irrigation or livestock.

- In addition, the case studies highlighted country context factors beyond the Bank's control as hindering results, especially at the outcome level. These include: (i) weak institutional, regulatory and policy frameworks; (ii) inadequate preparatory studies to support project design (37% of the cluster projects); (iii) a lack of adequate human capacity (due to high staff turnover and brain drain); and (iv) low counterpart funding (e.g., Zambia, Mali, Nigeria at all levels of government, and limited district level human resources in the cases of Rwanda and Senegal). Specifically, limited capacities within NGOs and the private sector also undermined the achievement of outcomes, as identified by water specialists and confirmed by country case studies.

- While the physical outputs of UWSS helped meet outcome expectations, the results were negatively affected by poor quality of aging urban water-distribution networks, financial losses of water utilities, and limited wastewater treatment and fecal sludge management.

Taking all of the above performance results into consideration, the effectiveness of the Bank’s support to the water sector (WSS and AWM) was rated unsatisfactory.

**Efficiency**

The efficiency of the Bank’s support to the water sector was assessed along three dimensions: economic performance, financial performance and timeliness. Twenty four projects examined as part of the PERs had complete economic internal rates of return (EIRR) assessments. All of these 24 projects, except two (Mauritius and Tanzania Dar es Salaam), were deemed economically viable, and all have EIRRs higher than their respective opportunity costs of capital ranging from 10% to 12%. However, from the perspective of water utility agencies, UWSS projects were not generating sufficient revenue to cover their investment and operating costs. In addition, the sanitation and rural water interventions are not generally not financially profitable. The WSS and AWM projects also experienced, during implementation, significant delivery delays and procurement challenges. Project implementation (from approval to completion) ranged from 49 to 141 months. On average, projects had a delay of around 18 months compared with planned schedules.

Implementation delays were mainly due to: (i) slow loan ratification; (ii) slow payment of government counterpart funds; (iii) poor quality at entry; (iv) procurement procedure issues; and (v) capacity constraints of contractors.

Overall, the efficiency of the Bank’s support to the water sector was deemed unsatisfactory.
Sustainability

To assess the sustainability of Bank support, the evaluation examined four aspects: technical soundness, financial sustainability, institution and capacity strengthening, and beneficiary ownership and participation in maintenance. Performance was found to be positive on the technical soundness and beneficiary ownership dimensions. At the same time, the evaluation found substantial deficiencies in the financial and institutional aspects of the projects supported.

The evaluation found a number of factors that could contribute to sustainability, including:

- Projects across all subsectors were generally strong in terms of using cutting-edge technologies, although some were less appropriate for the local context.
- Responding to the need for technical support, projects provided capacity building and ensured the connections between relevant groups. While these interventions were not always effective, to some extent they provided the foundation for ensuring sustainability.
- Projects across all subsectors created the conditions to build sustained partnerships and a sense of ownership among beneficiaries and stakeholders.

On the other hand, the findings of the evaluation highlight the following impediments for the sustainability of the outcomes achieved:

- Procurement of equipment and spare-parts remain a challenge to water sector operations, thereby impeding regular and timely repair and maintenance.
- Insufficient human capacity, especially at the local government and communities levels, to ensure the maintenance of water infrastructure was found to be a major factor threatening the sustainability of water projects.
- Financial sustainability poses the greatest threat to overall sustainability in the sector. A host of factors, including poor cost-recovery mechanisms, perennial wastage, and a general lack of appropriate legislative reforms to regulate tariffs, undermined the long-term sustainability of WSS and AWM infrastructure benefits.
- Similarly, the need for institutional and capacity strengthening, and the choice of appropriate low cost/maintenance technology are paramount issues for the sustainability of sanitation facilities.

Overall, the sustainability of the results of Bank support was deemed unlikely.

Lessons learned in the cases where projects were deemed sustainable (Morocco Urban WSS projects, Mauritius Urban Sanitation project, Rwanda WSS projects, Rwanda Bugesera Agricultural Rural Development Project, Mauritania WSS project) are as follows:

- Cost recovery remains a key issue that must be strategically and systematically addressed to ensure the financial viability of any intervention. This has become more relevant in the context of the negative impact from climate change on water resource availability.
- Improving the performance of UWSS utilities as a whole is critical for the water sector, if it is to maintain the equalization mechanisms between subsectors (water and sanitation) and between areas (urban and rural).
- Critical sanitation technology choices should be scrutinized carefully, if they are to deliver sustained results.

In summary, the table below provides an overview of the performance ratings (on a four-point scale) of the Bank’s 2005-2016 support for water and sanitation.
Overview of ratings

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<th>Evaluation criteria</th>
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<td>Relevance</td>
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<td>1. Strategic objectives</td>
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<td>2. Objectives of interventions</td>
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<td>3. Design of interventions</td>
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<td>Effectiveness</td>
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<td>Efficiency</td>
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<td>1. Economic performance -EIRR</td>
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<td>2. Financial performance -FIRR</td>
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<td>3. Timeliness</td>
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<td>Sustainability</td>
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<td>1. Technical soundness</td>
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<td>3. Institution &amp; capacity strengthening</td>
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<td>4. Beneficiary ownership &amp; participation in maintenance</td>
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HU=Highly Unsatisfactory, U= Unsatisfactory, S=Satisfactory, HS=Highly Satisfactory

Contributing Factors in Achieving Development Results

The Bank was active in development-partner coordination groups within the water sector. The Bank engaged in development-partner coordination mainly through the participation of water specialists in RMCs’ development-partner fora and joint-sector working groups. Coordination was effective where it was anchored on a country’s water sector master plan, and where the government played a leading role. It is estimated that this occurred in the majority of RMCs. At the same time, the Bank’s role in building broader partnerships with the private sector and non-governmental entities was limited, partly because RMCS preferred the Bank to deal directly with them.

Additional funds leveraged by the Bank to support ongoing WSS activities were limited. In terms of co-financing, for each dollar invested by the Bank, less than a dollar (on average USD0.89 for WSS and USD0.50 for AWM) was invested by partners, including country counterparts and development partners. Development partners and the Bank’s country office staff described working together as useful, but overall most partners tended to work in silos.
Knowledge work produced by the Bank in the water sector was described as useful in some cases (Senegal, Cameroon, Mali), while some stakeholders in RMCs questioned the adequacy of the Bank’s investment in knowledge and knowledge products. Supporting reforms in the water sector will require further development and promotion of knowledge. Although the WSS Department provided support to RMCs to advance their knowledge on available water sources and to complete needs assessments (through feasibility studies), this was not sufficient to support reforms and policy dialogue, as revealed by the review of the Bank’s economic and sector work (2005-10) and country case studies. The perception of the usefulness of the knowledge products varies across RMCs and there was limited awareness of the Bank’s water sector knowledge products. There is scope for the Bank to do more in this area, because demand for knowledge is strong.

The evaluation noted positive steps taken toward gender mainstreaming in 80% of the case-study countries. Positive steps ranged from integrating gender-specific targets and activities at the project level, to advocating for greater consideration of gender issues at working group meetings. Action on gender mainstreaming stemmed from the Bank’s operational guidelines, including its gender strategy and requirements, such as the involvement of a gender expert on supervision missions. Interviewees pointed out that the Bank’s gender-related indicators tended to focus more on monitoring physical infrastructure output, and less on behavioral change.

Managing for development results, monitoring and data availability were identified as challenges. Project baseline data were insufficient for adequate performance monitoring and evaluation (M&E). Supervision missions were cited as a key approach for project-level M&E.

The effectiveness of supervision missions was affected by budget constraints, and the focus on physical infrastructure, while capturing few ‘soft’ components such as behavior change.

Issues and Recommendations

Policy and Strategic Issues

1. Water resources development and management

Recommendation 1: The Bank should continue to enhance its engagement with RMCs on an integrated approach to Water Resources Development and Management. Such an integrated approach should go beyond WSS and AWM.

Findings and Issues:

1. The benefits of UWSS were more clearly manifested in Morocco and Mauritius, where the governments integrated UWSS with tourism and small- and medium-sized business opportunities within their integrated development strategy and plans. This approach optimized UWSS use, business development and expansion, and helped to raise living standards.

2. Critical risks concerning the reliability and quality of water resources were not always adequately addressed during the Bank-supported water sector project designs. In addition, the independent evaluation of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) implementation between 2000 and 2010 found that only five out of 40 of the projects that were reviewed explicitly addressed water resources management and conservation, a critical aspect for sustained water sector results.
3. Literature review, country case studies and PERs found that water security is one of the greatest challenges resulting from climate change and its economic fallout. Impacts are already being felt in African countries in all regions, and also on selected trans-boundary water resources, for example in Lake Chad and Lake Victoria. The case of Kenya Green Zones provides a good example of how the Bank’s water sector interventions can advance water conservation issues. Such practices should be further developed.

Low access to improved sanitation

**Recommendation 2:** The Bank should prioritize sanitation by focusing on the required policy shifts, introducing new models with sustainable technologies, partnerships, and scale-up mechanisms.

**Findings and Issues:**

1. The two main approaches (financing and community-based behavior change approaches) used for the Bank-financed sanitation interventions within the challenging RMC contexts (country sanitation policies and a widening financing gap in the WSS sector) contributed to the relatively low levels of sanitation outputs, including household latrines. The financing approaches were mostly used in the cluster projects (six of 11 projects). They have some limitations in terms of funds required for targets in hardware subsidies or loan schemes. In addition, the cost of latrines proposed in the Bank-funded interventions was seen as high by beneficiaries in some cases (Rwanda RWSS, Congo Urban sanitation), making them difficult to scale up.

2. The Bank, through policy dialogue, has been advocating for and financing investments in sanitation with limited results, as sanitation remained a major challenge in Africa. Limited financing and performance of the sanitation and hygiene component does not bode well for achieving development results of RWSS interventions.

**Recommendation 3:** The Bank should deepen ongoing efforts to support increased innovative financing mechanisms (including private sector participation) to accelerate water and sanitation infrastructure development and management in RMCs.

**Findings and Issues:**

1. The landscape of donors is changing in Africa, with an increasing amount of official development assistance and concessional loans coming from non-traditional donors, such as Brazil, China, India, Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Turkey and the United Arab Emirates. The private sector is also playing an increasingly important role in the development finance landscape. These actors have the potential to provide financial resources, as well as knowledge and skills, that can lead to more sustainable and effective infrastructure development and services. Countries require sound policy, governance and regulatory frameworks to attract finance from these actors for infrastructure development and to deliver effective services.

2. Specific challenges in engaging the private sector were raised in the country case studies, including:

   - Only one-third of countries have sector financing plans that are defined, agreed upon and consistently followed, and there are still significant gaps between needs, plans and financing;

   - Insufficient access to credit for private companies to invest in the water sector;
In rural areas, a lack of presence and capacity of the private sector, as well as the cost associated with dealing with dispersed populations, make securing the private sector’s engagement more challenging; and

The lack of an appropriate legislative framework in many countries, to provide private operators with confidence, as well as monitoring their involvement and progress.

**Recommendation 4:** The Bank should continue to explore innovative ways to strengthen RMCs’ institutional capacity and the performance of service providers toward sustained service delivery of water sector interventions to attract funding and foster development impact.

**Findings and Issues:**

1. Poor service delivery (water quality, quantity, reliability, accessibility and affordability) and performance of service providers (limited functionality of infrastructure) affected the main outcomes related to sustainable access to safe drinking water. Users of water and sanitation services seek to hold service providers to account over the services received. In addition, the sustainable development goals (SDGs) propose new definitions of success in the water sector, which go beyond access to an improved drinking water source, with a changing focus on monitoring service delivery. This should be incorporated in the Bank’s interventions.

2. For AWM, the limited results in terms of improving access to water for irrigation are due to limited water-related outputs achieved and challenges in the capacity of WUAs to manage resources optimally.

3. The performance of UWSS was uneven in terms of providing sustained access to water and sanitation services. This was largely due to the poor quality of the aging urban water-distribution networks for some projects, limited wastewater management and lack of capacity.

4. Available evidence suggests that, while capacity development has always been an integral component of the Bank’s water sector projects, there were limitations in terms of sustaining and enhancing the support. Evidence also indicates that countries with improved institutions were better equipped to make use of additional capacity support relative to those RMCs with weak governance and high staff turnover.

**Participatory Approach**

**Recommendation 5:** The Bank should continue to adopt appropriate participatory practices through effective collaboration with stakeholders at all stages of the project cycle (identification and design, implementation, completion and exit) for its water sector interventions.

**Findings and Issues:**

1. While projects were ‘demand-driven’, and thus responded to the RMCs’ needs, the level of collaboration with beneficiaries and the private sector was weak in some RWSS projects and AWM interventions. In some of the cases, the main technologies used were not in line with beneficiary habits and practices.

2. Evidence from the 10 country case studies shows that the appropriate inclusion of stakeholders during project design, including experts on the ground, can contribute to sustaining water and sanitation facilities. Such stakeholders possess direct cultural understanding and affinity for the challenges that communities are facing.
Results Measurement

Findings and Issues:

1. The key reporting tool used by the Bank - the annual development effectiveness report (ADER) - is based on data from project reports (including approved PCRs) that assume access rates in terms of people living in the vicinity of the infrastructure. This tool does not take into account water infrastructure that ceases to function shortly after project completion, or issues of quality and reliability.

2. Furthermore, the Bank’s efforts to track performance toward development outcomes do not provide sufficient guidance and appropriate resources for project M&E systems to track key outcomes of its interventions throughout the project lifespan, including post-completion. Lack of appropriate M&E systems and missing baselines were reported in 88% of the cluster projects. New information and communication technology (ICT) offers opportunities for more cost-effective M&E.

3. The Bank’s new Development and Business Delivery Model (DBDOM) does not clearly include, within the decentralized structure, a role for M&E and demonstration of outcome sustainability after project funding ends.

Recommendation 6: The Bank should improve its measurement and reporting of development results. Specifically, the M&E system at project, country, and Bank levels should be strengthened to provide the requisite range of results data (baseline, targets and actual) for design, during implementation, at completion and post-completion. Results data should cover outputs and outcomes (for both hard and soft infrastructure) of its water interventions.

Knowledge Sharing

Findings and Issues:

1. Some stakeholders, especially in RMCs, have questioned the adequacy of the Bank’s investment in knowledge and knowledge products. It is argued that the scale of knowledge work produced by the Bank in the water sector was limited and not strategically disseminated compared with other MDBs, such as the World Bank. However, the knowledge work that has been produced was described in some cases (Senegal, Cameroon, Mali) as helping staff to influence the discourse on the reform of national strategies for water management and rural sanitation. There is, therefore, scope for the Bank to do more in this area.

2. The assessment also noted that the usefulness of knowledge products varies across RMCs and depends on the level of awareness and accessibility. The use of ex-post evaluations conducted 2 to 3 years after project completion was viewed as good practice, not only among Bank staff interviewed in the context of the policy and the literature review but also by stakeholders interviewed during case studies in Cameroon, Kenya, Rwanda and Morocco. This helps to reduce the tendency of development partners to neglect the ‘long-term’ view of projects, which is essential for attaining sustainability of the benefits of completed projects.

Recommendation 7: The Bank should continue its promotion of platforms, networks and knowledge products to enhance the transfer of experience and knowledge among development partners, governments, end beneficiaries, sector experts and evaluators for improved performance of its RMCs.
About this Evaluation

This report summarizes the findings, lessons and recommendations from an independent evaluation of the support provided by the African Development Bank Group to the water sector from 2005 to 2016. This includes support for Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS, UA 3.7 billion over the evaluation period) and for Agricultural Water Management (AWM, UA 2.2 billion). It aimed to inform the Bank’s strategies and operational approach to water sector assistance by taking stock of the results of the Bank’s assistance and drawing lessons for future work.

All public and private sector operations in WSS and AWM, and institutional strengthening and capacity building activities, approved during the evaluation period are included in this evaluation - 274 WSS operations and 144 AWM operations in all. The evaluation is based on a policy and literature review; a portfolio review; 41 project evaluation reports across 23 countries; and 10 country case studies. The sector evaluation is supported by three stand-alone project cluster evaluations, on rural WSS, urban WSS and AWM.

The Bank’s water sector interventions were found to be relevant, and they delivered substantial outputs, although output levels remained below expectations. Achievement of outcomes was found moderate (particularly in the area of sanitation), leading to overall effectiveness being rated as unsatisfactory. Efficiency was likewise found unsatisfactory, and the results achieved are unlikely to be sustained. Multiple internal and external factors contributed to this results performance, including those related to development partnerships, knowledge work, and managing for development results. The evaluation makes recommendations in the areas of policy and strategy, participatory approach, results measurement and knowledge sharing.