IDEV evaluation of AfDB’s Integrated Safeguards Systems

The Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV) of the African Development Bank (AfDB or “Bank”) is conducting an evaluation of the Bank’s Integrated Safeguards System (ISS), which is the cornerstone of its strategy to promote growth that is socially inclusive and environmentally sustainable.

What is the AfDB Integrated Safeguards System (ISS)?

The ISS was approved in 2013 and adopted an integrated approach building on the previous environmental and social safeguards procedures and sector policies. The ISS aims at protecting the environment and people from the potentially adverse impacts of projects financed by the Bank, while maximizing potential development benefits to the extent possible. Click here for more information about the ISS.

What will the evaluation look at?

The IDEV evaluation will encompass questions related to the relevance, efficiency and emerging effectiveness of the ISS. Some of the key areas that the evaluation will assess include the role of ISS in supporting the delivery of the Bank’s strategic objectives; the relevance of the ISS in regard to the Bank’s current portfolio and its alignment with best practices and with other multilateral development Banks (MDBs); the efficiency of the system’s processes, resourcing and incentives; and emerging effectiveness in achieving the Bank’s safeguards objectives.

In addition, the evaluation will assess in depth the Bank’s compliance with the ISS operational safeguards related to involuntary resettlement, including land acquisition, population displacement and compensation. It will also shed light on the emerging evidence about the implementation of the ISS environment and social safeguards by Bank operations involving lending to financial intermediaries (FI).

What methods will the evaluation use?

This evaluation will employ various methods such as document reviews of the Bank’s ISS and safeguard systems, and those of other MDBs; in-depth interviews and focus groups with senior management of the Bank and other MDBs, as well as operational, environmental and social safeguards specialists; stakeholder surveys, including civil society organizations, and in-country visits to interview clients.

What will the findings provide?

The findings from this evaluation will provide the Board and Management with vital information about the progress achieved to date in relation to the ISS objectives, as well as the emerging challenges and opportunities in relation to best practices and those facing other MDBs. Recommendations will provide lines of action to strengthen the Bank’s environmental and social safeguards system, considering the ongoing Bank’s institutional changes and the most pressing sustainability challenges of the continent.