What did IDEV evaluate?

The evaluation covered the 2004–2014 period during which the volume of Bank assistance to Morocco was about UA 3.8 billion (USD 5.2 billion) for 58 projects. Energy and transport infrastructure together represented 48% of the Bank’s net commitments in Morocco. The evaluation assessed 21 of 33 completed projects. Resources used by the Bank in Morocco were mostly from the ADB window (94.2%).

What did IDEV find?

Relevance is considered satisfactory. The Bank programs and strategies are consistent with Morocco’s sectoral and crosscutting strategies. These programs, led in partnership with the government and financial and technical partners, implicitly took into consideration issues such as gender and the degree of inclusion of disadvantaged people. They did so by helping to reduce social and regional inequalities, particularly in accessing public services, and impacts on the environment and climate change. However the logical frameworks of some of the governance projects had unclear objectives and were not well aligned with the strategic objectives of the Bank’s country strategy paper (CSP).

Effectiveness is moderately satisfactory. The Bank’s assistance contributed to the significant changes observed between 2004 and 2014, mainly in terms of contribution to the reduction of poverty as well as social and regional disparities. Interventions in the health, education and vocational training sectors led to clear improvements: child mortality dropped to 26.1/1000 in 2014 from 36.5 in 2004, and school and vocational training enrolment increased. Bank assistance to the transport sector led to great progress in terms of liberalization, development of competition and improvement of the quality of service of the different transport modes. In the energy sector, an integrated project financed by the Bank raised the rural electrification rate to 99% by the end of July 2015. In the agricultural sector, Bank operations contributed to an increase in agricultural GDP from 3.98% (average over 2000–2009) to 7.6% in 2014.

Sustainability is moderately satisfactory. While the results of the reforms carried out by the strongly-committed Government of Morocco are sustainable for the most part, some outputs still need attention. Bank-financed projects in the productive and infrastructure sectors are generally viable. A potential risk to sustainability is the lack of clarity of institutional and regulatory frameworks for sectors such as water and sanitation, transport and especially energy. These did not have regulatory bodies to oversee the relationships among private sector actors, central government, and users.

The efficiency of Bank strategies and programs is deemed moderately satisfactory. While budget support was usually disbursed on time, delays were noted mostly in technical assistance operations with slippage ranging from 2–36 months.
What did IDEV recommend for the new strategy?

The Bank should:

- Continue to support the Government of Morocco in its macro-economic, financial and economic diversification efforts to ensure inclusive, equitable and sustainable growth.
- Support the Government in its transition to green growth and agricultural sector development.
- Anchor the identification of economic and sector work in the CSP preparation process (preparation, mid-term review and completion) to enhance its relevance and strategic alignment, improve the predictability of its financing and ensure its continuing use for policy dialogue purposes.
- Implement a capacity building program for sector executing agencies, support the development and establishment of results-based monitoring and evaluation systems and scale up the use of existing national systems as part of technical assistance and grant operations financing.
- Capitalize on the existing synergy between the Bank’s public and private sector windows to affirm its positioning and consider the possibility of adding a private sector specialist to the Bank’s Morocco country office’s human resources in order to consolidate its comparative advantage as an ‘integrated Bank’.

About IDEV

Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV) of the African Development Bank carries out independent evaluations of Bank operations, policies and strategies, working across projects, sectors, themes, regions, and countries. By conducting independent evaluations and proactively sharing best practice, IDEV ensures that the Bank and its stakeholders learn from past experience and plan and deliver development activities to the highest possible standards.

What did Management respond?

On the whole, Management agrees with the findings of this report and, in particular, that the Bank has made significant contributions to Morocco’s economic growth and public sector performance. The various findings and recommendations will be taken into account in developing the Bank’s new assistance strategy for Morocco (2017–2021) and the various resulting operations.