
What did IDEV evaluate?
The evaluation assesses the Eastern Africa Regional Integration Strategy Paper (RISP) for the period 2011-2015. It examines all 24 of the Bank’s operations approved during the evaluation period under the RISP and amounting to 1.41 billion UA for consistency. The development sectors covered under the Eastern Africa RISP include transport, energy, finance, ICT, agriculture, and multi-sector.

What did IDEV find?

Relevance
The Eastern Africa RISP’s relevance is moderately satisfactory. Indeed, it is aligned with the Bank’s strategic objectives under the Ten-Year Strategy (TYS) and the projects funded under the strategy constitute a priority for participating Regional Member Countries (RMCs). However, the evaluation found that about 30% of multi-country or single country operations do not directly contribute to the objective of regional integration, even if all of them were supportive of the RISP’s other objectives and those of the Bank.

Effectiveness
The RISP’s overall effectiveness is rated moderately satisfactory. Good progress was noted despite the discrepancy between the RISP’s two pillars as far as results in achieving the planned outputs and outcomes are concerned. The Regional Infrastructure Pillar of the RISP was found to have greater demonstrated effectiveness than the Capacity Building Pillar. The evaluation concluded that greater attention to policy reform and “soft” infrastructure, particularly at the design stage, would have further advanced the ambitious regional integration outcomes identified in the RISP.

Sustainability
Overall, sustainability is rated as moderately unsatisfactory. Sustainability is generally weak with variations across sectors. Projects in the financial and transport sectors fared better on sustainability compared to the agriculture sector and institution building operations, where it is weakest.

Efficiency
Efficiency is rated as moderately unsatisfactory. The weak capacity of Regional Economic Communities (RECs) or Regional Member Countries revealed serious delays with problems in the procurement process of the capacity building operations. Analyses of costs or rates of return were absent in the majority of the implementation progress reports and supervision reports, making it difficult to conclude whether the operations were on track or would be efficient once implemented.

Coherence
The Bank’s dialogue with RMCs and RECs did deal with regional integration issues in almost all cases. Some of these areas of dialogue include the regional integration dimensions of transport corridor projects, capacity building for road safety, and technical assistance on trade facilitation for the East African Community. However, it was noted that policy dialogue with the private sector, especially in transport corridor projects, was missing in the RISP.
Donor Coordination

In many cases, the Bank assumed a leadership role with regard to donor coordination in the 24 operations reviewed. However, performance was somewhat weaker in terms of working formally within the Paris Declaration framework and fostering greater coordination between RECs and RMCs and between RECs and the Bank. This is partly due to lack of clarity as to who is ultimately in charge.

Managing for Development Results

The Bank’s system for managing for development results is not being implemented robustly enough to help guide implementation or serve as a basis for supervision. Planned outcomes (and their associated indicators) are well beyond what the project could affect; relevant baselines and target indicators for completion are frequently missing. Too often, project outputs and outcomes do not address the broader regional integration issues and therefore opportunities for synergies are missed.

What did IDEV recommend for the new strategy?

- Improve the procurement process by supporting RECs and/or RMCs.
- Design and implement results-based monitoring and evaluation systems so they provide valuable management tools for assessing and managing for results.
- Support RECs and/or RMCs to develop solid mechanisms to handle commercial, financial and technical sustainability risks associated with asset management of regional public goods.
- Strengthen the institutional capacity of RECs by underscoring their importance as the key building blocks for continental integration.
- Consider to underpin the next RISP with a clear vision that focuses on regional integration and that is supported by a theory of change and a results-based framework.

About IDEV

The 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?

Management welcomes IDEV’s evaluation of the RISP for Eastern Africa, covering the period 2011 to 2015 (extended by 1 year to 2016). The evaluation provides a timely assessment of the Bank’s contribution to regional integration in Eastern Africa in terms of the relevance, effectiveness and sustainability of its interventions in the region. Management generally agrees with the findings of the evaluation and welcomes the recommendations of the IDEV Evaluation, which will be taken into account in the preparation of the Bank’s new RISP 2017-21 for Eastern Africa and the Bank’s RISP guidelines currently under preparation.

Evaluation task manager: Hajime Onishi, Principal Evaluation Officer, IDEV 1
Publication coordinated by Jayne Musumba, Principal Knowledge Management Officer, IDEV 3
Najade Lindsay, Junior Consultant, Communication and Knowledge Management, IDEV 3

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