Overview
Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV) at the African Development Bank (AfDB or “the Bank”) has undertaken various evaluations of the Bank’s infrastructure interventions, including in transport, energy, and water supply, sanitation and hygiene. The purpose of our webinar on “Fostering Sustainable Development Impact: Lessons from IDEV’s Evaluations,” was to engage with the Bank’s Management and operations teams working in infrastructure sectors to review lessons and recommendations from evaluations and discuss how they could be applied and integrated into future projects.

The opening remarks were made by Lydie Ehouman, Acting Division Manager for Transport & Logistics, on behalf of Amadou Oumarou, Director of the Bank’s Infrastructure and Urban Development Department (PICU).

- PICU is committed to providing integrated solutions to Africa’s infrastructure challenges. It started preparing holistic transport projects to improve social-economic impact in the Bank’s Regional Member Countries (RMCs) in 2002, with the design of the Tema-Ouagadougou-Bamako Multinational Transport and Trade Facilitation Project. The project appraisal report noted that there needed to be more than just cosmetic changes to schools along the road corridor, and after consultation with beneficiaries, community development activities such as rehabilitation of schools and health centers and construction of boreholes and parking lots, were subsequently included in the design of the project, at a cost of less than 10% of the total project amount.

- In 2010, the Bank collaborated with the Government of Ghana to pilot an integrated approach project to address development constraints in the northern region of Ghana, one of the most impoverished and isolated regions in the country. The Fulfuso-Sawla Road Project design was formulated in consultation with stakeholders, including 15 communities living along the road. It comprised several projects spanning multiple sectors, including transport, agriculture, water, sanitation, health, education, trade and tourism, while emphasizing regional integration, gender, environmental protection, and sustainable energy use.

- PICU welcomes the independent evaluation of the Fulfuso-Sawla Road Project. The key lessons from the evaluation of integrated projects include:
  1. Combining different sectors into a program brings economic, social, and human development benefits to beneficiary communities.
  2. In the case of the Fulfuso-Sawla Road project, the “One Bank” approach allowed staff from various departments and the Bank’s Ghana office to provide inputs at all stages of the project and its successful completion, with value for money a common denominator in decision making.
  3. The involvement of project stakeholders created a sense of ownership by all.
  4. Project supervision by the Bank exceeded the mandatory requirement and allowed for constant assessment of the project’s progress and timely resolution of issues that could impede success.
  5. Project sustainability is still an issue due to the maintenance of infrastructure. A lesson learned is to have a clear, written agreement with a centralized authority and beneficiaries on how the infrastructure will be operated and maintained.
In setting the stage for the panel discussion, Joseph Mouanda (Chief Evaluation Officer, IDEV) made a presentation on lessons learned from IDEV’s evaluations of integrated infrastructure projects. Most importantly, he pointed to the fact that ancillary works generated proportionately greater additional effects than their additional costs. However:

- Africa is lagging behind in terms of universal and equitable access to infrastructure. As a result, there is a huge infrastructure gap that can hinder the development of the continent and the achievement of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) and aggravate the impacts of climate change.
- It is essential to mobilize more financing, but that is not enough to achieve the SDGs. There is a need to go beyond infrastructure and focus more on service delivery and the sustainability of benefits.
- There are numerous challenges in service delivery. For instance, many African countries have to deal with frequent power cuts, poor viability of water companies, and degraded road networks. In addition, financial sustainability poses the greatest threat to the overall sustainability of all infrastructure sectors. Therefore, reforms are needed to tackle these challenges, especially in the energy and water sectors.

He then explained the African context and the advantages of integrated solutions:

- In Africa, infrastructure interventions have historically been fragmented. However, there has been a progressive transition towards more integration in infrastructure sectors.
- Integration is also about integrating stakeholders, businesses, NGOs, beneficiaries, etc.
- Integrated solutions to infrastructure come with many benefits: 1) to deliver services more effectively, efficiently, and sustainably; 2) In rural areas, multisectoral infrastructure development is more cost-effective; 3) Integrated solutions offer opportunities for economies of scale.
- The impact assessment of the project demonstrated the transformative nature of the multidimensional impact on poverty reduction of combining social and economic road infrastructure into a single intervention.
- Findings from other evaluations demonstrate:
  - **In water and sanitation**: the need to strike the right investment balance between water supply, sanitation, and health & education components; and between water supply systems and institutional support measures; while urban sanitation requires an integrated handling through its three main pillars: (i) wastewater collection and treatment, (ii) fecal sludge management (compost, biogas, and electricity), and (iii) commercialization. For example, integrated projects in Morocco and Mauritius have associated water and sanitation infrastructure with tourism and small and medium-sized businesses opportunities.
  - **In rural electrification**: more synergy is needed to leverage the economic opportunities of electrification. For example, in Tunisia, the impact was highest where the Government integrated electrification in a holistic rural development plan.
- All lessons drawn from evaluations highlight the interest in integrated solutions in terms of impact. The Fulfuso-Sawla Road project also highlighted institutional and relational factors, including the importance of the sustainability of impacts.
- While the impact is context-specific, systems and sectors are interconnected and interdependent. Therefore, the Bank’s interventions should seek to balance social, environmental, and economic dimensions of sustainability in all phases of the project cycle.
- Integrated solutions account for interpersonal relational dimensions of human actions and how people may hinder or help sustainable development.

The panel discussion
The session was chaired by **Yero Baldeh** (Director, Transition States Coordination Office). Panelists included: **Lydie Ehouman** (Acting Division Manager for PICU.1 – Transport & Logistics), **Ibrahima Konate** (Chief Power Engineer, Power Systems Development Department), **Babatunde Omilola** (Division Manager, Public Health, Security and Nutrition, Human Capital, Youth and Skills Development Department), **Mohamed El Ouahabi** (Water & Sanitation Specialist, Regional Directorate North Africa), and **Joseph Mouanda** (Chief Evaluation Officer, IDEV).

**Key takeaways:**

**Understanding integrated solutions and how to achieve optimal integrated solutions in the design of infrastructure projects:**

- An integrated solution is a holistic approach to integrating different sectors to achieve sustainable development through a human and social development angle, while disaggregating by gender. It also implies vertical and horizontal cohesion, especially in terms of policy, program or project formulation and implementation.
- An integrated solution responds to the population’s expectations, having public consultations with the beneficiaries and integrating their needs into the project.
- Flexibility is vital in incorporating unplanned needs of RMCs in the Bank’s projects.
- Addressing the demand holistically requires flexibility and openness - a project from one sector may need a project from another sector.
- Multisectoral work needs to be aligned to countries’ national development plans and priorities.
- Capturing knowledge through data analysis and Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) to monitor results and communicate results.
- Collaboration between Bank units to achieve common goals, measuring KPIs over time to ensure proper integration.
- An example of the Bank’s engagement in Morocco in the water sector includes a policy framework and commitment to providing potable water, in terms of quality and quantity, to urban and rural populations and help develop different sectors, including industry and tourism. As a result, the various projects have provided water for 15 million people in two-thirds of medium-sized cities in Morocco, with investments totaling around EUR 1.2 billion.
- In the context of transition states, integrated solutions have high value-addition and address core factors of fragility.

**The role of communities in sustaining development on the ground - stakeholder participation and sustainable management.**

- There are sustainability issues associated with the road and ancillary projects of the Fufulso-Sawla Road project. The sustainability of the road depends on the quality of the road works and on usage. Regarding the ancillary infrastructure, it is necessary to focus not only on the needs of the populations, but also on the use and maintenance of these infrastructures. In addition, the Governments and decentralized authorities such as districts, Civil Society Organizations, and NGOs should be involved in the infrastructure maintenance effort.
- From the early phases of the project and during implementation, there should be continuous dialogue with the various stakeholders to ensure the sustainability of results.
- There has been a pilot project in Morocco to outsource management and maintenance of the infrastructure put in place by the Government to the private sector and by engaging NGOs, emphasizing the quality of management of the projects like access to drinking water in rural areas.
Drawing from previous experiences to design an integrated solution, depending on the beneficiary populations.

- Analyze all facets of the problem to offer the best solutions.
- The private sector, through concessions, plays a more important role in projects where there are measures and agreements in place to ensure sustainability.
- Rigorous Economic and Sector Work, including a comprehensive analysis, is fundamental.
- Effective stakeholder participation is an essential condition for success.

Critical success factors in the effective design and management of integrated infrastructure solutions

- Five main considerations:
  - Prepare well. Quality at Entry is important. In the preparation phase, conduct feasibility studies, robust economic and social analysis, ensure the project answers the main development issues pointing to the actionable solution, and ensure key sectors and Bank units are involved from beginning to end of the project.
  - Conduct social and economic impact analysis to assess the impacts of integrated solutions.
  - Secure ownership and commitment of governments, especially in sovereign operations.
  - Leverage partnerships that go beyond the Government in any country, such as with the private sector, civil society, and communities including women, youth, and co-beneficiaries.
  - Have KPIs that focus on common goals regarding results, roles, and responsibilities across relevant Bank sector departments and offices to design and implement integrated budgets.

- Integrated solutions are not a novelty at the Bank, but improvements in these programs need to be made.
- For infrastructure projects, sustainability is the main issue. There is a lack of ownership because the degree of consultations is insufficient. The example of the Fufusso-Sawla Road project in Ghana is a good illustration of this. To ensure sustainability, measures have to be put in place to consult, capacitate and empower people to be responsible for the project once completed.

What learning mechanisms should be put in place when designing an integrated solution project?

- Have a knowledge-sharing system.
- Ensure collegial management between all departments involved in the project design. There must be a shift to the “One Bank approach” in conducting this management, with shared knowledge and supervision so everyone can contribute.
- Have a sound M&E system for each project.

Concluding remarks from the panelists:

- The collegial management as shown in the Fufusso-Sawla Road Project is a good example. A collaborative approach among sector experts allowed for better supervision of all projects in the integrated approach. This collaboration is also important at the country level – all stakeholders working together with the Bank, such as the Ministry of Roads, the executing agency, and decentralized authorities. This level of coordination is hard to achieve, but necessary for multisectoral teams at all levels.
- Integration at the operational level requires the procurement team to make acquisitions that will directly impact the project’s success.
• There is a need for continuous engagement of the procurement team and the Environmental and Social Safeguards Department at the Bank-level.
• The Bank should initiate negotiations and reach mutual understanding about the projects with RMCs and other co-financing partners to ensure that the value of integrated solutions is understood and accepted.
• Integrated solutions for development means everything must be holistic and multisectoral, assisting the path to achieve the SDGs and the Bank’s High 5s.
• The most significant approach includes common KPIs and targets in Country Strategy Papers and Regional Integration Strategy Papers, followed and imposed in both countries, and regular programming for any investment in this area.
• To leverage partnerships by bringing on board beneficiaries, including women, and disaggregate based on gender, i.e., disaggregated data, monitoring, and communicating results.
• Ensure coordination and engagement of all different stakeholders working on the project.
• The quality at entry should be reinforced through feasibility studies, which offer a global and complete vision.
• Mutualize the project to include stakeholders and different sectors.
• Too often, our projects focus on the supply side. Integrated solutions allow us to reconcile the demand and supply sides.
• Integrated solutions have a strong focus on the human aspect of development.

The Q&A Session

Q1: In rural areas, the integrated infrastructure solution seems to be more beneficial than individual sector projects. Can you cite 2-3 cases of WASH projects in rural areas?

• In terms of integrated infrastructure, we have more evidence in the energy sector than in WASH. (Examples of projects are available in the IDEV project cluster evaluation report "Spurring local socio-economic development through rural electrification: cluster evaluation").
• As for the integrated solutions in the WASH sector, Morocco is a good example of success. (Examples of projects are available in the IDEV cluster evaluation report "Reaching the most vulnerable: Scaling Up Service Delivery in Urban Water Supply and Sanitation").
• Additional comments: Regarding access to drinking water, Morocco has carried out major projects, but sanitation remains a problem, especially in rural areas.

Q2: Is it possible to envisage sustainable integrated solutions at the operational level without taking integration into account at the strategic level? If not, what levers should be used to take integration into account at the strategic level?

• Integration is already supported at the strategic level through the Bank’s High 5s, strategy papers, etc.
• Integrated solutions are also contained in the framework of regional integration (corridors) and in the policy framework for transition countries.
• The issue lies at the operational level, from design to collaboration between the Bank’s departments (procurement, environmental and social safeguards department, etc.) and sectors (water, transport, etc.). Worth noting they are difficult to address in the current COVID context, where there is little contact at the country level.
• The Bank has been talking about selectivity. Projects need to have more impact – be more holistic and integrated. Strategic selectivity will enhance integrated projects. Hence, a well-integrated project will necessarily have more impact.

• To delve deeper into the question by posing a question: "Is it conceivable to allocate a share of an investment allocated for a given sector to another in the framework of the implementation of an integrated project?" Further study and reflection are still needed at the strategic and operational levels to address this question.

• Successful operational integration depends on upstream strategic support. A comprehensive, holistic vision with a legal and regulatory framework that defines the boundaries of each sector is necessary for successful integration.

Q3: Participant comment

• Regarding Country Strategy Papers (CSPs), how do we ensure that programming reflects the possibility for task managers to undertake integrated solutions when designing projects? Task managers should look at Strategic Pillars as focus areas. The root problems they are trying to solve are often connected to social issues (employment, housing, education, etc.). The CSPs that focus on infrastructure do not exclude integrated solutions.

• As a Country Economist in Ghana, he has witnessed the impact of the Fufulso-Sawla Road Project. Anecdotal - an old man told him that people used to die of snakebites every day in his village, but they could now go to the hospital and get treated because of the new road.

• Proper road projects provide solutions to existing problems, whereas integrated projects offer new opportunities that beneficiaries can capitalize on.

Q4: How do we address the challenge of the scope of the project? And how do we address integration across different projects?

• Regarding scope, while it is tempting to go overboard, we also have to be realistic. From the experience of the Fufulso-Sawla Road Project, during consultations, there was an issue of the curriculum in education that came up, but realized it was difficult to go beyond the basic infrastructure of the project. The scope is indeed problematic, but we must know our expertise and remain in that field. Unfortunately, we cannot solve all problems.

• We need to engage in discussions at the country level to determine the best way to combine projects.

• An integrated project does not necessarily have to take all possible aspects into account. It is necessary to be realistic, at the risk of having unrealizable projects.

• For example, through partnerships, we can ensure that other development partners take care of the sectors that we cannot cover within the project framework.

• We should avoid creating unmanageable "mega projects."

• It would be wise to plan projects by region at the country level. This could facilitate a certain complementarity across sectors and make it easier to achieve integrated solutions.

Q5: What are the good practices in developing integrated solutions? Could the Bank engage in a policy dialogue on the need for this cross-cutting dimension to accompany the sustainable development of its RMCs, as there is resistance at the level of some countries and sectors?

• In the context of the impact evaluation of the Fufulso-Sawla Road project, the Management Response recommended developing a manual for integrated projects (Department of Transport).
The Bank needs tools to assist the management of integrated projects in order to support policy dialogue.

- Our experience shows that we must try to understand what has not worked in implementing integrated projects and share the knowledge, including at the country level. Unfortunately, many countries are not aware of the importance of this approach, but when they are informed, they generally adhere.
- Before taking on a large project like the Fufulso-Sawla Road, we can also start small and be modest to show the impact projects can have.

**Q6: Integrated solutions for sustainable development is not the same as integrated development, which was earlier applied for agriculture projects, as infrastructure projects and complementary activities associated with the infrastructure are not as integrated as the name implies. Integrated agriculture projects failed in most countries in Africa, and this approach was eventually abandoned. I would like the panelists to clarify this issue.**

- We are not talking about integrated development, but projects with integrated solutions. It is not the same approach. The objective of integrated projects is to determine the basis of the final objective of the intervention and the solutions to carry it out. It is not about putting several projects together with a high number of components, which compromises implementation because it is impossible to address them all.

**Q7 (Comment): We need to start engaging at the policy level when formulating country strategy and programs and ensure that project beneficiaries are properly consulted during the preparation and design phase, in order to maximize the benefits and address the needs of beneficiaries.**

**Q8: Do we have any examples of projects that have included Public-Private Partnerships (PPPs) in agriculture? If so, what is the Bank’s understanding of this approach for the wellbeing of rural populations in Africa?**

- In Morocco, we have an example of the Green Morocco Plan since 2009 (and the new Green Generation program will follow it). It created agropoles that integrated PPPs for the supervision of farmers and the supply of inputs, seeds, etc. It is one of the flagship programs of Morocco, which is a success.

**Closing Remarks:**

**Karen Rot-Münstermann**, Acting Evaluator General, IDEV

- One of the things I learned today is that the Bank started with integrated projects in 2002.
- Integrated projects and solutions respond to the expectations of the populations in Africa, which is what the Bank is about. So, the design of projects should look for what the real needs of the people are.
- Critical success factors: securing ownership and commitment of governments; legal and regulatory frameworks and involving the users in design and maintenance of the projects so that the benefits will last.
- The “One Bank approach” brings a change from a single department to a collegial approach.
- This approach should also be replicated at the country level, with ministries and local authorities.
- Country authorities or ministries do not always want or are used to integrated solutions. Hence, the Bank has a role in pursuing policy dialogue and even advocacy to demonstrate to
stakeholders that integrated projects have greater development effects. That relatively small investment has disproportionately large benefits.

- Such projects can contribute to greater poverty reduction, gender equality, and wellbeing. However, we also must be realistic as these projects will not solve all development issues at once.
- There is an evidence base for the Bank to move forward in this direction to strengthen and deepen its impact on the benefits for the population of Africa. We all have a role to play and to contribute.

ANNEXES:

Links to the Relevant IDEV Publications:
- Impact Evaluation of AfDB-Funded Ghana Fufulso-Sawla Road Project
- Impact Evaluation of the African Development Bank-supported small-scale irrigation projects in Malawi
- Ethiopia: Impact Evaluation of the rural water supply and sanitation programme
- Spurring local socio-economic development through rural electrification: cluster evaluation
- Evaluation of the AfDB’s Support to the Water Sector (2005-2016)
- Reaching the most vulnerable: Scaling Up Service Delivery in Urban Water Supply and Sanitation
- Towards a Service Delivery Approach to Rural Water Supply and Sanitation
- The African Development Support for Agricultural Value Chains Development
- Strengthening Agricultural Water Management to Feed Africa
- Lessons from IDEV Water and Agriculture Evaluations
- Water Supply and Sanitation in Africa: Findings, Lessons and Good Practices to Improve Delivery

Polls Results

1. What motivated you to register for this webinar?
   - To develop my knowledge of integrated infrastructure interventions
   - To inform the design of a new project
   - To make progress or solve an issue in an active project
   - To grow my knowledge of evaluations
   - Something else

n= xx/xx Respondents
What motivated you to register for this webinar?

- To develop my knowledge of integrated infrastructure interventions || Développer ma connaissance des interventions intégrées en matière d’infrastructures
- To grow my knowledge of evaluations || Développer ma connaissance des évaluations
- Something else || Autre
- To inform the design of a new project || Eclairer la conception d’un nouveau projet
2. **How do you learn from evaluations?**
   - Read evaluation reports
   - Consult evaluation knowledge products
   - Attend evaluation learning events (webinars, seminars, capitalization workshops, etc.)
   - Visit IDEV website
   - Other sources

*n= xx/xx Respondents*