



African Water Facility
Mobilising Resources for Water in Africa



Mobilizing Resources for a Water Secure Africa: An Independent Evaluation of the African Water Facility (2005-2018)

**Summary Report
March 2020**



AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP



IDEV

Independent Development Evaluation
African Development Bank



**African Water Facility: “Project Preparation Facility of the year”
Africa investor (Ai) Infrastructure Project Developer Awards 2015**

Foreword

By Roland MICHELITSCH
Evaluator General

Trust or Special funds are becoming an important instrument for the operations of the AfDB. It is thus critical to understand how they perform to ultimately improve their use. It is against this background that AfDB’s Independent Development Evaluation (BDEV) evaluated the African Water Facility Special Fund (AWF).

This evaluation was originally not part of BDEV’s 2019-2021 work program. However, AfDB’s Water Development and Sanitation Department (AHWS) requested an evaluation of the AWF, following a recommendation by AfDB’s Board of Directors. In response to this recommendation, the AWF Governing Council affirmed its support for the evaluation, given its importance to the AWF operations. BDEV, after consultation with the AfDB’s Board’s Committee on Operations and Development Effectiveness (CODE) thus agreed to manage the evaluation, which was funded by AHWS/AWF, but conducted by an external Consulting Firm (UNIVERSALIA) in close collaboration with BDEV.

This is a special case where BDEV and AHWS/AWF successfully considered the quality of the process to optimize ownership of and learning from evaluation. This was done through a strong engagement process and communication between BDEV and AHWS/AWF early in the evaluation (starting with the preparation of the TOR) and throughout the process. Preliminary findings were also presented to the AWF’s Oversight Committee and Governing Council, as well as to water sector staff. BDEV/Universalialia and AHWS/AWF had close and interactive consultations to review the recommendations of the evaluation. This is a very good example of an utilization-focused evaluation approach that we plan to replicate in other BEDV evaluations.

I am confident that this evaluation will inform the debate on how to mobilize resources for a water-secure Africa. This is particularly important in Africa where there are significant gaps between needs, plans, and financing to achieve the SDGs on water and sanitation.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank AHWS/AWF for their strong collaboration during the process, wishing them much success as they implement the action plan responding to our recommendations.

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Acronyms

ADA	Austrian Development Agency
ADB	Asian Development Bank
ADF	African Development Fund
AfDB	African Development Bank
AHWS	AfDB Water Development and Sanitation Department
AMCOW	African Ministers' Council on Water
ANBO	African Network for Basin Organizations
AU	African Union
AWF	African Water Facility
AWFTF	African Water Facility Trust Fund
AWV	Africa Water Vision
BADEC	Bank for Development and Cooperation
BMGF	Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation
CBO	Community-Based Organization
CICOS	International Commission for the Congo-Ubangi-Sangha Basin
CIDB	Construction Industry Development Board (South Africa)
COFAMOSA	Committee for the Facilitation of Agriculture between Mozambique and South Africa
COPEAU	Water Pollution Information System (Tunisia)
CRIDIF	Climate Resilient Infrastructural Development Facility
CSO	Civil Society Organizations
DFAT	Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (Australia)
DFID	UK Department for International Development
DGRE	Directorate of Water Resources Management
ECCAS	Economic Community of Central African States
ECGLC	Economic Community for the Great Lakes Countries
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
EIB	European Investment Bank
ERG	Evaluation Reference Group
EU	European Union
FGD	Focus Group Discussions
GAMA	Greater Accra Metropolitan Area
GASSLIP	Greater Accra Sustainable Sanitation and Livelihoods Improvement Project
GC	Governing Council
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GIS	Geographic Information System
GWP	Global Water Partnership
IDA	International Development Association
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
IDEV	Independent Development Evaluation Unit
IDRC	International Development Research Center
IGAD	Intergovernmental Authority on Development
ILWMKTC	Integrated Land and Water Management in the Kibuo and Tende River Catchments
IPR	Implementation Project Reports
IRHMCLS	Integrated Rainwater Harvesting and Management and Complementary Livelihood Systems
IWMI	International and Water Management Institute
IWRM	Integrated Water Resources Management
LVWATSAN	East African Community Lake Victoria Basin Commission Water and Sanitation
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDG	Millennium Development Goals
MUS	Multiple Use Systems
NBA	Niger Basin Authority
NGO	Non-governmental Organization
NWRM	National Water Resource Management
O&M	Operation and Management

ODA	Official Development Assistance
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Co-operation and Development's Development Assistance Committee
ONAD	National Sanitation Agency (Côte d'Ivoire)
ONAS	National Sanitation Office (Senegal)
ORASECOM	Orange-Sengu River Commission
PAR	Project Appraisal Report
PCR	Project Completion Report
PCRE	Project Completion Evaluation Report
QA	Quality Assurance
RBOs	River Basin Organizations
RECs	Regional Economic Commissions
RMCS	Regional Member Countries
RMSAP	Resource Mobilization Strategy and Action Plan
RWRMC	Regional Water Resources Management Center
SADC	Southern African Development Community
SCMP	Supply Chain Management Professional
SDG	Sustainable Development Goals
SINEAU	National Water Information System (Tunisia)
SISOLS	Soil Information System (Tunisia)
SIWI	Stockholm International Water Institute
SME	Small and Medium Enterprises
SWAP	System-Wide Approach
SYGREAY	Water Resource Management Systems (Tunisia)
TAC	Technical Advisory Committee
TACs	Members of the Technical Advisory Committee of AMCOW
TOR	Terms of Reference
TWRM	Transboundary Water Resource Management
UMG	Universalia Management Group
UN	United Nations
UNEG	United Nations Evaluation Group
UNEP	United Nations Environment Programme
UNICEF	United Nations Children's Fund
VBA	Volta Basin Authority
WASH	Water, Sanitation, and Hygiene
WATSAN	Water and Sanitation
WHO	World Health Organization
WIS	Water Innovation System
WRC	Water Resource Commission
WRMA	Water Resource Management Authority (Kenya)
WSS	Water Supply and Sanitation
WWC	World Water Council

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Executive Summary

Introduction

The African Water Facility (AWF) is an initiative of the African Ministers' Council on Water (AMCOW). It is hosted and managed by the African Development Bank (AfDB) at the request of AMCOW. The AWF is a multilateral Special Fund that provides grants and technical assistance to enable governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private-public partnerships to address the increasing investment need for the development and management of water resources in Africa, towards meeting the goals and targets of the Africa Water Vision (AWV) 2025 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG). The AWF supports a wide portfolio of water projects across a broad range of sectors, including the following: Agricultural water management; Drinking water; Environmental management; Flood and drought protection; Fisheries; Hydropower; Industry; Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM); Sanitation and hygiene; Transport; Transboundary Water Resource Management (TWRM); and Tourism.

After almost 15 years of implementation, an independent evaluation of the AWF was commissioned by the AfDB, the Trustee of the AWF. This evaluation had a dual objective of *accountability* (by looking at the organizational and development effectiveness of the AWF) and *learning* (by identifying the lessons on what has worked and what has not worked and why) and make actionable and relevant recommendations to guide future operations of the AWF. It covers AWF's work since its first funding in 2005 until 2018 and focuses on the core areas of support, namely Project Preparation, Water Governance, and Water Knowledge. Five geographic regions of Africa were considered to ensure continental balance.

Methodology

In line with the status of the AWF portfolio, summative and formative approaches were used to conduct the evaluation. A summative

approach was used to assess all completed projects, especially those falling under the first two strategic periods, with long-term outcomes, impact, and issues of sustainability being assessed. This approach served both accountability and learning purposes. It allowed the evaluation team to draw conclusions about past performance, intent on informing ongoing and future AWF efforts at various levels: organizational, management, strategic, and operational. The evaluation design used a combined theory-based approach and a system-based approach.

For third phase projects (i.e. those since 2017), many of which were still ongoing at the time of the evaluation, a formative approach was pursued, allowing the evaluation team to ascertain AWF progress towards its main objectives and expected outcomes. The formative approach was geared towards course-correction, both analytically and in informing recommendations. The evaluation also examined institutional dimensions of the AWF as a Facility, as well as the broader governance structures in which it operates. The evaluation comprises five core deliverables, as follows: Inception Report; Portfolio Review; Policy and Literature Review; Case Studies (covering nine countries); and a Synthesis Report. This Executive Summary provides key high-level messages from the evaluation, drawing on all sources, and includes a list of all recommendations.

Main Findings

Relevance of AWF Instrument

The AWF has been a highly relevant instrument for supporting the African continent as a whole in addressing its water and sanitation challenges, in line with the African Water Vision 2025. The AWF has complemented traditional development finance, positioned to contribute to building an enabling environment for infrastructural and other development. The AWF's focus on "soft" development aspects, like project preparation,

innovation, and policy development, has given it a unique value add to addressing the continent's water and sanitation challenges.

The AWF is one of the few water-related actors that operate at the African continental scale in support of project preparation, enabling further co-production and co-financing of projects with a whole range of development partners and actors. Projects supported by the AWF over the years have been generally consistent with the needs and priorities of recipient RMCs and/or regional organizations.

Development Effectiveness

The AWF's development effectiveness is overall satisfactory, although there is an indication of a decline in recent years due to shifting strategic priorities. Nevertheless, AWF projects have satisfactorily achieved their outcomes or are on track towards reaching them.

AWF projects have appropriately and successfully influenced the governance of sanitation in RMCs, in terms of stakeholder engagement, policy development and practice, improved planning and administration, private sector engagement, and in other ways. The AWF has been effective in enabling RMCs to introduce innovative models for the management of national water resources. It has fostered a strategic and integrated planning and management of water resources at the national level.

AWF has furthered the goals of the AWV 2025 through its support focused on the governance of transboundary water resources in river basins across the African continent. In particular, its support has helped promote cooperation among riparians and stakeholders, addressing institutional gaps for TWRM, and enabling the development of improved policies, laws, regulations and information systems for shared water management.

The AWF has contributed to an institutional strengthening of relevant water organizations in RMCs. While also improving competencies

of human resources, it has been limited in advancing and ensuring staff retention (or replacement) strategies in the sector.

While the AWF has been an important and effective instrument for knowledge generation, its knowledge management function has steadily declined. Indeed, while AWF has helped recipient organizations and/or countries to generate useful water-related knowledge, it has been relatively limited in its effectiveness at generating knowledge products at a scale that can capture the lessons learned from its interventions.

AWF-supported projects, notably those focused on feasibility studies, designs and investment plans, enabled downstream investments and produced impressive leverage factors, particularly in vulnerable and transition states, and for transboundary projects.

Organizational Effectiveness

While AMCOW remains politically crucial to the AfDB and AWF, it has struggled to fulfill its strategic role in the AWF Governing Council and operating with declining effectiveness.

The AWF's declining technical capabilities is partially attributable to diminished staff resources, which corresponds to the limited financial resources at its disposal. Current AWF plans to have a full staff complement provide the promise of renewal.

The project monitoring and evaluation system of the AWF is generally well-perceived by the project coordination teams. However, the basis on which AWF success is being measured by AfDB's Water Department is largely inappropriate and misaligned with the purpose of the Trust Fund. Consequently, the current value of AWF achievements is not fully recognized nor appreciated within the AfDB results measurement system which reports: (i) how many projects were approved; (ii) how much was disbursed, and (iii) whether projects were delivered on time. Important results that have been produced from the projects, such as enhanced transboundary governance, new

structures created, multiple innovative approaches adopted, fragile communities strengthened, which contribute to outcome level results are not clearly captured due to the lack of qualitative indicators and post-completion follow-up.

AWF operational processes and procedures are moderately appropriate and relevant. They suffer from a number of drawbacks. Project and data management, reporting, communication, and project follow-up are all issues, largely attributable to staff shortages that should be addressed.

Efficiency

The AWF's project efficiency has been overall unsatisfactory, based on timeliness and disbursement challenges. This is mainly due to the (i) lack of realistic assessment of the proposed activities (costs, time) to ensure good project planning and respected timelines, (ii) long procurement and decision-making process, and (iii) disbursement challenges.

Most project implementation schedules did not factor in or make contingency for potential delays in administrative, structural, procurement and consensus-building areas. However, AWF and AfDB staff were exceptionally responsive and flexible in making the necessary changes in timeliness to ensure project completion and effective implementation.

Sustainability

Sustainability of AWF's Project Results: While projects have largely been designed with sustainability in mind, it is unlikely that most of the AWF projects will be enduring, in particular with regard to their environmental and financial sustainability. In terms of institutional sustainability and strengthening of capacities, national, local and transboundary good governance have been advanced through AWF project support. The long view of good governance has been a strong feature in the AWF's transboundary projects by virtue of building the institutional architecture for joint decision-making.

In addition, convening learning events from AWF partners across different countries in the second strategy phase was very successful in teasing out lessons across different countries in pro-poor sanitation which contributed to new knowledge in the field and strengthened the capacity of implementing partners through peer-learning.

Environmental sustainability has featured strongly in the design of AWF projects. However, while the design included environmental impact assessment studies for the category 1 projects, their implementation was not ensured.

Governance, political and macro-economic conditions prevailing in RMCs have been significant factors affecting effectiveness and sustainability overall, though having affected AWF interventions differently.

With regard to the ownership and sustainability of partnership, the AWF's approach, flexibility, and manner of operating enables it to be highly relevant to country needs. This responsiveness builds country and regional ownership and contributes to the development and sustainability of ideas planted and growth enabled by AWF. In terms of partnership development, the sustainability of nationally-based and transboundary AWF projects is heavily reliant on the participation of the right partners. Indeed, having the right partners can mitigate a whole series of other sustainability challenges.

AWF at a Crossroads as Facility: AWF's capacity for mobilizing further resources has declined in recent years. This has negatively impacted the sustainability of the Special Fund. Despite the significance of its interventions in the water sector at the country level, the AWF often has little visibility where it has no direct representation. This has constrained the AWF's ability to position itself strategically, expand its pool of donors and create synergies with other water and sanitation partners

The AWF has had a limited and unsystematized engagement with both AfDB and stakeholders more widely. This reveals a missed opportunity in its approach to generating the sustainability

of results through strategic and meaningful engagement. Across all three phases, the AWF/AfDB's approach of relying heavily on external consultants to carry out project activities has caused frustration during project implementation and undermined project sustainability.

Integration of Cross-cutting Issues

From a high-level overview perspective, cross-cutting issues were not adequately integrated into the design of projects in a systematic way during the first strategic phase of the AWF. During the second phase, there was a more systematic integration of cross-cutting issues.

Gender equality has only been addressed in a limited manner across all three phases. The gender equality dimension in AWF projects was not a focused priority in project proposals and through reporting. Nevertheless, gender considerations were often accounted for at the stage of project implementation.

Climate change, poverty reduction, and income generation is an underlying and sustained objective across most AWF projects without having been singled out as a cross-cutter.

While 24% of the 118 AWF projects have been undertaken in transition countries and vulnerable contexts, the extent to which they have intentionally been framed as transformative in this regard is limited.

Recommendations

Based on the findings and the general conclusions of this study, the following recommendations have been formulated, specifically aimed at the AWF.

Institutional and Managerial Arrangements

Recommendation 1: The AWF should be more flexible, nimble and efficient, to maintain its comparative advantage and fulfill its mandate, in collaboration with AfDB.

Accordingly, the AfDB and AWF need to implement a number of measures to enhance the operational efficiency of the AWF. Moreover, the AfDB and AWF operations should be aligned as much as possible to maximize synergies between the two institutions.

Governance Arrangements

Recommendation 2: Given the political origins of the AWF, the composition of the Governing Council should be widened to include a broader set of stakeholders to improve strategic guidance, while the AfDB Board of Directors focuses on operational issues. This suggests reconfiguring the mechanisms of engagement of the AWF and AMCOW, considering their respective mandates. To improve the working relations between the two entities, areas of duplication and comparative advantage should be assessed holistically within their strategic frameworks to forge the needed synergy in the delivery of their mandates.

Results Reporting, Communication, and Learning

Recommendation 3: The AWF should improve its results reporting and communication (about the AWF as a Facility, its operations, and achievements) to its range of stakeholders. Outcome monitoring should be intensified to provide the evidence needed to engage proactively with donors in the interest of resource mobilization. This should be done through appropriate communication mechanisms, whilst also increasing efforts to generate and disseminate requisite knowledge on lessons from its interventions to facilitate learning. Accordingly, the AWF should consider developing a sound knowledge management actions plan that is aligned with its intervention strategies, with appropriate staffing and financial resources, and output targets.

Improved data management and an information database should be a priority for AWF. This should include AWF having all Project Appraisal Reports (PARs),

Implementation Progress Reports (IPRs), and Project Completion Reports (PCRs), and Project Completion Evaluation Report (PCREs) on hand.

Efficiency of AWF Operations

Recommendation 4: The AWF should adopt concrete measures to improve its operational efficiency for optimal delivery on its mandates. Towards this, the AWF should work to improve on i) the core processes and procedures on project assessment, planning, preparation and appraisal in relation to cost and time, ii) procurement and administrative arrangements to minimize and/or avoid procedural delays, and iii) mechanisms to strengthen its capacity and that of Executing Agencies for efficient implementation.

Visibility and Advocacy Role

Recommendation 5: The AWF should engage more with decision-makers (i.e., politicians, academics research, and the whole range of development partners and actors) in RMCs to increase its visibility, synergies and coordination, and deepen advocacy and policy engagement for adequate quantity, capacity and skill levels of professional human resources in the water and sanitation sector on the continent. The AWF should continue to market itself to donors to renew their participation and engagement, thereby increasing its financing.

Readers are encouraged to consult the full report and additional discussion on each of the recommendations.

1 INTRODUCTION AND CONTEXT

1.1 Report Contents

The Universalia Management Group Limited (henceforth, “Universalia”) is pleased to submit this final evaluation synthesis report to the African Development Bank (AfDB) – Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV) unit. This report summarizes the findings, conclusions, and recommendations emerging from the independent evaluation of the Africa Water Facility (AWF) for the period 2005-2018.

1.2 African Water Facility

The AWF is an initiative of the African Ministers’ Council on Water (AMCOW) and is hosted and managed by the African Development Bank (AfDB) at the request of AMCOW. Established in 2004, the Facility aims at boosting water sector investment in Africa, while at the same time strengthening capacity for water governance and promoting water knowledge. The AWF received its first funding in 2005 and became operational in 2006 when it funded its first project: *Support for the creation of the Volta River Basin Authority*. The AWF is a multilateral Special Fund that provides grants and technical assistance to enable governments, non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and private-public partnerships to address the increasing investment need for the development and management of water resources in Africa, towards meeting the goals and targets of the Africa Water Vision (AWV) 2025 and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs).

The AWF is a demand-driven, African-led Facility that is focused on Project Preparation, Water Knowledge, and Water Governance, providing grants and technical assistance to ensure that projects are bankable, viable and future-proofed, with a clear opportunity for effective implementation. Projects can last from two to five years depending on the complexity and scope. Grants range from €50,000 to €5,000,000. Occasionally, the AWF also provides grants to fund the implementation of small-scale pilot projects. Since its inception, the AWF developed three strategic periods and foci, namely 2005-2011, 2012-2016, and 2017-2025.

AWF Operational Strategy 2005-2011 Key Strategic Pillars

The 2005-2011 AWF strategy had four pillars, corresponding to four areas of intervention of the African Water Vision. The four pillars include the following: (i) Consolidating Water Governance; (ii) Encouraging investments to satisfy needs for water; (iii) Consolidating the financial base; and (iv) Improving skills and knowledge of water.

AWF Strategy Plan 2012-2016 Strategic Priorities

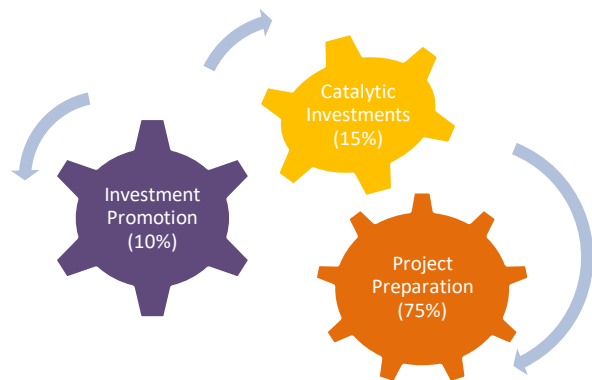
The second AWF Strategic Plan (2012-2016) had three strategic priorities: (i) Prepare Bankable Projects for effective and sustainable investments; (ii) Enhance Water Governance to create the conducive environment for effective and sustainable investments; and (iii) Promote Water Knowledge for the preparation of viable projects and informed governance leading to effective and sustainable investments

AWF Strategy 2017-2025 Key Strategic Pillars

The AWF supports a wide portfolio of water projects across a broad range of sectors: Agricultural water management; Drinking water; Environmental management; Flood and drought protection; Fisheries; Hydropower; Industry; Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM); Sanitation and hygiene; Transport; Transboundary Water Resource Management (TWRM); and Tourism. Committed to

environmental and social sustainability and to promote viable projects, the AWF aims to have its projects address climate change adaptation and mitigation, gender and social equity, and environmental and social protection.

The Governing Council of the AWF decides the general policy and direction of the Facility. It is made up of 13 members appointed by AMCOW, donors to the Fund, the AfDB, the African Union (AU), and UN-Water/Africa. Since 2006, the AWF has mobilized €163 million (€171.5 million including cumulative net interest earned) from 15 bilateral, multilateral financial institutions, foundations, and African governments, namely: AfDB, Algeria, Australia, Austria, Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation, Burkina Faso, Canada, Denmark, European Commission (EC), France, Nordic Development Fund, Norway, Senegal, Spain, Sweden, and United Kingdom (UK).



2 PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, AND SCOPE OF THE EVALUATION

2.1 Purpose and Objectives of the Evaluation

AWF operations are guided by a series of strategies and operational programs, the focus of which has evolved over the years to provide sufficient room to address changing demands in the water sector. Since starting its operations and through the period covered by the evaluation, the AWF has developed a portfolio of grants covering 118 national and multinational projects worth €163.3 million in 52 of the 54 countries in Africa.

After almost 15 years of implementation, an independent evaluation of the AWF was commissioned by the AfDB, the Trustee of the AWF, following a recommendation by its Board of Directors in 2018. This evaluation builds on an operational review and institutional assessment of the AWF that was conducted in 2010-2011 after 5 years of operation (2005-2009) to prepare the 2012-2016 Strategy.³ The objective of the 2010-2011 study was to undertake a review of the operational activities and the institutional set-up to determine the effectiveness of the AWF and identify areas of improvement needed to achieve its objectives and mandates. Major issues the review sought to address included resource mobilization, internal organization, capacity to scale up projects, and more systematic formulation and dissemination of lessons learned from all the projects.

In line with the Terms of Reference (ToRs), the purpose of the current evaluation was threefold:

- To help the AfDB account for the performance of the AWF during the period 2005-2018 and disclose results to the targeted audience of the evaluation (hereinafter referred to as the Audience) in a transparent manner.
- To help the AfDB extract learnings from the implementation of the AWF for the period covered by the evaluation (2005-2018).
- To help the AfDB identify gaps in the design and implementation of the AWF projects and propose practical remedial actions or recommendations for improvement of the Fund and of the grant management processes.

³ Association WEDC-HYDROCONSEIL. *Operational review and institutional assessment of the African Water Facility*. October 2010.

The evaluation had a dual objective of *accountability* (by looking at the organizational and development effectiveness of the AWF) and *learning* (by identifying lessons on what has worked, not worked and why). It has been commissioned to make actionable and relevant recommendations and guiding future AWF operations.

Evaluation Users

There are a wide range of users of the independent evaluation results, including the African Water Facility Trust Fund (AWFTF), AWF's Governing Council, AMCOW, AfDB's Board of Directors, AfDB's Water Development and Sanitation Department (AHWS) Management, Donors, potential donors, Regional Members Countries (RMCs), and many institutions (at continental and global levels) with a mandate related to water in Africa – such as Regional Economic Commissions (RECs), River Basin Organizations (RBOs), the African Network for Basin Organizations (ANBO), water research institutions and others.

2.2 Evaluation Scope and Questions

2.2.1 Scope of the Evaluation

Drawing on the ToR and in agreement with IDEV and AWF, the evaluation team outlined the following evaluation scope:

- **Temporal Scope:** The evaluation covered and was inclusive of all AWF work from 2005 through to 2018. The evaluation considered all three strategic periods and foci, namely 2005-2011, 2012-2016, and 2017-2025 (Table 2.1).
- Project Preparation, Water Governance, and Water Knowledge.
- **Geographic Scope:** Since AWF operates all over Africa, and activities have been funded in 52 countries, the evaluation aligned with this scope. Notably, the evaluation's sampling strategy considered the five geographic regions of Africa to ensure a continental balance, as follows: West Africa, East Africa, Southern Africa, Central Africa, and North Africa.
- **Analysis of Multinational Projects and Country Operations Combined:** Multinational projects are by far the most frequent projects financed by AWF. They notably include projects with sub-regional organizations (basin authorities, sub-regional economic cooperation mechanisms) as direct beneficiaries. A number of multinational projects are continental (with AU member states as direct beneficiaries). The evaluation team sampling strategy included the association of multinational projects with the countries involved in multinational projects. (See Annex II for details).

2.2.2 Evaluation Questions

In line with the evaluation areas indicated in the ToR, the evaluation was focused on seven main evaluation questions (see Table 3.1), that were further operationalized into evaluation sub-questions (see the Evaluation Matrix in **Error! Reference source not found.**). While sub-questions drew largely on the questions provided in the ToR they were rearranged, refined and or complemented. Doing so helped structure the evaluation, both with greater coherence and in line with the priority interests of the AfDB and AWF.

Table 2.1 Main Evaluation Questions

MAIN EVALUATION QUESTIONS	EVALUATION CORE AREAS
1. To what extent is the AWF a relevant instrument for supporting Africa to address water-related challenges?	AWF Global Role and Relevance
2. To what extent and under what circumstances has the AWF achieved its strategic objectives: strengthening the financial base for water-related investments in Africa, meeting basic water needs, enhancing conducive water governance, and promoting water knowledge?	AWF Effectiveness (Development and Organizational)
3. To what extent and how have the AWF institutional design and management arrangements and processes supported the achievement of the Facility's development objectives?	
4. To what extent are the results achieved by the AWF likely to be sustained over time?	Sustainability of AWF Results
5. To what extent and how have AWF operations been optimal in achieving the Facility's objectives?	AWF Efficiency
6. To what extent have the cross-cutting issues of capacity development, gender mainstreaming, environmental sustainability, climate change, and good governance been considered by the AWF?	Cross-cutting Issues
7. What are the major areas of improvement needed to enable successful future operations of the AWF?	Forward-Looking Dimensions

3 METHODOLOGY

3.1 Evaluation Approach

In line with the status of the AWF portfolio, summative and formative approaches were used to conduct the evaluation. A summative approach was used to assess all completed projects, especially those falling under the first two strategic periods, with long-term outcomes, impact, and issues of sustainability being assessed. This approach served both accountability and learning purposes. It allowed the evaluation team to draw lessons about past performance, intent on informing ongoing and future AWF efforts at various levels: organizational, management, strategic, and operational.

For third phase projects (i.e. those since 2017, many of which were still ongoing at the time of the evaluation, a formative approach was pursued, allowing the evaluation team to ascertain AWF progress towards its main objectives and expected outcomes. The formative approach was geared towards course-correction, both analytically and in informing recommendations. The evaluation also examined institutional dimensions of the AWF as a Facility, as well as the broader governance structures in which it operates.

The overall evaluation approach was systems-based. The evaluation considered progress made by the AWF towards achieving the results (and objectives) specified in its intervention logic(s) across the three strategic periods. It also assessed the internal and external conditions and factors that shaped the actuality and/or likelihood of observed results (e.g. the context of the implementation of the AWF supported projects, the assumptions made, etc.). The evaluation entailed a multi-level (i.e. global, regional, national, etc.) approach. It was retrospective in its assessment of progress and forward-looking in its orientation as input for the AWF's continued improvement.

3.2 Core Components of the Evaluation

The evaluation comprises five core deliverables, as follows: Inception Report; Portfolio Review; Policy and Literature Review; Case Studies; and a Synthesis Report. Each is discussed separately below.

3.2.1 Inception Report

An Inception Report outlined the key issues that emerged during the inception phase of this evaluation. It clarified the scope of the evaluation and updated the methodology described in the ToR. The Inception Report was developed with the input and guidance of consulted IDEV and AWF staff. It was supported by a preliminary review of documents carried out by the evaluation team.

3.2.2 Portfolio Review

The Portfolio Review was a desk-based exercise, which began after the Draft Inception Report was submitted. The portfolio review was informed by Project Appraisal Reports (PARs), Project Completion Report Evaluation Notes (PCREs), Project Completion Reports (PCRs), and Implementation Progress Reports (IPRs). The focus of the portfolio review was to assess the performance of all projects funded by the AWF under each strategic period, based on the evaluation criteria agreed to for this evaluation. An excel-based review grid mirroring the evaluation matrix was developed and used to assess projects against stated objectives per strategic period. Grounded in this approach, the evaluation team was able to draw insights both anchored in and cutting across strategic periods, thereby capturing strategic, outcome and sustainability insights of the portfolio as a whole. A Portfolio Review report was prepared, comprising a series of findings per evaluation criteria and areas of inquiry, which were further explored through the case studies.

3.2.3 Policy and Literature Review

The Policy and Literature Review followed a similar approach to the Portfolio Review, although with a different scope. The level of inquiry and analysis was more regional, global, strategic and organizational, providing contextual analysis to the functioning of the AWF. This served to inform the evaluation's analysis of the AWF global role and relevance, as well as its organizational effectiveness, in particular.

3.2.4 Case Studies

A series of nine case studies served to illustrate the importance of country context to the implementation of AWF-supported projects. Following discussions with AfDB and AWF, the following countries were selected for field missions to inform the case studies: Cameroon, Côte D'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia, and Zambia. Countries – and projects – were selected based on the following major criteria: representation of Africa's five regions; reflective of AWF spending in various regions; participation in multinational projects; the existence of country-specific projects that target various AWF focal areas; participation in three strategic periods; and, prior evaluation team experience of the national water sector. Case studies were constructed as per the following four themes, reflective of AWF priorities: Improved Water Governance; Greater Water Resources Leveraged; Improved Water Knowledge; and Organizational Support Provided by the AWF.

The Case Study Synthesis report has been prepared, encapsulating the body of knowledge and learning that has emerged from the fieldwork.

3.2.5 Synthesis Report

The current report synthesizes findings and evidence collected through the study's aforementioned deliverables (Portfolio Review, Policy and Literature Review, and Case Study Reports). It has been structured according to the evaluation questions and matrix. Ahead of submission, it was subjected to internal quality assurance procedures and consistency checks to ensure triangulation and minimize potential bias.

3.3 Data Collection and Analysis

Specific data collection instruments and practices, discussed below, allowed the evaluation team to answer these evaluation questions and related sub-questions.

3.3.1 Desk Review

The evaluation team conducted a systematic review of a variety of relevant AWF materials, both provided by the AfDB and secured through the evaluation team's independent research. Documents included (but were not necessarily limited to) AWF strategies and operations, program and project documents, work plans, internal monitoring and evaluation products (operational and financial progress reports), and other relevant documentation. Secondary data gathered included AMCOW water-related strategic documents, reports, websites, archives, funding proposals submitted by AWF applicants, minutes of meetings, and so on. The evaluation team also consulted relevant additional global and/or country-specific documents on water issues (e.g. country water development and management strategies, water policies, etc.).

3.3.2 Semi-structured Interviews

Semi-structured, key informant interviews were conducted with a wide range of internal and external AWF stakeholders. Such stakeholders included the AWF Governing Council, AfDB's Board of Directors, AWF staff, AMCOW members, donors, partners, etc. Interviews were conducted either remotely (via videoconference, telephone) or face-to-face. In the latter case, the evaluation team met interviewees at AWF Headquarters in Abidjan, during in-country visits, or at strategically selected events (e.g. the 13th AWF oversight committee meeting in Tanzania).

Overall, the total number of interviewees is 146 people, distributed as follows: 30% were women and 70% men; 19% from AWF/AfDB; 26% from government ministries and agencies; 11% were donors and partners; 30% from implementing agencies/institutions; 7% from NGOs; and 7% were beneficiaries. (See Annex III for details on the different categories and numbers of people interviewed).

3.3.3 Focus Group Discussions

Focus Group Discussions (FGDs), used primarily during field visits, allowed the evaluation team to explore topics of interest with specific stakeholder groups (e.g. water services providers, NGOs/civil society organizations [CSOs], state officials, etc.). In particular, FGDs were held with AWF beneficiaries (in-country), wherever and whenever possible to convene them. Relevant partners of the AWF at country level were encouraged to participate in these discussions.

3.3.4 Online Survey

An online survey (consisting of 27 specific questions) was implemented, targeting more than 250 potential respondents identified by the AWF. Based on a five-point Likert scale, the survey sought to gather data on the overall relevance, effectiveness, and value-added of the AWF and supported

projects. Respondents represented implementing agencies, beneficiaries, stakeholders and AfDB staff. The survey aimed to reach clusters of respondents and was to provide additional evidence on AWF performance.

Despite extending the deadline and sending multiple reminders, the survey's response rate remained too low to be of any use in this evaluation (see Table 3.2 for survey results). It was thus discarded.

Table 3.1 On-Line Survey Data

SURVEY	NUMBERS
Total Duplicates/Rejections	150
Actual Total Recipients	169
Total Full Responses	23
Response Rate	13%

3.3.5 Data analysis

A database was created which enabled the team to analyze data based on evaluation criteria, questions and sub-questions from interviews and focus group discussions. This information was gathered using the interview protocols developed for each stakeholder group. In line with the summative approach, assessment of past performance was combined with this data gathered from the desk review, portfolio review and other input from informants from the case studies and field research, to triangulate and analyze the data to support the findings.

This approach allowed for analysis of the AWF at organizational, management, strategic, and operational levels, within the context of its relevance, efficiency, organizational effectiveness, development effectiveness, and sustainability. This was complemented by a formative approach that analyzed the 3rd phase's progress towards achievement of its main objectives and expected outcomes.

3.4 Limitations

The evaluation team faced some limitations in the design and implementation of this mandate, with specific reference to the portfolio review, the online survey, and country case studies, as follows:

1. While an appraisal report was available for all projects financed by the AWF since 2005, other reporting documents (IPRs, PCRs, and PCREs) were only available for a more limited number. As a result, the portfolio review report was informed by 118 Project Appraisal Reports (PARs), 14 Implementation Progress Reports (IPRs), 49 Project Completion Reports (PCRs), and 11 Project Completion Evaluation Report (PCREs). The IPR was not used in cases where a PCR was available to review a project. *Due to the limited availability of documents, data presented in the portfolio review report is based only on available documents.*
2. While most PARs and reporting documents follow a predetermined template, a few reporting documents use a different template, with different indicators and ratings. Even in cases where the standard template was used, it did not always include the same indicators and ratings. For example, PARs do not systematically report on project relevance to AWF strategic priorities for 2005-2009 projects. By comparison, PARs for projects implemented since 2012 do include a section on a project's relevance to AWF strategic priorities. Consequently, data provided to the evaluation team was either incomplete or needing interpretation on some criteria. *To address*

this, the evaluation team identified aspects in the reports which related to AWF strategic priorities per period.

3. While several cross-cutting themes were included as part of the evaluation criteria, the PARs, IPRs, and PCRs did not include specific sections or ratings on how projects dealt with cross-cutting issues. PCREs, PCRs, and IPRs do not include criteria nor ratings on the inclusion of cross-cutting themes in project design and results. *To circumvent this limitation, the evaluation team included some criteria in the portfolio review template to assess the integration of cross-cutting issues in each project reviewed.*
4. While an online survey was prepared and distributed to 319 email contacts provided by the AWF, 106 of these addresses were either duplicates or rejected by the server. The actual total number of recipients was 213. Subsequent messages also encountered 44 further “problem” tags, reducing the actual total recipient numbers to 169. Despite numerous reminders and three deadline extensions, only 23 full responses were received, representing a response rate of 13%. *The survey was deemed unusable by the evaluation team.* The evaluation team’s experience related to the on-line survey points to significant limitations of the existing AWF database in terms of validating contact persons.
5. The evaluation team received uneven support in the preparation of country missions which, in some instances, made it difficult for the team to meet with the former staff of selected projects. The Côte d’Ivoire, Tunisia, and Zambia case studies encountered some limitations in scheduling interviews as a result, – despite support from AfDB country offices and AWF staff. *Consequently, some of the different case studies rely on documents (e.g. existing grey literature) to varying extents, with higher relative reliance in the preparation of case studies related to these three countries.*

4 RELEVANCE OF THE AWF

4.1 Introduction

This chapter of the report addresses the strategic relevance of the AWF. It focuses on the extent to which the AWF is a relevant instrument for supporting Africa to address water-related challenges. It examines the extent to which programs and activities of the AWF are competing with/or complementing others providing similar support. It further discusses issues of the AWF’s regional relevance.

4.2 Addressing Water-related Challenges

Finding 1: The AWF is a highly relevant instrument for supporting the African continent as a whole in addressing its water and sanitation challenges, in line with the African Water Vision 2025.

The AWF’s raison d’être is to address the continent’s water sector and sanitation challenges. Aware of trends in development assistance related to water and sanitation on the African continent, shortly after the establishment of Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM) as an international principle, the AU set out a framework for tracking its country members’ progress in water and sanitation. Coinciding with the year of a global agreement in setting 15-year targets for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), AMCOW was established in 2000, to provide the political leadership for achieving this mission. This newly established council of African ministers sought to alter the way development funds were invested on the continent regarding infrastructure provision. AMCOW’s

approach was influenced by the Dublin Principles in terms of pricing water for economic growth, human needs provision, and sustaining ecosystems.

To drive the work of AMCOW forward, the African Water Vision 2025 (AWV 2025) was developed with IWRM at the fore. It was drafted with the support of the Economic Commission for Africa, the AU, and the AfDB.⁴ The key elements in the framework for action of the AWV 2025 were: first, to strengthen the governance of water resources, as the institutional capacities at national levels were weak; second, to increase water wisdom, to develop better evidence of the state of the environment and the implications of human activities in depleting natural resources; third, to meet water needs through infrastructure development, and the construction of management systems to deliver water and sanitation services; and fourth, to strengthen the financial base for the desired water future. The AWF was created as a vehicle to help prepare projects for channeling widespread interest in investing in this vision. Through project preparation, the AWF was meant to leverage the financial resources to realize the AWV 2025.

4.3 Enabling “Soft” Development

Finding 2: The AWF has complemented traditional development finance. It has been positioned to contribute to building an enabling environment for infrastructural and other development. The AWF’s focus on “soft” development aspects, like project preparation, innovation, and policy development, has given it a unique value add to addressing the continent’s water and sanitation challenges.

An analysis of trends in Official Development Assistance (ODA) shows that support to multilateral institutions has remained steady over the past decade, capturing approximately 28% of overall ODA. Within this stream, however, there has been a rapid rise from 12% of ODA to 40% of all ODA transiting through multilateral institutions being earmarked for Trust Funds that are either country-based or thematically based.⁵ This has enabled a mushrooming of Trust Funds, which have served as specific vehicles to cater to development priority themes.

The successful ODA development interventions in Asia and Latin America over the decades have enabled national transitions towards middle-income status⁶ The remaining low-income and least developed countries are now concentrated in Africa. According to Rogerson and Barder, the International Development Association (IDA)⁷ is quickly becoming an “African Facility” and is equipped with large concessional funds that were previously available to the AfDB soft window.⁸ Since 1995, the share of IDA spent in Africa has risen from 45% to 72%.⁹ In terms of institutional overlap, the IDA is duplicating the local presence of the AfDB with a wider and deeper field staff complement. However, The World Bank of recent is retreating from supporting RBOs, leaving the AfDB and AWF to be among

⁴ African Union *Africa Water Vision 2025* (2000).

⁵ Rogerson A., and Barder. O. *The Two Hundred Billion Dollar Question: How to Get the Biggest Impact from the 2019 Replenishments*. 2019

⁶ Ibid.

⁷ The International Development Association (IDA) is an international financial institution which offers concessional loans and grants to the world's poorest developing countries. The IDA is a member of the World Bank Group and is headquartered in Washington, D.C. in the United States.

⁸ Soft lending windows are financed directly by contributions from wealthy donor countries and are replenished every three to five years. The AfDB’s soft (or concessional) lending window is known as the African Development Fund (ADF).

⁹ Rogerson A., and Barder. O. *The Two Hundred Billion Dollar Question: How to Get the Biggest Impact from the 2019 Replenishments*. 2019

the remaining few funders of multinational projects in transboundary water basins. Also, to a certain degree, the AWF has been shielded by this growing duplication of institutions focused on concessional lending, due to its unique role in focusing on project preparation that others, including donors and RMCs, are not likely to finance. **Thus, one of the AWF's comparative advantages relates to the support it has provided for the preparation of bankable projects.**

Having sound bankable projects remains a precondition for accessing partners' funding. Through investment in project preparation, the AWF is a unique tool that has contributed to closing the financing gap in the African water sector. When water sector organizations and governments approach development partners, they are often expected to have projects already developed to a certain maturity level, implying that much preparatory work must be done in advance. Governments are not likely to finance such studies (through their funds or loans). Also, interviews conducted during field missions (e.g. in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Kenya, Rwanda, and Zambia) showed an absence of dedicated budget lines in the relevant Ministries budgets to sponsor studies and project preparation. Not only are resources for project preparation limited on the African continent, but capacity for preparation of quality projects that can attract investment financing (i.e. bankable projects) is weak on the continent and is an important contributor to the low number of investment-ready projects in Africa. **This is one important gap that the AWF is helping to bridge.**

AWF support bridges an important gap in the water sector in RMCs. All AWF projects in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, and Senegal involved technical and feasibility studies – thus creating knowledge needed for decision-making and project preparation, pre-requisites for attracting follow-on investments for water and sanitation infrastructure. In Rwanda, for instance, AWF support helped the government plan future investments in the sector, and is expected to help finance government water and sanitation efforts to meet ambitious targets. It was reported in the Country Case Study for Côte d'Ivoire that, while hydrological observation activities in the Niger Basin have been in place since the 1980s, and the capacities of hydrological services in RMCs were relatively developed, the monitoring and evaluation of water resources in these countries diminished significantly in the 1990s, notably due to structural adjustment programs. Thus, AWF support to the *Niger-HYCOS* project was perceived as a driving force for the sustainable revival of hydrological information systems at the Niger Basin-scale and their appropriation by the riparian countries.

In the case of Tunisia, all three sampled projects for this evaluation focused on improving country and regional information systems aimed at facilitating better strategic planning. The *Geo Aquifer Project by SSO* has created the scientific tools for monitoring the depletion of groundwater resources, with implications for shared resources across three countries (Algeria, Libya, and Tunisia). These tools are embedded in a set of protocols that facilitate joint decision-making about the planned allocation of water across the countries. Similarly, in South Africa, the AWF provided catalytic support in moving the *Multinational-Orange Senqu River basin: Preparation of a Climate-resilient water Resources Investments Strategy and Multipurpose Project*, hereby referred to as the *Lesotho-Botswana Transfer* project; from an evolving concept over ten years, through the formulation of an IWRM plan, into a high priority bankable project.

A second area of the AWF's additionality relates to its role in supporting and leveraging innovations that can be scaled-up to address water and sanitation challenges. The value add of the AWF's role in leveraging innovation has come out most clearly in the projects that were anchored within the first strategic phase (2005-2011), where greater emphasis was placed on knowledge management. As the AWF was defining its priorities, it allocated particular importance to innovation through actual funding of knowledge management and learning in the design of infrastructure projects, as highlighted in the country case studies, including Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Senegal, South Africa, and Tunisia. Some AWF projects were able to introduce innovative approaches – e.g. addressing sanitation issues in urban

areas across the sanitation value chain (e.g. see the *Promotion of Access to Toilets and Jobs in Bouaké and Katiola Through the Reuse of Sludge and Urine*¹⁰ project in Côte d'Ivoire, *Ziguinchor Sanitation Master Plan* in Senegal, the *Social Franchising Operations and Maintenance of School Sanitation Facilities* in South Africa). In Ghana, the influences of testing out different management models for constructing sanitation units and maintaining them combined with the scientific and academic research on how to reuse this waste had significant influence in pro-poor urban sanitation and reuse policy development. The importance of AWF is illustrated by the following quote:

“There is tremendous investment happening in urban sanitation in Ghana, ten years after the first urban sanitation for the poor AWF project started. The AWF is investing in a new pioneering opportunity through collaboration in secondary cities. This will create a new line up of investments that the AfDB can expand into”. (Government official from Ministry of Sanitation in Ghana)

**Box 1: Benefits of Working through Trust Funds in Continents without Strong Agency Presence:
Two Cases of Donors’ Interest in the AWF**

Due to limited budgets, development partners generally maintain that a light touch across a widespread is the preferred way to channel resources. At the same time, interviews with development partners about why they chose to support the AWF is revealing of the benefits of having a Special Fund to earmark thematic interests that aligned with their strategic priorities. A multilateral organization, like the AfDB that could enable continental reach at the same time as deepening a strategic focus in water and sanitation, made it a relevant institution for receiving support from certain international development aid agencies, including those of Australia and Austria. The strategic focus on developing an enabling environment during the first phase of the AWF was perceived as a good fit for both countries’ donor agencies who want to make a strategic, targeted investment in water in Africa and work with a broad range of countries.

Australia

Australia began working with the AWF in 2010. AusAID viewed the Fund as a regional governance facility in water and sanitation that aligned with its emerging African Water and Sanitation strategy. Given Australia had only Aud 5 million (US\$3.5 million) per annum to contribute, the AWF was of interest because it had a regional spread and was a flexible mechanism open to any country on the continent so long as they were willing to commit their resources. With a small contribution, Australia could leverage a larger set of players. Furthermore, by being hosted within the AfDB, AWF resources were assured quality oversight in the management of AusAID (and other donors) resources stemming from the agency’s due diligence requirements, while avoiding a duplication of project management that AusAID did not have the human resources to oversee. The AWF approach enabled the development of projects uniquely suited to a country and area of need, but with centralized oversight and management. Australia’s support remained until 2014, when the country’s Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade (DFAT)¹¹ shuttered its water and sanitation programming in Africa, reverting to its historic, geographic focus on Asia.

Austria

The Austrian Development Agency (ADA) has been a founding partner of the AWF and has been a consistent contributor to the Trust Fund ever since. It has remained active in the AWF because of an alignment of development interests related to water in Africa. At present, Austria is the only bilateral country supporting the AWF; from 2017 to 2019, Austria has contributed an annual amount of 500,000 Euros to the Special Fund of the African Water Facility and this will continue in 2020.

¹⁰ *Promotion de l'accès aux toilettes et aux emplois à Bouaké et Katiola à travers la réutilisation des boues et des urines.*

¹¹ AusAID was merged into the Foreign Affairs office in 2014, a similar process that occurred in Canada through the merger of CIDA into Global Affairs Canada (GAC). Much has been written about the merits of these mergers in terms of the hemorrhaging of development expertise that was lost in the process.

On a final note, there has been a growing consensus among multilateral organizations to encourage concessionary loans as the primary instrument for development finance, as more traditional, grant-based approaches to development have shifted their focus towards fragile countries. At the same time, there has been a decline in smaller parts of these large systems (e.g. specialized UN Agencies) that address more normative aspects of the development system, including knowledge generation. This coincides with the declining prioritization given to the knowledge-sharing stream of the AWF's work in the second part of the second strategic phase as well as in the third strategic phase. Some scholars are questioning whether it is a move in the right direction in terms of priority setting.

4.4 Complementarity of AWF's Support

Finding 3: The AWF is one of the few water-related actors that operates at the African continental scale in support of project preparation, enabling further co-production and co-financing of projects with a whole range of development partners and actors.

The global landscape has seen a flourishing ecosystem of actors supporting countries in improving the governance of water resource management (Global Water Partnership [GWP], World Water Council [WWC], United Nations Environment Programme [UNEP], International Water Management Institute [IWMI], International Development Research Centre [IDRC]), infrastructure provision (IDA, AfDB, Asian Development Bank [ADB], UNICEF, WaterAid) and knowledge brokering (GWP, Stockholm International Water Institute [SIWI], IDRC). In these three areas of water and sanitation practice on the continent, the AWF has sought out partnerships with the actors noted above through co-production and co-financing of projects and through supporting implementing agents.

Development finance across Africa, in terms of leveraging funds to trigger state and private sector investments, has been limited by the paucity of bankable projects, stemming from a limited capacity amongst the institutions above and others to adequately support project preparation. And where they exist, relevant institutions have generally focused at the sub-regional level. For instance, the Climate Resilient Infrastructure Development Facility (CRIDIF) has tried to address this gap in bankable projects for transboundary water infrastructure, but at the Southern African level only. Given the challenge that many governments have in fulfilling the administrative requirements to be eligible for AWF financing, CRIDIF, through its core funding from the UK Department for International Development (DFID), has supported governments in preparing applications for leveraging AWF finance, thereby complementing AWF interventions. **Nevertheless, the AWF remains one of the few actors that operates across the continent in addressing project preparation.**

No other facility on the continent has the AfDB as an entry point for collaborating with African states and stakeholders to drive innovation, preparing projects for further downstream investment as well as piloting potentially catalytic projects. This niche has enabled the AWF to reconcile both being demand-responsive to the Water and Sanitation (WATSAN) priorities of African governments while channeling these diverse demands into a thematic area of performance. Finally, the high demand pressures at the country level for widening access to water and sanitation have tended to influence country-level decision-makers to focus on tangible aspects, such as water supply infrastructures. This has contributed to a growth in demand for IDA and AfDB concessionary loan support for achieving these objectives. This has often been at the expense of neglecting soft development aspects such as policies, regulations, water knowledge and project preparation needed to ensure this infrastructure can be equitably and sustainably delivered. This narrow approach has created a huge gap over the past two decades, which AWF financing has been positioned to address.

The AWF is recognized by a major global foundation in terms of what it has to offer on influencing mainstream funding. The AWF can do this because it is recipient-administered, and the work is done

in the ministries of governments themselves. This is creating pathways for larger ADF grants and concessionary loans from the AfDB at country level. This is perceived as an influential space for the Fund to leverage how the AfDB itself invests in the sector. As such, the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) is continuously seeking out new opportunities for addressing the AWF's sustainability challenges. The BMGF has tried to inform how this could be done through exposure to the Asian Development Bank (ADB)¹² and World Bank in terms of Trust Funds that recover costs by embedding their work into the terms of the loans. The AfDB has been keen to explore this concept but to do so with all Trust Funds across the institution. This has inadvertently delayed the opportunity for the AWF to explore this option because of the inevitable delays when working at the pace of a larger bureaucracy.

Donors' interest in AWF during the phase 1 period was very much driven by searching for innovation concerning creating an enabling environment and with a focus on governance. By phase 2, with a shift to a greater focus on infrastructure provision, certain themes were highlighted within the AWF that were earmarked through donor funds, such as a special window for climate change in 2014 (supported by the Nordic Development Fund). In phase 3, with an overall shift in the AWF to bringing in private sector financing, this earmarking of special windows has continued with urban sanitation, funded by the Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation. The AWF has been careful to integrate these resources into their existing programming to retain a coherence in their Phase 3 strategy.

4.5 Regional Relevance

Finding 4: Projects supported by the AWF over the years have been generally consistent with the needs and priorities of recipient RMCs and/or Regional organizations.

AWF financed interventions have been implemented throughout three strategic periods and operational programs, as presented in Figure 4.1. While the first strategic period is more represented than other strategic periods in terms of the number of projects, the second is relatively more important in terms of the total amount the AWF invested. The trend points to a decrease in the AWF's portfolio in terms of the number of project interventions over the periods. A shift in emphasis from 'soft' governance, IWRM and knowledge management projects in the first strategy, to preparatory stages of infrastructure projects in the second and third strategy phases partially explains this. The latter type of project is more cost-intensive. Therefore, only a few projects can be supported with a given level of funding. This situation suggests, but does not confirm, a decreasing relevance of the Facility due to reduced resources. Other factors need also to be examined, such as declining donor contribution to AWF, which could be caused by multiple factors, including shifting donor interests, and failure of the AWF to market itself to donors.

¹² The Sanitation Financing Partnership Trust Fund (SFPF) under the Water Financing Partnership Facility (WFPF), established in 2013 between the Asian Development Bank (ADB) and the Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation (BMGF) through a Channel Financing Agreement, was designed to promote investments in fecal sludge management (FSM) focusing on non-networked sanitation and septage management, piloting technologies, policies and regulatory framework and project delivery mechanisms. Prior to the establishment of the SFPF, ADB's investment in non-networked sanitation and septage management was very low at \$3.8 million. Since 2014 SFPF has helped leverage a total of \$133.7 million investment in non-networked sanitation, far exceeding the target of \$75 million by 2020.

Projects supported by the AWF have been generally consistent with the needs and priorities of recipient RMCs, largely due to their alignment with a distinct set of strategic priorities. Indeed, each strategic period includes a distinct set of strategic priorities, objectives, or pillars pursued by the AWF.

In terms of strategic priorities per the 3 operational periods of the AWF detailed in Figure 4.2, the evaluation found that the AWF portfolio was dominated by projects aimed at strengthening water governance in the first strategic period (39 out of 68 projects had a water governance component). Project preparation is the most represented strategic priority from period 2 onwards (e.g. 27 out of 54 projects had a project preparation component in period 2). It is important to note that a single project can be relevant to more than one strategic priority.

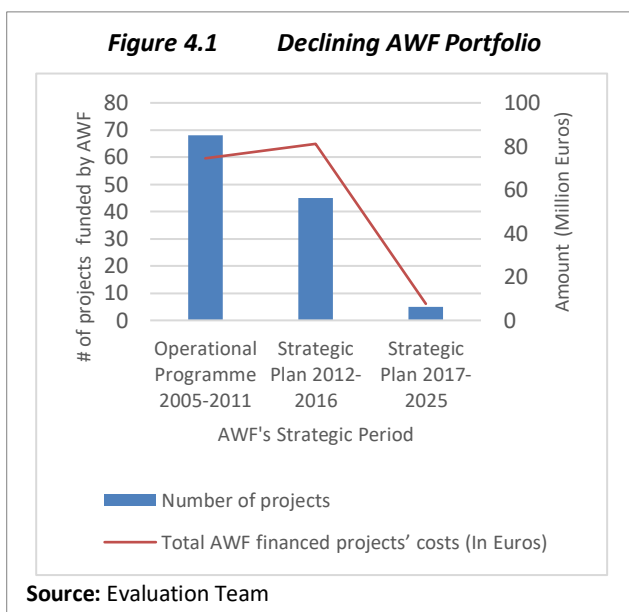
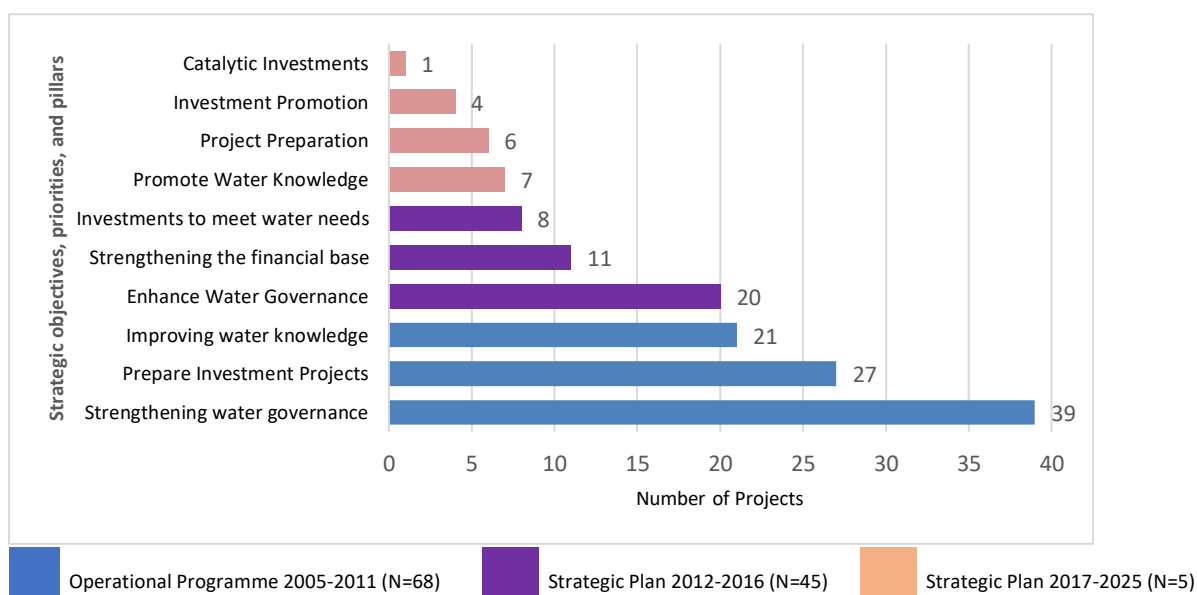


Figure 4.2 Alignment of AWF Projects Objectives with its Strategic Objectives, Priorities, and Pillars



Source: Evaluation Team, Portfolio Review.

Table 4.1 below shows that the AWF projects are distributed across the five African regions. East and West Africa are the most represented, both in terms of the number of projects and AWF financed projects' costs.

Table 4.1 *Distribution of Projects per Region¹³*

Regions	Projects		Total AWF financed projects' costs	
	#	Percent	Amount (In Euro million)	Percent
West Africa	35	29%	38.3	23%
East Africa	34	29%	43.6	27%
Southern Africa	16	14%	37.3	23%
Central Africa	13	11%	15.1	9%
North Africa	9	7%	13.1	8%
Projects covering more than one region	11	9%	15.9	10%
Total	118	100%	163.4	100%

By supporting TWRM and governance, AWF projects have been consistent with the needs of recipient Regional Organizations. The AWF supported many of the 80 shared river basins and lakes across the continent: Chad Basin, Kayanga Geba Basin, Niger Basin, Rweru and Cyohoha Lakes, Volta Basin, Congo Basin, Lake Victoria Basin, Songwe River Basin, Orange Senqu Basin, and Zambezi Basin. The AWF facilitated improved administration and management through the creation of new River Basin Organizations (e.g. Volta Basin Authority [VBA], Kayanga-Geba Authority) or strengthening of existing RBOs, thus enabling management of water resources at an appropriate scale.

The AWF enabled improved laws and regulations for shared water management. Some of the AWF projects helped involve riparian countries to craft framework agreements, cooperative mechanisms and planning processes for shared water. As such, they can allocate and regulate water more realistically and equitably, taking into account the interests and needs of each country. Examples include: (i) Draft Convention for the VBA; (ii) Development of the Water Charter for the Lake Chad Basin; (iii) Creation of the transboundary River basins organizations in the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS).

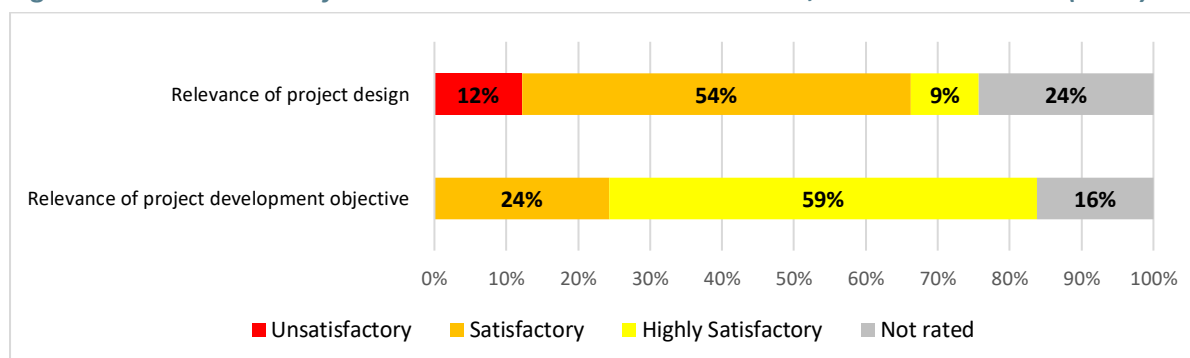
The AWF is focused on supporting the AfDB's High 5, although not addressing each one equally. Regarding the alignment of the AWF projects with the AfDB's High 5s (Table 4.2), i.e. its top priorities, the evaluation found that "improve the quality of life for the people of Africa" is overwhelmingly represented in comparison to other AfDB's priorities. Most projects under this priority are related to improving access to water and sanitation. The second most represented AfDB priority is "Feed Africa", with many projects aiming to increase the productivity of arable land and reducing poverty. "Industrialize Africa" is not represented in any of the 118 projects. It is important to note that a single project can be relevant to more than one AfDB High 5s.

¹³ This information is based on the evaluation team's review of the PARs, and thus includes all AWF interventions regardless of the availability of other reporting documents. More than 25 percent of all projects are multinational, while the remainder are country-specific interventions. Regarding projects' status, there were 53 projects completed, 26 ongoing, 32 closed, and seven projects were terminated.

Table 4.2 *Distribution of Projects Across AfDB's High 5s¹⁴*

AfDB's High 5s	Number of projects ¹⁵
Light up and power Africa	4
Feed Africa/	33
Industrialize Africa	0
Integrate Africa	17
Improve the quality of life for the people of Africa	59
Relevance to AfDB's High 5s but not explicit	27

The AWF has supported specific projects that are relevant to the AfDB's Ten Year Strategy, notably through their alignment to Green Growth dimensions. Such projects involved private sector development with particular support to small enterprises as engines for job creation and inclusion. An example of how the gender dimension is well blended with job creation and green growth is illustrated by the *Social Franchising Operations and Maintenance of School Sanitation Facilities* project in South Africa, enabling women to not only become economically productive through skills development in sanitation services but to also create jobs through the companies they have groomed to provide these services. Furthermore, this initiative has aligned with the AfDB's agricultural productivity priority by creating sanitation by-products through bio-char that can contribute to greater soil productivity for food production.

Figure 4.3 *Relevance of AWF Interventions as Assessed in PCRs, and IPRs and PCREs (N=74)¹⁶*

Source: Evaluation Team

"Not rated": There were multiple projects for which either a PCRE, PCR, or IPR was available, but no ratings were provided on the two indicators.

There is evidence to corroborate the high degree of relevance of the AWF's projects by drawing on the AfDB's systems for assessing the overall performance of AWF projects. The PCREs, PCRs, and IPRs included two indicators that assess the relevance of AWF projects, namely the relevance of project development objectives and the relevance of project design. As seen in Figure 4.3 above, most projects were rated satisfactory or highly satisfactory concerning these two indicators respectively. Overall, this is strong evidence that AWF projects were selected methodically, based on pertinent criteria that aligned with countries' priorities, and matched to the various priority periods and goals.¹⁷

¹⁴ This information is based on the evaluation team's review of the PARs, and thus includes all AWF interventions regardless of the availability of other reporting documents.

¹⁵ Projects can be relevant to more than one AfDB's High 5s. Hence, adding the total number of projects in the right column will result in more than 118 projects (the total number of projects).

¹⁶ This information is based on the evaluation team's review of the PCREs, IPRs, and PCRs. As a result, only 74 projects are represented in the table. As seen in the column "Not rated", there were multiple projects for which either a PCRE, PCR, or IPR was available, but no ratings were provided on the two indicators.

¹⁷ Evaluation Team, Portfolio Review.

5 DEVELOPMENT EFFECTIVENESS

5.1 Introduction

This chapter provides insights on the development effectiveness of the AWF. A subsequent chapter discusses organizational effectiveness. These are discussed separately, while also acknowledging the existence of overlaps and inter-connectivity between the two.

5.2 Overall Development Effectiveness

Finding 5: The AWF's development effectiveness is overall satisfactory, although there is an indication of a decline in recent years due to shifting strategies priorities. Nevertheless, AWF projects have satisfactorily achieved their outcomes or are on track towards reaching them. AWF has furthered the goals of the AWV 2025.

Since its creation in 2004, the overall goal of the AWF has been to contribute to sustainable development in Africa, by assisting RMCs in meeting the targets and goals for the water sector as established by the AWV 2025. All AWF's interventions contribute to the goals of the AWV 2025 as the Vision has a broad scope including mainstreaming IWRM, transboundary water governance, building water information systems, strengthening water financing, water supply, and sanitation, agricultural irrigation, hydropower production, water for industry, environmental conservation, and drought, flood and desertification management. Accordingly, the AWF delineated three broad support (or priority) areas, which also constituted the AWF's major output and outcome areas. These are: strengthening water governance, improving water sector knowledge and capacity, and preparation of projects for mobilizing capital investments. In this evaluation, the assessment of the AWF's development effectiveness was done by investigating the extent to which the AWF-supported projects have achieved their expected outcomes, and by identifying evidence of the changes created by these interventions in the African water sector.

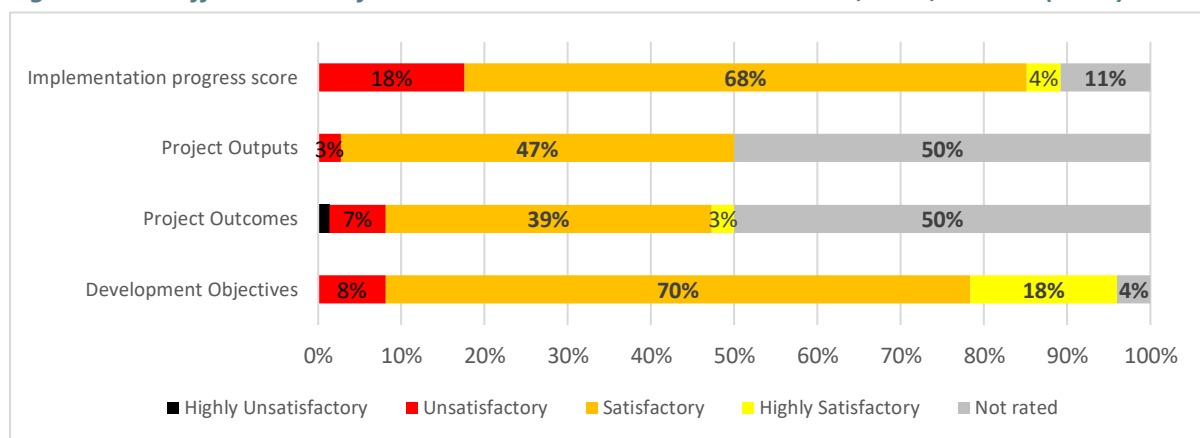
The AWF's development effectiveness is overall satisfactory. In phases 1 and 2, AWF's development effectiveness was achieved through the Facility's contribution to innovation through local-level pilots that supported knowledge generation. This has been influential in shifting the policy terrain at the national level. In recent years, the AWF's development effectiveness has been varying, due to the shift in strategic priorities and diminishing resources.

Despite the strategic shift in priorities, AWF projects have satisfactorily achieved their outcomes or are on track towards reaching them. The evaluation sought to understand the effectiveness of the projects supported by the AWF, based on four indicators included in consulted PCREs, PCRs, and IPRs: Implementation Progress Score; Project Outputs; Project Outcomes; and Development Outcomes. Results displayed in Figure 5.1 show that the majority of projects are rated satisfactory or above on these four indicators. Overall, these results suggest that the AWF completed projects have generally performed well in terms of achieving expected outputs and outcomes¹⁸ and that ongoing projects are on track. For example, in terms of impacting the lives of people, the cumulative number of beneficiaries from the AWF projects with a water supply component has been estimated at 7.8 million, while the

¹⁸ While this indicator is systematically included in IPRs, it was not systematically addressed in PCRs. As a result, there are many projects for which this indicator is not rated, although PCRs were available.

AWF projects with a sanitation component have reached about 7.1 million people (of which 52% were women).¹⁹

Figure 5.1 Effectiveness of AWF Interventions as Assessed in PCREs, PCR, and IPR (N=74)²⁰



Source: Evaluation Team, Portfolio Review.

The evidence collected from in-depth country case studies confirms that sampled AWF projects have had a significant influence on the African water sector. The major findings and evidence of the specific contributions made by the AWF supported projects in the African water and sanitation sector are detailed below. The analysis is structured into three themes: water governance (sanitation and water), capacity development, and knowledge management.

5.3 Water Governance

AWF projects have generated insights that positively influenced sanitation and water supply policies in RMCs. This discussion begins with a review of the implications on sanitation and follows with a more specific water-related discussion.

Finding 6: AWF projects have appropriately and successfully influenced the governance of sanitation in RMCs, in terms of stakeholder engagement, policy development and practice, improved planning and administration, private sector engagement, and in other ways.

The sanitation sector has been lagging in terms of attracting sufficient financial investments, principally because countries lacked adequate policy and regulatory frameworks. However, over the past decade, the sanitation sector has started attracting the attention of decision-makers, as evidenced by the establishment of dedicated ministries or national agencies, and the development and adoption of sanitation policies in many countries.

Of the AWF projects reviewed, 59 projects out of 111 focused on governance, which is over half the projects, based on their stated objectives. There was no specific rating assessing projects' contribution to water governance (focussing rather on development objectives, outputs, outcomes, sustainability, efficiency, and effectiveness). However, based on the case studies, key informant interviews, PCREs, PCR, and IPRs that included qualitative descriptions which indicated the project's contribution to

¹⁹ AWF Progress Report, 2018 pg 5.

²⁰ This information is based on the evaluation team's review of the PCREs, IPRs, and PCR. As a result, only 74 projects are represented in the table.

governance, capacity building, and the mobilization of finance, the evaluation team found a total of 49 demonstrated a positive contribution to water governance and capacity building respectively.

Examples of this include sanitation projects implemented in Côte d'Ivoire and South Africa served as springboards for implementing agencies to engage with relevant authorities at the country level, thus using insights and best practices (from project implementation) to influence thinking and action in the sector, which further influenced policy and legislation. The following examples are telling in this respect:

- During the implementation of the *"Promotion Accès Toiletes et Emplois à Bouaké et Katiola à travers la réutilisation des boues et des urines"* project in the cities of Bouaké and Katiola in Côte d'Ivoire, Care International and other project stakeholders managed to effectively engage and synergize with the National Sanitation Agency (ONAD). In so doing, project insights influenced the sanitation policy development process and legislation in the country. Building on the successful experience of this project in organizing and professionalizing private sanitation operators in the two cities, the minister in charge put in place in 2016 an agreement for the "vidangeurs" (faecal sludge emptiers) to be able to collect waste professionally. Further, ONAD put in place a Fund through which sanitation enterprises could access credit to buy trucks and other equipment needed to start businesses.
- The *Social Franchising Operations and Maintenance of School Sanitation Facilities* project in South Africa had similar effects. Aimed at piloting an innovative approach for dealing with the challenge of school sanitation maintenance and the safe and sustainable disposal of school faecal waste, the project generated useful insights, which stakeholders across numerous sectors drew upon to produce the School Sanitation and Menstrual Hygiene Management Guidelines for East London. The evaluation found that these guidelines were not only used in the province where the project occurred but were adopted by other provinces in the country.

AWF interventions enabled improved planning for sanitation at relevant levels (city, national, and regional) in RMCs. The sanitation challenge in Africa is very complex and multidimensional; however, a primary challenge for government agencies and other actors working on sanitation issues relates to poor and/or lack of planning and coordination of interventions. The AWF has supported projects that have contributed a solution to this problem at different levels. The *Ziguinchor Sanitation Master Plan* project²¹ implemented in Senegal and the East African Community *Lake Victoria Basin Commission Water and Sanitation Initiative* project (LVWATSAN) both illustrate the contribution of the AWF in that regard. Both projects involved activities that enabled target cities to identify their immediate and long-term needs in sanitation and to define and package solutions concrete plans.

- As a regional project, LVWATSAN enabled priority secondary towns of the Lake Victoria Basin to have, among other things, detailed drawings and specifications of sanitation plans that were used for tendering in the subsequent implementation projects, feasible and satisfactory investment plans, as well as financing and implementation plans available (and used in the Appraisal for the subsequent implementation project).
- The *Ziguinchor Sanitation Master Plan* project enabled the city to have a Sanitation Master Plan, with detailed investment projects, some of which subsequently obtained funding from the AfDB and the AWF. The former provided funding to build a wastewater treatment plant in the City, while the latter supported the construction of a city faecal sludge treatment plant. This evaluation found that the Sanitation project in Ziguinchor has had a great impact on urban sanitation planning in Senegal. Following the successful experience in Ziguinchor, the National

²¹ Étude du Plan directeur d'assainissement de Ziguinchor.

Sanitation Office (ONAS) has been able to develop 42 Sanitation Master Plan studies (since 2016).

The AWF interventions enabled improved administration and planning of sanitation in RMCs, notably by fostering the sanitation value chain approach and private sector involvement in urban sanitation. Within the context of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs), African countries have aimed at providing not just improved sanitation facilities (such as toilets) but safely managed sanitation services. The AWF has supported sanitation projects that have, among other things, fostered approaches to sanitation that take into account the whole sanitation value chain, while at the same time promoting the participation of private sector actors as an appropriate strategy towards a better organization of the provision of sanitation services in urban areas. In Senegal and South Africa, such projects targeted faecal sludge management, as discussed below.

- The *Ziguinchor Sanitation Master Plan* project in Senegal has contributed to an improved organization of faecal sludge management in the city (by supporting different segments of the chain), and to a professionalization of Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs) involved in faecal sludge emptying through dedicated capacity development activities. At the time of the evaluation, such SMEs had not as yet been authorized by ONAS in Senegal, but their existence already constitutes an important step towards a better administration of faecal sludge management services in the city.
- The *Social Franchising Operations and Maintenance of School Sanitation Facilities* project in South Africa strengthened the capacity (and contributed to the professionalization) of the five target SME social franchisees (4 females and one male). This resulted in each of the five SMEs acquiring significant industry-related professional growth during the implementation of the project, in terms of their respective Construction Industry Development Board (CIDB) grading status. All the SME franchisees achieved registration as suppliers on the National Treasury's Supplier Database and were fully tax compliant with statutory procurement requirements in South Africa, thus contributing towards the sustainability of the franchisees' businesses.²²

AWF projects influenced sanitation policy and practice in RMCs. Across the case studies prepared for this evaluation, evidence has been gathered of situations where AWF projects helped bring about positive change in the attitudes of water and sanitation actors on using wastewater or sludge as a resource (e.g. Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, South Africa). Implementation of AWF projects positively altered the way people at different levels perceived and dealt with urban wastewater. Two sanitation projects implemented in Ghana best illustrate this outcome, namely the *Improved Sanitation and Water Supply Service Delivery to the Urban Poor through Tripartite Partnership (TPP) 2012-2014* (the TPP project) and the *Design for Reuse-Harvesting the Value of Effluents and Nutrients for Sustaining for Operation of Sanitation Facilities* (the Re-use project).

- The *Re-use project* specifically convinced local planners and decision-makers to acknowledge (at policy level) and apply design-for-reuse principles. The adoption of the Resource Recovery Policy for the sanitation, energy and agriculture sectors (2018) demonstrates the achievement of that objective. Stakeholders engaged in Ghana acknowledged that the seeds planted by the Re-use project have started influencing the design and implementation of large-scale urban sanitation projects like the AfDB-funded *Greater Accra Sustainable Sanitation and Livelihoods Improvement Project (GASSLIP)* and the World Bank-funded Greater Accra Metropolitan Area project (GAMA).²³

²² AWF Project Completion Report on *Social Franchising for operation and maintenance of school sanitation facilities and demonstration of on-site faecal sludge treatment in East London, Eastern Cape*. 2019. Page 9

²³ AWF Project Completion Report for *"Design for Reuse-Harvesting the Value of Effluents and Nutrients for Sustaining for Operation of Sanitation Facilities."* 2014. Page 15

- The *TPP project* enabled the establishment of WASH platforms such as the Research Centre Network and Learning Alliances, which created successful opportunities for advocating the lessons learned from the various service delivery management arrangements that were trialed. These advocacy efforts resulted in the emergence of a collective consensus on the need for an “urban pro-poor WASH agenda” in Ghana. This was demonstrated by the formation of an urban pro-poor WASH group amongst key sector stakeholders (i.e. decision-makers in government, utilities, development partners and INGOs) and the establishment of a “pro-poor unit” at the Ghana Water Company Limited, the biggest water utility in the country.²⁴ The pro-poor WASH group identified gaps in the existing national sanitation policy concerning urban areas and developed the “Guidelines for Targeting the Poor and Vulnerable for Basic Sanitation in Ghana”, which was put out by the Ministry of Sanitation and Water Resources in 2018.

Finding 7: The AWF has been effective in enabling RMCs to introduce innovative models for the management of national water resources. It has fostered a strategic and integrated planning and management of water resources at the national level.

The 2015 Mid-term Review of AWF support indicated that, by this date, the AWF portfolio included 18 projects which had a National Water Resources Management (NWRM) component, with a total value of € 24.3 million. This amount accounted for 13% of total AWF funding (AWF, 2015). In many cases (e.g. Cameroon, Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, and Tunisia), AWF-supported projects allowed beneficiary countries to experiment with diverse and innovative water management and planning models at local and national levels to address water security issues. For instance:

- In Kenya, Rwanda, and Cameroon, projects were implemented with the support of AWF that sought to introduce new techniques and technologies for rainwater harvesting.²⁵ Generally, such projects aim at enhancing water availability, food security, poverty reduction, climate change adaptation, and sustainable livelihoods in targeted regions.
- The *Implementation of the IWRM Action Plan for Senegal*²⁶ project enabled the Ministry of Hydraulics and Sanitation to invigorate national water resources planning, notably by dividing the country into five water resources zones and 28 sub-zones, with each to have a customized IWRM Master Plan.
- In the Republic of South Africa, the *Operationalizing Community-Driven Multiple-Use Water Services (MUS)* project enabled the implementation of an innovative concept that had not as yet been adequately tested in South Africa. MUS is an approach that takes people’s multiple water needs as a starting point for planning and providing water services. It also emphasizes participatory approaches.²⁷ The approach proved to be of particular relevance in rural and peri-urban areas where poor people, with diversified agriculture-based livelihoods, need water for many purposes. The evaluation found that an increasing number of villages and districts, beyond the demonstration areas in Limpopo, were beginning to replicate the MUS approach.

²⁴ AWF Project Completion Report for “Ghana: Improved Sanitation and Water Supply Service Delivery to the Urban Poor in Ghana through Tripartite Partnerships.” 2017. Page 4

²⁵ Scaling up of Integrated Rainwater Harvesting and Management and Complementary Livelihood Systems (IRHMCLS) in Semi-Arid Districts of Kenya (2012 – 2016) (Kenya); Projet pilote à l’Introduction des Techniques de Collecte et d’Utilisation des Eaux de Pluie à Bugesera (Rwanda); Projet d’étude de mobilisation et de valorisation des eaux pluviales à travers des retenues collinaires dans la région du Nord Cameroun (Cameroun).

²⁶ *Projet de mise en œuvre du plan d’action Gestion Intégrée des Ressources en Eau (PAGIRE) du Sénégal.*

²⁷ The recently completed global Guidelines for Planning and Providing Multiple-Use Water Services synthesizes typical participatory stepwise planning and implementation processes: diagnosing problems, identifying informed solutions, prioritizing actions aligned with budgets, agreeing on work plans, implementation, and monitoring and evaluation (M&E).

- In Tunisia, AWF supported the *National Water Information System*²⁸ (SINEAU) project. It addressed the need to centralize and coordinate information systems related to the management of surface and underground water and of irrigated land. It did so by setting up monitoring mechanisms using standardized data in a single information system, the SINEAU, which serves as an umbrella for three sub-systems, namely: the Water Resource Management systems (SYGREAU); b) the Water Pollution Information system (COPEAU); and c) the Soil Information system (SISOLS).

The evaluation found that key stakeholders acknowledged the value of such a novel approach, pledging support for their being scaled up. For instance, the 2018 AWF annual report indicates that the Government of Rwanda has pledged an additional € 47.8 million in follow on investments resulting from the *Pilot project for the Introduction of Rainwater Harvesting and Utilization Techniques* in Bugesera.²⁹ The Kenyan Rainwater Harvesting Association, the implementing Agency for the *Integrated Rainwater Harvesting and Management and Complementary Livelihood Systems* (IRHMCLS) project, has been in continuous discussions with the government while seeking other financings from EU-based institutions, building on the success of the AWF project.

The AWF has fostered a strategic and integrated planning and management of water resources at the national level. The NWRM projects have enabled the creation of national frameworks for integrated water resources management at country levels. These frameworks span from country water visions to IWRM plans and associated implementation strategies.

The *Vision and Strategy for the Water Sector in 2050*³⁰ project in Tunisia best illustrates the contribution of AWF support to strategic national water planning. Developed by the Ministry of Agriculture and Hydraulic Resources, the project is focused on mobilizing financial resources for priority projects in the initial action plans that are to emerge from the long-term water sector strategy being drafted. Support for the strategic planning of the water resource at national level elsewhere is equally exemplified by many NWRM Plans developed with the support of the AWF. Similar examples from elsewhere include the formulation of IWRM plans for Burundi and Namibia.

From a water governance perspective, such projects have contributed to clarifying roles and responsibilities in managing water resources at the national level (or regional level), including responsibilities for water policy making, policy implementation, operational management, and regulation, while fostering co-ordination across these responsible authorities. Produced IWRM plans have generally enhanced the enabling environment for national water financing. In some cases, potential water financiers were associated with the whole process of developing IWRM plans, thus enabling funding commitments to be secured from these partners. In others, the plans served to convince donors and funders to provide financial resources. *Implementation of the IWRM Action Plan for the Senegal* project, for instance, enabled the development of two strategic planning instruments: a national Water Resource Mobilization Strategic Plan 2025, and the Investment Programme 2025. The evaluation found that, based on these plans, Senegal's Ministry of Hydraulics had been able to mobilize around FCFA 4 billion, so far, from the World Bank to further the implementation of Senegal's national IWRM plan.

Innovative strategic approaches being advanced by AWF (e.g. replicating & piloting innovative solutions, providing viability gap funding to leverage commercial finance, etc.), as espoused in the Facility's more recent strategic documents though they may not have yielded much to-date are

²⁸ *Système d'Information sur l'Eau de la Tunisie.*

²⁹ At the time of writing, it was not clear the extent to which such pledges had translated into concrete funding.

³⁰ *Élaboration de la Vision et de la Stratégie Eau 2050 de la Tunisie.*

considered as key interventions. The instrument with multiple constituencies (public and private; community to government) and represents a pivot from traditional development approaches.

Finding 8: AWF has furthered its support focused on the governance of transboundary water resources in river basins across the African continent. This support has helped promote cooperation among riparians and stakeholders, addressing institutional gaps for TWRM, and enabling the development of improved policies, laws, regulations and information systems for shared water management.

The AWF has provided key support to ten³¹ of the eighty shared river basins and lakes across the continent. In the period 2005-2018, the AWF supported the implementation of 31 multinational projects, aiming to foster water governance across the African continent. As of 2015, 19 such projects had been implemented with a TWRM component, with a total value of AWF funding of € 25.7 million. The funding to TWRM projects accounted for 23% of the total AWF funding commitment between 2006 and 2015.³²

This support has contributed to accelerating the conceptual and practical uptake of IWRM and TWRM in Africa, enabling a shift towards more integrated and coordinated water management, particularly at the basin level. AWF support has helped further the goals of the AWV 2025 in this respect. AWF support to transboundary water governance was particularly appreciated by African stakeholders consulted for this evaluation, cognizant that Africa has lagged behind other continents on the implementation of IWRM and TWRM. According to a recent report,³³ Sub-Saharan Africa has the lowest average implementation levels of IWRM.

AWF support helped to address institutional gaps in the governance of transboundary water resources at different levels. The management of shared water systems in many parts of Africa has suffered from weak and or lack of appropriate administrative institutions. Through different projects and at different scales, the AWF helped supported countries address some existing governance weaknesses, in the areas of coordination, planning, and management of water resources, regulatory frameworks, environmental and resources monitoring, information management and policy development.

- At the basin level, AWF supported the creation of new RBOs (e.g. VBA; provision of ongoing support to four ECCAS member countries – Cameroon, Congo, Equatorial Guinea, and Gabon – to create a Transboundary Basins Authority). Alternatively, the AWF supported the strengthening of existing RBOs (e.g. Niger Basin Authority [NBA]); the International Commission for the Congo-Ubangi-Sangha Basin [CICOS]). This type of support has enabled improved planning and management of water resources at an appropriate, basin, scale. The following illustrates this point.
- At the regional level, the ECCAS Regional Water Policy project enabled the establishment of a Regional Water Resources Management Center (RWRMC), aimed at fostering IWRM in the ECCAS Region Member States. Approval of the RWRMC by the ECCAS Council of Ministers and ECCAS Assembly of Heads of State and Government provided strong political footing, making it

³¹ Chad Basin, Kayanga Geba Basin, Niger Basin, Rweru and Cyohoha Lakes, Volta Basin, Congo Basin, Lake Victoria Basin, Songwe River Basin, and Zambezi Basin.

³² AWF AWF Portfolio Review – Transboundary Water Resources Management Projects. 2015

³³ UN Environment Programme Progress on integrated water resources management. Global baseline for SDG 6 Indicator 6.5.1: degree of IWRM implementation. 2018

a powerful water governance institution and instrument. At the same time, the evaluation found that RWRMC, an important building block for effective governance of water resources at the regional level, still faces capacity challenges (e.g. insufficient human and financial resources).

The AWF contributed to strengthening dialogue and cooperation among riparian countries, thus preventing water-related disputes tensions and conflicts at the basin or regional level. Literature and evidence from the field demonstrate that the first generation of efforts in African countries to improve the governance of shared water has begun with governance instruments, notably by implementing legal and regulatory reforms.³⁴ Seeing the results of these interventions can take a decade or two as the evolution of transboundary governance frameworks to mature into joint decision-making structures takes time. In terms of transboundary water management, perhaps the greatest progress has been made in Southern Africa, with the Southern African Development Community (SADC), with South Africa driving the process of setting up strong basin institutional structures.³⁵ Many other countries still struggle to do so. And where good policies and regulatory frameworks exist, countries often lack appropriate mechanisms to ensure active implementation, coordination, monitoring, and evaluation to actualize them.

Box 2: Examples of TWRM Legal, Institutional Instruments Created with AWF Support

- Draft Convention for the VBA
- The Water Charter for the Lake Chad Basin
- Convention on the Legal Status of Kayanga / Geba and Koliba / Corubal Rivers
- Updated Water Charter in Senegal (emphasizing IWRM principles)

Source: AWF Progress Report, September 2019.

This evaluation found that AWF contributed to the creation of such frameworks in many places in Africa (e.g. the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries [ECGLC], Kayanga-Geba River member countries and Southern Africa States). The AWF portfolio comprises many projects that speak to this outcome, including:

- The development of the *Regional Programme for the Integrated Development of the Ruzizi Plain* project (PREDIR)³⁶ enabled the creation of three national technical committees, one in each country of the Economic Community of the Great Lakes Countries (ECGLC): namely Burundi, Rwanda, and Democratic Republic of Congo. The committees are constituted of the countries' respective ministries of agriculture, finance, and environment, along with private sector representatives. The evaluation found that these committees have had a positive impact on water dialogue between the three countries, in a context where cooperation among ECGLC Member States was weak.
- According to the project PCR, a lack of consultation between Kayanga-Geba River member countries had made it difficult to address concerns of downstream water users, thus creating tensions between Senegal and Guinea Bissau. The AWF supported project helped to improve this situation. IWRM studies conducted on the river and subsequent preparation of joint investment projects enabled these countries to have better information and understanding about the state of the shared resource and to foresee positive effects from their transboundary water management. All this has likely strengthened cross-border cooperation.
- The Lesotho-Botswana water transfer project opened space for greater engagement and cooperation between Southern Africa states, whereby South Africa worked bilaterally with Namibia, Lesotho, and Botswana regarding transboundary water management.

³⁴ AfDB. 2009. *Water Sector Governance in Africa. Volume 1, Theory and Practice.*

³⁵ Swatuk, L.A. and L. Wirkus. *Transboundary water governance in southern Africa: Examining underexplored dimensions* 2009.

³⁶ *Élaboration du Programme régionale de Développement intégré de la Plaine de Ruzizi.*

The AWF support enabled improved policies, laws, and regulations for shared water management. Amongst the 30 multinational projects hosted by the AWF, several involving riparian countries have enabled respective national governments to jointly craft framework agreements, cooperative mechanisms and planning processes for shared water.³⁷ As a result, governments are further able to allocate and regulate water more realistically and equitably, taking into account the interests and needs of each country. The following illustrates this point.

- The *IWRM plan of the Kayanga-Geba River Basin*³⁸ project (Gambia, Guinea Bissau, Guinea, and Senegal) played an instrumental role in accelerating the signing of the Convention on the legal status of Kayanga / Geba and Koliba/ Corubal Rivers. Despite the adoption in 1987 by the Heads of State of the extension of the Gambia River Basin Development Organization³⁹ competence to these rivers, extension projects had never been signed by Guinea Bissau. However, as soon as the AWF project was approved, the OMVG Council of Ministers signed a Resolution on the status of the Kayanga / Geba River and the problem was partly resolved.
- On the policy side, the ECCAS Regional Water Policy project has contributed to raising consciousness among Member States about the importance of having national IWRM-oriented water policies, which has now started happening. In countries such as Cameroon, efforts are ongoing towards the development of such a national water policy, though constrained by the contextual environment and its as yet limited receptivity to IWRM.

AWF has provided key support to enable more effective information management for improved decision-making at the basin level. AWF operations are underpinned by the belief that improved water governance banks on sound water information management and systems at different levels (e.g. national or basin levels). Throughout its existence, AWF has financed projects aimed at improving knowledge of the water resource as well as infrastructure in RMCs. More specifically, as of 2015, the AWF portfolio included 27 projects with a knowledge management component, for a total value of €37.1 million), equivalent to 31% of AWF funded projects since 2006.

AWF knowledge projects addressed diverse dimensions and levels (national, transnational or regional) of knowledge management. Notably, AWF support allowed relevant water organizations to conduct research/ studies to produce new or update existing water knowledge or to acquire appropriate knowledge infrastructure. Doing so, enabled a more timely generation and sharing of hydrological data for decision-making.

At the river basin level, the AWF helped many RBOs to establish Water Information Systems (WIS) (e.g. though the HYCOS projects implemented by the Volta and Niger basin authorities). Functional WIS are reported to have fostered effective water resource monitoring and evaluation (M&E) by allowing the tracking of water resource availability and consumption. They enable well-informed planning processes while supporting equitable access to water resources. The project establishing a TWRM database within the Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) region served these very purposes.

The evaluation confirmed that the availability and quality of hydrological data in the Volta Basin has somewhat improved as a result of implementing the AWF project and that Volta Basin countries have started generating and sharing data with the VBA, although inconsistently. Such delays and lacunae have constrained the VBA's efforts to keep a functional and rich regional water database for use by decision-makers. Nevertheless, the hydrological data has already informed various surveys, notably

³⁷ Chad Basin, Kayanga Geba Basin, Niger Basin, Rweru and Cyohoha Lakes, Volta Basin, Congo Basin, Lake Victoria Basin, Songwe River Basin, and Zambezi Basin.

³⁸ *Gire du Bassin du Fleuve Kayenga-Geba.*

³⁹ *Organization pour la mise en valeur du fleuve Gambie's (OMVG).*

led by consultants. In some VBA countries, such as Ghana, the government and other agencies have already built on the data provided by their strengthened hydrological services for the design of various hydrological interventions in the basin.

5.4 Capacity Development

Finding 9: The AWF has contributed to an institutional strengthening of relevant water organizations in RMCs. While also improving competencies of human resources, it has been limited in advancing and ensuring staff retention (and or replacement) strategies in the sector.

The AWF portfolio comprises projects that aimed specifically at institutional or human capacity development. Indeed, most AWF supported projects included a capacity development component. Capacity development activities ranged from the creation of new water management structures to the provision of resources to establish WIS (as seen above), and to competence building for relevant staff and stakeholders.

Across the projects reviewed there has been a strong focus on capacity building and the training of staff on new equipment and systems usage. Many of the bankable project had infrastructural outputs impacting a wide number of beneficiaries and follow up projects.

The Water Sector Reform Support project implemented in Gambia is illustrative of an institutional strengthening projects in that, among other things, it supported the introduction of a favorable legal and institutional environment for IWRM. In terms of human resources, examples include the Capacity Building for Decentralized IWRM project implemented in Burkina Faso – involving, among other things, training of eight graduate students and 25 technicians who were subsequently recruited by the government and assigned to the Directorate of Water Resources Management (DGRE).

AWF's attention to capacity strengthening in the design of water and sanitation projects was widely appreciated by stakeholders consulted for this evaluation, given that capacity strengthening is expected to ripple in value and effect beyond any individual project. However, it remains unclear whether, and the extent to which, capacity strengthening benefits (e.g. of training activities) are integrated institutionally, beyond the experience of specific individuals. In some projects, the sustainability of improved capacities was curtailed by the inability of water organizations to retain trained professionals or replace trained staff nearing retirement age. For example, in the *Niger – HYCOS* project, the average age of the National Hydrometeorological Service trained was estimated at 50 years, while the retirement age is 55 years in some Niger basin member countries. The following quote illustrates the issue of retaining trained professionals:

*“...If the government does not give you means to recruit smart people to replace those who retire, change jobs and go elsewhere, in the long run, you cannot sustain the project results. At the department, especially in Regions (in Ghana we have regional hydrological services across different regions), we have been losing our staff over the past 5 years: we are not able to replace them and thus we cannot continuously operate and maintain the installed hydrological equipment. The AWF helped to train staff on data collection and management issues. There was a lot of capacity development provided - but the program cannot employ people. You can train people, but if afterward, they leave the department, then we are stuck: this is a crucial issue in Ghana and in that regard, we are not different from other countries”.
(Ghana Hydrological Services Department)*

The training given by the AWF makes the beneficiaries more skilled, knowledgeable and, therefore, more marketable. These people may eventually move on to better jobs. The AWF has little ability to

control this unintended impact. Looking narrowly at the department or unit in which the training has taken place, the departure of the trainee may be viewed as a loss. However, most times the trainee remains within the water sector and serves in a different position within the same organization or moves to another organization in the sector. Therefore, from a sector-wide perspective, the AWF will still have made a positive contribution to building of capacity of the water sector.

Nevertheless, in the absence of clear succession planning, the sustainability of AWF project outcomes may be limited. Agencies interviewed in this evaluation acknowledged that training provided through AWF projects was necessary but insufficient to ensure the continued, updated and sustained capacity development required to significantly address water and sanitation problems in their countries.

AWF projects have importantly supported the development of RMC capacity in the water sector M&E. Highly relevant projects in which this was the case included Togo's *Integrated Water Information System*⁴⁰ project, Ethiopia's *Development of Water Information and Knowledge Management Systems* project, and as well as for ROs such as the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) and other transboundary organizations. The projects provided soft and hard infrastructure implementing agencies (and other relevant stakeholders), which has enabled improved collection, monitoring and management of hydrological, sanitation, and environmental/ climatic change data, while supporting internal capacity to monitor and evaluate the performance of projects and results produced.

It should be noted that some concern was raised by interviewees on the matter of capacity development and implementation. It is widely felt that AWF projects rely disproportionately on consultants for project implementation, wherein African state actors would have preferred to be more involved as implementing agents themselves. Relying too much on consultants risks a growing disengagement of state implementing agents.

5.5 Knowledge Management

Finding 10: While the AWF has been an important and effective instrument for knowledge generation, its knowledge management function has steadily declined.

The contribution of AWF projects in generating water knowledge on the African continent is extensive. Approximately 28 of the 118 projects were categorized as knowledge management projects and were implemented in the first (21) and second strategic (7) phases of the AWF. There were no knowledge projects in the third strategic phase as this area of work declined as a priority towards the middle of the second strategic phase of the AWF. New knowledge, however, has emerged from all AWF projects that financed technical and/or feasibility studies. These have either generated new, or updated existing knowledge on surface or groundwater resources and infrastructure in participating countries and/or regions. Based on such knowledge, countries are empowered to better plan their water development projects.

The various technical and feasibility studies planned and/or already implemented in the context of the *Project to Support the Creation of a Cross-border Basin Organization (Ogoué, Ntem, Nyanga, and Komo) and Preparation of Investment Projects (PACOBT-PPI)*⁴¹ project contributed to enriching current knowledge of national and shared waters across the four ECCAS member countries (e.g. building an inventory of current uses of water, possibilities of water development and modalities of their

⁴⁰ *Système Intégré D'information sur L'eau (SIIEAU).*

⁴¹ *Projet d'appui à la création d'un organisme de bassins transfrontaliers (Ogoué, Ntem, Nyanga, et Komo) et préparation de projets d'investissements (PACOBT-PPI).*

mobilization, vulnerability, and sensitivity of aquifers, etc.). As such, project outputs are believed to enable effective planning for better management of the basin.

AWF supported projects also enabled knowledge production on many other water and sanitation aspects. For example, studies supported by the Sanitation projects in Côte d'Ivoire and Ziguinchor in Senegal created new knowledge and insights on improved toilet access in urban areas, criteria for choosing appropriate sanitation technologies for urban environments, and financing modalities (e.g. micro-financing by example) across the urban sanitation value chain.

AWF operations have also contributed to the promotion of water knowledge systems and infrastructure in supported countries. Of the 28 projects that specifically targeted the strategic areas of “promoting knowledge” and “improving knowledge” there has been a particularly strong benefit to the TWRM dimension of the AWF’s work. These projects had strong components that helped in the development of WIS at national, regional, and/or basin levels. The establishment of a regional WIS by the ECCAS Regional Water Policy project, or the WIS systems established and/or strengthened in the Volta and river basins within the framework of the HYCOS projects best illustrate this contribution. These and other knowledge management systems helped countries and river basin organizations to continuously collect, treat/analyze and share water data.

5.5.1 Generating Water-Related Knowledge Products

Overall, at the project and national levels, AWF has been successful in helping recipient organizations and or countries to generate useful water-related knowledge. AWF supported studies were successfully packaged into various reports. In other cases, implementing agencies have relied on relevant partners to package this knowledge in accessible formats. For instance, the Sanitation project in Ziguinchor, Senegal worked closely with the University of Ziguinchor, by involving Masters level students who produced and defended their thesis on safe faecal sludge management in Ziguinchor. Within the context of the Implementation of *Senegal’s IWRM Action Plan* project, the Ministry of Hydraulics opened a documentation center where interested parties could access all knowledge products from the supported studies produced by this project. Most of this documentation is also now online and accessible to all. The same can be said of the research published in relation to the MUS project through the Water Research Commission in South Africa or the *Ghana Effluent* project through the IWMI.

According to AWF, its knowledge management approach “*seeks to organize, create, capture or distribute knowledge through tools and events, and to ensure its availability for future users.*” Despite operating at the African continental level and producing valuable knowledge at national or basin level, AWF has not met expectations with regard to capturing, synthesizing, packaging knowledge across projects and countries into knowledge products for sharing and influencing action across the continent. The AWF portfolio of 111 projects (not including the 7 terminated projects) has produced only 25 distinct knowledge products, less than one-quarter of total projects funded. Few have been packaged in formats that are accessible to diverse categories of audiences, and very little is shared beyond projects. At the time of the evaluation, the AWF had neither a knowledge management vision nor a strategy. This has curtailed AWF's ability to engage regionally and globally on lessons from its work.

From the outset, the knowledge generation and learning dimensions of the Facility were seen as key dimensions during the first two phases, to capture the value of the institutional footprints that were laid through the AWF knowledge generation interventions. A key challenge in this was to determine, from a results dimension, what could be captured and shown. On this front, this evaluation notes that the AWF’s visibility has diminished because of its inability to generate sufficient knowledge products at an equivalent scale to the depth and effectiveness of its interventions (e.g. related to feasibility studies, catalytic interventions, small grants for pilot projects). Its weakness in producing and

disseminating learning from implementation across such a wide thematic, substantive and continental reach remains a missed opportunity and also one of the reasons for its diminished visibility.

Finding 11: While AWF has helped recipient organizations and/or countries to generate useful water-related knowledge, it has been relatively limited in its effectiveness at generating knowledge products at a scale that can capture the lessons learned from its interventions.

Nevertheless, efforts were being made to address limitations in communications, knowledge production, and the capturing of results and impact from AWF projects. In 2018, two knowledge products (KPs) were produced, consisting of a project case study *Scaling up of Integrated Rainwater Harvesting and Management and Complementary Livelihood Systems in Semi-arid Districts of Kenya: Voices from the Beneficiaries* and a thematic analysis – *The AWF Experience in Supporting Transboundary Water Resources Management in Africa*, in 2018. One Background Paper was also produced “How to prepare bankable projects for financing climate change adaptation in transboundary basins” has been prepared jointly with UNICEF.

Good practices and lessons learned studies from Togo, South Africa, and Ghana, and improved and more frequent digital presence through social media and updates of the website. The implications of doing so moving forward will become clearer over time.

5.5.2 Supporting Monitoring and Reporting

Through AWF support in developing water information systems and baseline information for off-site sanitation systems, the AWF has inadvertently contributed to strengthening country-wide M&E systems for the water and sanitation sector. Monitoring systems provide a critical basis for effective sectoral planning and development. The lack of credible national and regional water and sanitation sector monitoring and reporting systems in Africa is acknowledged as a constraint for making informed decisions on the development and effective use of water resources on the continent. To varying degrees, AWF projects have enabled improvements in water and sanitation sector monitoring and reporting systems in many African countries.

Largely, AWF projects provided hard infrastructure to implementing agencies (and other relevant stakeholders) aimed at enabling improved hydrological data collection, monitoring, and management. For instance, the *IWRM of the Kayanga-Geba River Basin*⁴² project supported the installation of many hydrometric stations (seven in Guinea Bissau, seven in Senegal, and one in Guinea) and piezometric stations (three in Guinea Bissau and two in Senegal).

Importantly, in response to the need for a more comprehensive and harmonized approach to monitoring and reporting, the AMCOW Secretariat, with support from AWF and hosted by AfDB, commenced an initiative for a web-based monitoring and reporting system under the *AMCOW Monitoring System* project. This was implemented from late 2015 through 2016 with technical assistance from the UNEP-DHI Partnership. Importantly, efforts have been made to align the Africa Water Sector and Sanitation Monitoring and Reporting System with the water and sanitation-related SDG targets and indicators.⁴³

The AWF draws from high-level thematic areas and caters to country demands. When the AWF was created, there had not been an understanding that it would come to play such a pivotal role on the

⁴² *Gire du Bassin du Fleuve Kayanga-Geba*.

⁴³ The system has been operationalized and can be found at <http://www.africawat-sanreports.org/IndicatorReporting/home>.

continent in terms of long term planning at a wider water resource level or on complex issues, such as climate change and urban sanitation. It was believed the AWF would be a source of knowledge for project preparation at the request of water ministers that would be leveraged for significant downstream investments.

In the 9 field mission countries for this evaluation, requests had been articulated for studies that would enable better planning and strategic thinking, given the countries understand the implications of not doing so properly. In many countries, AWF has provided useful support to improve information management for improved decision-making and planning at the national level. The SINEAU and *the Vision and Strategy for the Water Sector in 2050* projects in Tunisia best speak to this outcome. These two projects have provided the framework for updating the long-term strategic plans of the country, which all other sectors will need to consider in ascertaining their water needs. AWF has also supported projects with similar objectives in other countries, including Ethiopia⁴⁴ and Togo (with SIEAU).

5.6 Enabling Downstream Investment

Finding 12: AWF-supported projects, notably those focused on feasibility studies, designs and investment plans, enabled downstream investments and produced impressive leverage factors, particularly in vulnerable and transition states, and for transboundary projects.

AWF investments in project preparation are critical overall, and more so for both fragile states and transboundary projects, mobilizing key plans and studies that produce pledges and address key development needs. Thus, the investments of donors in the AWF have produced multiple benefits, including increased project investments in recipient countries. AWF projects have mobilized significant additional resources to sustain initial investments. These contributions have come in the form of much larger projects, comprising both lending and grant-based initiatives.

AWF reports indicate that the cumulative total of mobilized and committed financing for “bankable projects” since 2006 is estimated at €1,527 million against a pledged amount of €2167,20. Based on this reported figure, the AWF achieved a leverage factor of about 32 in 2018 (i.e. each €1 spent by AWF in the preparation of investment projects has mobilized €32) for future projects. The largest contributors are the AfDB (€591 million) and RMC governments (€376 million), representing 44% of the leveraged pledged contributions. Other big contributors include the AFD (€229 million), World Bank (€166 million), private sector (€160 million), European Investment Bank (EIB, €134 million), bilateral contributors (€120 million), BADEC (€101 million), Islamic Development Bank (IsDB) (€77 million) and Green Climate Fund (GCF) (€54 million), together representing 48% of the pledged amount. Ten other contributors and smaller organizations represent 8% and the balance of the investors.⁴⁵ Figure 7.1 displays the funds pledged for AWF project follow-on investments by different partners. The following passage describes the appreciation of AWF’s leverage effect:

*“We are impressed with the leveraging track record as this is rare to see such a high number”
(From a donor)*

While the total number of contributors is substantial, and the leverage effect impressive, the low number of bilateral investors (which do not include some of the donors to AWF itself) demonstrates the potential for approaching bilateral donors for greater engagement. The nuances around the leverage effect and contributors must be reviewed closely. It should be noted that in the case of these

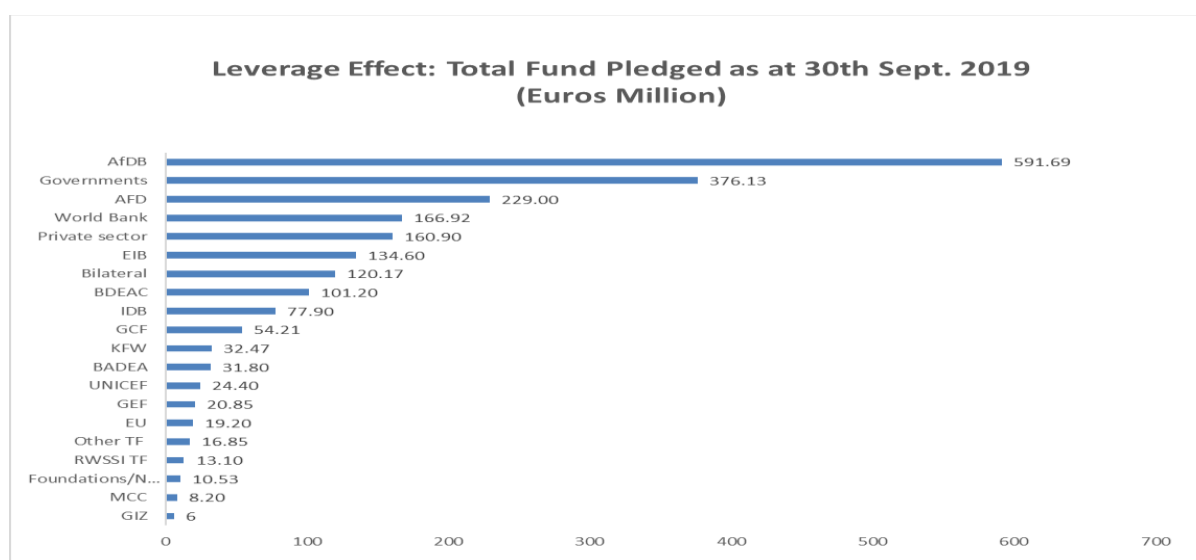
⁴⁴ Support to the development of water information and knowledge management systems in Ethiopia.

⁴⁵ AWF Minutes of the 18th Governing Council Meeting. 2018

investors, there is a tendency for them to selectively invest, barring AfDB and governments. For example, the World Bank’s related leveraged investments are principally in Congo (€22 million) and Malawi (€135 million).

AFD’s investments are principally in Gabon (€110 million) and Burkina Faso (€108 million). The EIB’s investments are in three countries, namely Gabon (€72 million), Swaziland (€36 million) and Seychelles (€926 million), while IsDB’s investments are in two countries, namely Gabon (€45.1 million) and Burkina Faso (€32.8 million). These consolidated investments conform to priorities, well planned and large-scale project investments, including the €153 million Drainage & Solid Waste Management project (in Burkina Faso) and the €288 million Urban Storm Water Drainage Infrastructure project (in Gabon). It is significant to note that these two projects combined represent 20% of the total leveraged, pledged amounts.

Figure 5.2 Total Funds Pledged for AWF-Fund Follow-on Projects



Source: AWF Progress Report January – September 2019

Interestingly, transboundary projects have produced a higher leverage effect. Six of the bankable preparation projects are multinational/ transboundary projects comprising a total pledged contribution amount of €510 million based on an AWF investment of only €10.08 million, which shows a considerably higher leverage factor of 47. Of this amount, almost half (i.e. €254 million) was attributed to the Multipurpose Infrastructures for the *Niger Basin Agricultural and Climate Change Adaptation and Development Programme*, and effectively attracted multiple contributors, including the private sector – specifically AfDB (107.55), KFW (32.47), GEF (10.33), Gov (23.23), GCF (54.2), EU (15.0), Private (11.6).

AWF Projects addressing fragile state needs are both critical and have proven successful at leveraging investments and pledges. For fragile states classified by AfDB, the AWF €7.43 million investments in Togo, Niger, Congo, Liberia, Chad, and Central African Republic (CAR) have resulted in €249 million pledged for future projects, demonstrating a leverage factor of 33.

AWF investments have been exceptional at mobilizing resources for specific states which have climatic, economic and other vulnerabilities. For example, AWF investments in Mozambique leveraged €414 million through the *National Rural Water Supply and Sanitation (WSS) Programme* (AWF’s €0.5 million investment produced pledged amounts of €118 million) and *COFAMOSA Irrigation Project Integrated Study and Project* (AWF’s €1.18 million investment produced pledged amounts of €296 million). This amounts to a leverage factor of 370.

The distribution and the effectiveness of AWF efforts must also be analyzed from the viewpoint of how many countries have benefitted from leveraging. From the examples above, it can be noted that Mozambique, Gabon, and Burkina Faso represent almost 40% of the total leverage calculations. When the *Seychelles Water Supply Development Plan* (€119 million), *Swaziland LUSIP Smallholder Irrigation Phase II* (€131 million) and *Malawi Shire Valley Irrigation Project* (€224 million) are considered, they represent 21% of the total leveraged calculation. Consequently, from AWF calculations, six countries represent 61% of the total leveraged amount of pledged financing. There are also numerous other bankable projects which may have emerged and are not considered to directly leverage per se.

AWF catalytic investment projects have equally mobilized follow-on investments, although with limited amounts (compared to bankable projects). The AWF reports that cumulatively, 25 investment projects have been prepared since AWF inception in 2006 and 42% of the completed catalytic projects have leveraged a total of €21.27 million in terms of pledges. Details on mobilized finances from bankable preparation projects and catalytic investments can be found in Annexes VI and VII respectively.

Despite the relatively high level of downstream investment, the planned strategies for mobilizing follow-up investment did not materialize. This is notable in the case of planned Round Tables of donors, which were meant to mobilize follow-on investment but did not lead to concrete commitments. Such underperformance was more pronounced in 2018 when for instance, €23.9 million was mobilized and committed as downstream investment for four completed bankable projects in the AWF portfolio – against the €200 million targeted.

6 ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS

6.1 Introduction

This chapter provides insights into the organizational effectiveness of the AWF. A previous chapter discussed development effectiveness. These are discussed separately, while also acknowledging the existence of overlaps and inter-connectivity between the two.

6.2 Governance Arrangements

Finding 13: While AMCOW remains politically crucial to the AfDB and AWF, it has struggled to fulfill its strategic role in the AWF Governing Council and operating with declining effectiveness.

When the AWF was established by AMCOW in 2004 to give voice to the AWV 2025, its governance arrangement was that it would be hosted by AfDB as an independent Special Trust Fund that would be held to account strategically by AMCOW and development partners through a Governing Council (GC) that would meet annually.⁴⁶ Operationally, AWF would be accountable to the AfDB, but as an independent trust, it had different rules for approvals to facilitate a fast-tracking of decisions. Projects under €500,000 are approved by the Director of the Water Development and Sanitation Department. Projects beyond this threshold are approved directly by the President, not the Board of Directors.

⁴⁶ African Development Bank. *Instrument for the Establishment of the African Water Facility Special Fund*. 24 May 2004 <https://www.afdb.org/en/documents/document/instrument-for-the-establishment-of-the-african-water-facility-special-fund-administered-by-the-african-development-bank-10475>

While AMCOW remains politically crucial to the AfDB, given its reach well beyond the countries to which the AfDB currently lends, AMCOW has been challenged to fulfill its strategic role in the GC. Overall, the strategic role of AMCOW on the continent has not been well perceived by stakeholders, therefore putting into question the value of the political gravitas it once offered AWF in its efforts to leverage resources. Interviews with AMCOW members provided insights into the reasons for this.

First, the Secretariat of AMCOW has struggled to find its resources and, as such, has begun to compete for a diminishing pool of resources from development partners. This has created a conflict of interest in AMCOW playing a governance role for a Fund against which it competes.

Second, the governance structures within AMCOW require a regular rotation between members for Technical Advisory Committees (TACs) and Ministers that take on a sub-regional chairing role. This rotation is necessary to ensure wide and broad participation of all African nations in the governance of the Council. Yet, such rotation (in terms of who sits on the GC of AMCOW) has resulted in a high turnover of political representatives with little institutional memory to guide strategic decision-making for annual meetings of AWF. Furthermore, TAC representatives that attend are often delegated to other officials from a member country, who are not familiar with the history of the AWF or the GC.

Third, GC meetings in which significant decisions need to be made on complex issues are convened only annually. There is little to no time for technical representatives to discuss and deliberate on what decisions should be made. This leads to limited absorption and sense-making of the presented evidence to inform decisions.

Finally, the diminishing presence of Development Partners on the GC has reshaped the concept of the composition of governing body - only the Government of Austria and the BMGF remain. Consequently, the GC has not been effective in Phase 3 in maintaining or advancing donor support, or mobilizing additional resources, one of its most important functions. Further, the GC has not been an effective complement or counterpoint to the AfDB's administrative governance of the AWF. On the positive side, there has been increasing appreciation within the AfDB of the value of the AWF, which explains why it is willing to fund approximately 40% of the operational costs of the Fund, including most of the staff costs. Despite the very strong presence of the AfDB in RMCs, there is much to lose if the AWF cannot capitalize on the value of being hosted by such an influential institution.

6.3 Staffing

Finding 14: The AWF's declining technical capabilities is partially attributable to diminished staff resources, which corresponds to the limited financial resources at its disposal. Current AWF plans to have a full staff complement provide the promise of renewal.

The current staff complement of the AWF team (Table viii.i in Error! Reference source not found.) **is less than optimal.** At the time of writing, aside from the financial and administrative staff, the Director and Coordinator, there were only three technical staff who were operational, namely a Water & Sanitation Engineer, Sanitary Engineer, Programme & Knowledge Officer. Considering the low number of operational projects during 2019, and existing resources, this is adequate, but will not be so during a replenishment. However, these technical staff also have concurrent responsibilities with the AfDB AHWS.

Efforts are being made to increase the staff complement. In the interim, there has been a reliance on contract employees. Beneficially, the three current technical staff of the AWF have been there for a significant period (between 6-11 years), crossing over two strategic periods. This has promoted

consistency in operations, and an internal knowledge base serving as a reference for comparing different strategic periods.

Concerning the M&E of previous projects, follow-up on the sustainability of projects or working with other donors to leverage additional investments, these staff do not have the requisite time allotted for doing so. Follow-up is thus left with implementing agencies to initiate, and if and when opportunities materialize, AWF staff may work with counterparts to support or pursue opportunities. It should be noted, however, that these staff also have responsibility for preparing PARs, IPRs, and PCRs, leaving little time for other work associated with capturing lessons from past and ongoing projects, and to ensure this learning feeds into future design work.

As can be seen by reviewing the total staff complement over the period 2005-2018 (details on past staff of AWF are provided in Table viii.ii and viii.iii of **Error! Reference source not found.**), five previous staff held varying roles during their period of service (i.e., two or three different roles at various times). The average period of service for all AWF staff over its period of operation through 2019 is 2.8 years.

Through the years of operation, there have been four AWF Coordinators. The first two Coordinators served between 1-1.5 years, and the third almost five years (though in an acting position). The current Coordinator has been in position for less than six months. There have been seven Directors accountable for the AWF on behalf of AfDB (from AHWS or OWAS), demonstrating high turnover in the position. Four Directors served between 1-1.25 years, while the other two served between 2-3 years (over the second phase of the AWF). The current Director AWH/ AWF has been in her position for 1.5 years.

During the first phase of the AWF, staff served relatively short periods of service between 1-3 years, except for the Water Operations Officer (5 years), Water Policy Officer (8 years), and Financial Management Officer (4.5 years). During the second phase of the AWF, it had considerably more technical staff, including a Water Operations Officer, Water & Sanitation Engineer, Sanitation Engineer, Water Resource Management Officer, Water Policy Officer, and Evaluation Expert, most of whom were in position during the entire 2012-2016 period.

As can be seen by reviewing the technical staff, coordination and management complement, the longer the period of service (consistency) and the higher the number of human resources (ability to respond, analyze and provide technical support), the greater the productivity and the higher the performance. The AWF has been having human resource issues that have affected its relevance and effectiveness.

The evaluation found that there are key specific vacancies that should be addressed, including Policy & Strategy Development Specialist, Water & Climate Change Specialist, Gender Specialist, M&E Officer, and Communications Officer. These positions were all previously filled, and they remain priority areas for the AWF. The absence of such personnel undermines AWF's ability to deliver effective services to its internal and external stakeholders, including in terms of reporting to donors. A number of the aforementioned positions were financed through TA and some of them were not renewed when the TA ended. Not coincidentally, this evaluation observed that these are specific areas where the AWF as an organization needs to improve its performance to ensure effectiveness. Improved gender analysis, M&E, and enhanced communication are all areas in need of attention.

In terms of gender equality, the analysis indicates that 16 past and current staff of AWF are women (six in administrative positions), compared to 28 men (one administrative position). Efforts have been made to have improved gender equity at AWF, with presently three women and four men engaged at the organization.

Vacancies at the apex level of the Fund have limited its effectiveness. With the recruitment of a new Director of the Water Division within the AfDB, the recruitment of new staff has been prioritized. When the AWF Coordinator was hired in April 2019, after a four-year vacancy period, there were only three people within the Facility tasked with servicing 52 countries in a complex set of diverse arrangements. With these two senior posts in place, the overall staffing is now at six with a private sector specialist, M&E expert, and communications person in place. The fact that hiring for these AWF positions is being done by the Water Division within the AfDB is an encouraging sign of growing institutional commitment to addressing the human resource challenges facing the Trust Fund.

Overall, while there are plans to have a full staff complement, this is dependent on the future operations of the Special Fund, its potential merger with other Funds, and the importance of having the right personnel in the correct positions to fulfill assignments. All new positions being recruited for the AWF are funded by the AfDB, which is covering approximately 40% of operational costs of the functioning of AWF.

Exhibit 6.1 AWE Staff Planned Human Resources as Indicated at November 2019 GC Meeting

Positions	As at 30 September 2019		2020	
	Funded by AfDB	Funded by AWF	Funded by AfDB	Funded by AWF
Coordinator	✓		✓	
Chief Water Operations Officer	✓		✓	
Principal Finance, Administration & Resource Management Officer	✓		✓	
Principal Water Resource Management Officer	✓			
Portfolio Analyst	✓		✓	
Chief Water Policy Officer	✓			
Principal Monitoring & Evaluation Specialist (New)***			✓	
Secretary	✓			
Principal Water and Sanitation Engineer		✓		✓
Principal Sanitation Specialist		✓		✓
PPP Expert		✓		✓
Principal Sanitation Expert (New)***				✓
Principal Monitoring & Evaluation Officer (TA France)		x		
Water Resources & Climate Change Officer (TA Austria)				x
2019 Total Staff 13 (10 Professionals, 1 General Staff, and 2 Technical Assistants)				
2020 Total Staff 14 (12 Professionals, 1 General Staff and 1 Technical Assistant)				
*** New positions to be recruited soon				

Source: AWF Report to Governing Council, November 2019.

6.4 Monitoring & Evaluation / Learning

Finding 15: The project monitoring and evaluation system of the AWF is generally well-perceived by the project coordination teams. However, the basis on which AWF success is being measured by AfDB's Water Department is largely inappropriate and misaligned with the purpose of the Trust Fund.

As per AfDB practice, AWF organizes two supervision missions each year to countries where projects are implemented. Supervision missions by the AWF team reportedly have been a good tool for tracking the progress of projects, as they followed agreed-upon project planning, with clearly defined outputs and indicators. In particular, these missions made it possible for the AWF team to resolve outstanding project issues and to appreciate the requests made by grantees (e.g. request project extension). Another strong feature of learning and strengthening stakeholder governance of projects were steering committee meetings. Held once a quarter, these would involve all actors involved in the implementation of a project that had signed on to the PAR with a common understanding of roles and responsibilities.

These two systems are positive attributes of the AWF M&E systems at country level. They gave implementing agencies freedom and full responsibility during the implementation of projects while allowing sufficient time to apply lessons from M&E processes to improve project implementation. This perception was confirmed by stakeholders during the Senegal Mission. To most respondents from the AWF project implementing agencies in Senegal, the positive performance of the projects was largely attributed to good monitoring and evaluation, coupled with effective AWF facilitation.

Despite these benefits, there are several drawbacks to the current approaches to monitoring both in terms of the AWF's engagement with projects as well as how the AfDB Water Department assesses the performance of AWF interventions. The AWF's current monitoring system emphasizes adherence to procurement rules and the extent to which supply chain management issues are transparent. This creates rigidities that limit the abilities of projects to adapt to unforeseen circumstances. The AWF's monitoring and assessment of projects are generally focused on administrative and financial issues, with insufficient attention to the scientific aspects of the projects and the dissemination of this knowledge. Another limitation has been insufficient attention to soft issues, such as "influencing" as an outcome objective or how partnerships engage to enable or constrain sustainability. There are, of course, exceptions to the above, such as the Tripartite Partnership Project in Ghana, which was designed to research outcomes of pilots and feed the learning into a knowledge management and learning system. The wide influence of this project was partially due to phase 1 projects allocating greater resources to knowledge management and learning.

Part of the challenge facing AWF is that it is being assessed by the AfDB Water Department on the same terms as other Trust Fund operating within the AfDB. And this, despite the role of AMCOW in the AWF. Many stakeholders interviewed spoke to the conventional roles of banks, such as the AfDB, in providing concessional loans as a major factor shaping the AWF performance monitoring systems. For instance, AWF task managers are judged in relation to the quantum of investments that are disbursed. Nevertheless, the fact that AWF is housed by AfDB is one of its strongest comparative advantages. Its location in AfDB enables it to influence one of the largest investors on the continent.

AWF's reporting on its range of achievements and successes is mostly inadequate. This has much to do with uneven reporting. For instance, the annual board report to the GC speaks of cumulative achievements, but not what has occurred in the past year. This cannot be done because the timing of the GC in the last quarter of the year means that reports only go until September and are not complete for the year. Secondly, by reporting cumulatively, the annual reports do not speak to

progress against targets set for any given year. Third, there is confusion in speaking to programmatic achievements by separating project types (e.g. separating what the challenge has been in bankable projects versus catalytic investments). This makes it difficult for the GC to understand where the limitations are in performance. Below is how one key informant described the issue of poor results communication:

“...AWF is very poor in communicating results. Since 2017 annual reports are improving but previous annual reports were not good at this. The webpage is not updated. There needs to be more attention to knowledge production and dissemination. AWF does not invite donors to special events... (and so) donors not lining up.” (From a donor)

A further drawback stems from the means and methods of reporting protocols. The AWF does not utilize a specific monitoring and reporting format, using instead the AfDB’s IPR format. While this is an effective tool for compiling information, it does so using an approach which is more quantitative than qualitative. Since many of the projects are qualitatively constituted (e.g. training, consensus building, education, demonstration, public awareness, etc.), these aspects and achievements are not effectively presented. In addition, due to limited direct interaction with the implementing agencies, AWF officers responsible for project monitoring are unable to provide technical advice, which could prove a key difference in meeting implementation challenges promptly. In many cases, due to decentralization, the AfDB country-based Water Specialists are expected to carry out monitoring tasks, which AWF staff are unable to attend (due to limited resources and availability).

6.5 Operational Processes and Procedures

Finding 16: AWF operational processes and procedures are moderately appropriate and relevant. They suffer from a number of drawbacks.

The AfDB in its administration of the AWF uses the same principles and criteria established under Article 17 for the Agreement establishing the Bank. Consequently, its operational processes and procedures must be viewed within this context.

Key aspects related to the organizational processes and procedures are the processing time, the disbursement rate, and follow-up. These are impacted by the different transaction points in the cycle range from proposal reception to approval of proposed activities to actual first disbursement and actual implementation.

The AWF organizational processes display similar challenges that have been identified related to Trust Funds and Special Funds in particular. In the execution of its mandate, it has performed adequately, compared to other Funds. In some areas, it has outperformed other Funds, such as the collection of data and disbursements.⁴⁷

Regarding the effectiveness and efficiency of disbursements. Stakeholders informing this evaluation indicated that the AWF/AfDB requirement that a special bank account in a foreign currency being opened by implementing agencies for the projects has been a major constraining factor on their effective and efficient implementation. Opening a special account in a foreign currency can be problematic in some countries or regions; yet, it has remained one of the conditions for the first disbursement by the AWF. A previous study highlighted that this condition delayed the implementation of many AWF projects in West Africa because ECOWAS does not allow government

⁴⁷ See African Development Bank Operations Evaluation Department. Trust Fund Management at the African Development Bank, 2013.

institutions to open bank accounts in Euros.⁴⁸ This aspect has been under review and it is understood this issue is being addressed.

Grant administrative and management process. An area to be addressed is the extended time required for establishing, processing activity requests and for project implementation. The AWF average time from approval to grant signature is 5 months, effectiveness is 7.5 months plus another 5.7 months from effectiveness to first disbursement. Slow processes on the AWF side were reported to be a hindrance to the implementation of projects. These included delays in approval notification, delays in signatures of grant agreements, and delayed responses to project requests such as the issuance of no-objection related to procurement.

Project Responsibility. The evaluation found that the slowness of the AWF grant management process stemmed from staffing issues, including delays caused by many changes in AWF staff responsible for specific projects. For example, in the case of the *Niger-HYCOS* project, it was reported that during the life of this project, the AWF/AfDB changed assigned project officers three times, which hampered processes and overall project delivery and effectiveness.

The AWF previously had an extensive management infrastructure with eleven staff. This has been reduced substantially alongside the funds available for disbursement. As personnel have been reduced and not been replaced, it has increasingly depended on task managers from the operational AfDB. Implementing the processes, following up on implementation and providing approvals and technical support are challenges facing the AWF and the Task Managers in Phase 3.

Administrative Procedures. To a certain extent, the implementation of two-thirds of the 27 AWF projects visited are negatively affected by AWF/AfDB rules and procedures. Project stakeholders interviewed indicated that these procedures are both too complicated and incompatible with on the ground realities, hampering the implementation of projects. In some cases, stakeholders indicated that project funds were kept at the Ministry of Finance, such that the implementing agency had to complete substantial paperwork to obtain the funds, thus delaying payment for services rendered and goods acquired from third parties. In other cases, the staff of implementing agencies lacked experience and mastery of the AfDB/AWF procedures and rules related to project management, notably procurement and financial management procedures.

The AWF has attempted to provide training in these areas, it appears that by the time staff familiarized themselves with these procedures, it was late in the process such that project progress had already been negatively affected to a certain degree. Training on the AWF/AfDB grant rules and procedures were not conducted systematically or over time. They were frequently ad hoc or one-off, which does not allow staff of the implementing agencies to continuously update their knowledge of the procedures and ensure that such knowledge is socialized with staff who join projects throughout implementation.

As the AWF has matured and evolved, it has adjusted and adapted to deliver improved procedures. Following the review of Trust Fund operations in 2013, there have been improvements and enhancements in operational processes, that have introduced greater flexibility in approvals, adjustments, and support for the implementing agencies.

⁴⁸ Association WEDC-HYDROCONSEIL. *Operational review and institutional assessment of the African Water Facility*. October 2010.

7 EFFICIENCY

7.1 Introduction

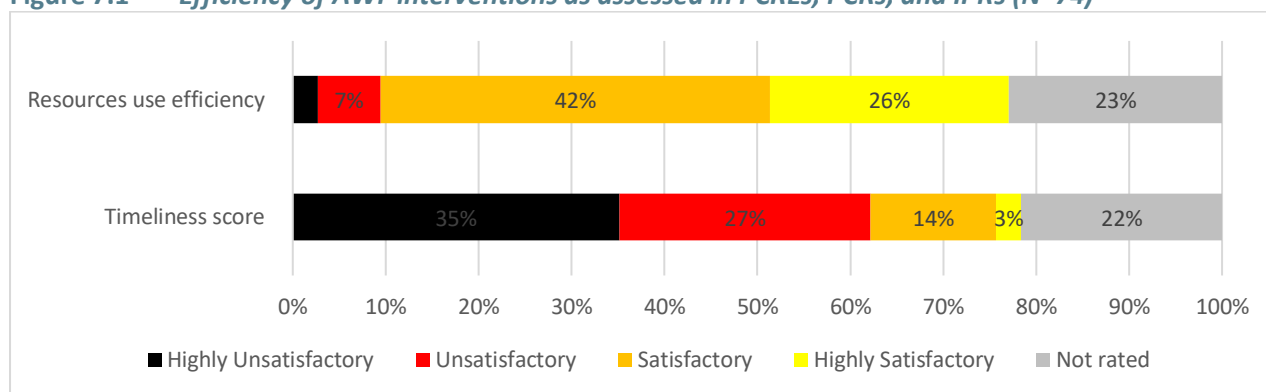
This chapter examines the efficiency of the AWF in terms of financial resource and time use.

7.2 Financial Resource and Time Use

Finding 17: AWF Projects typically use resources efficiently⁴⁹. They experienced delays due to lack of realistic assessment of the proposed activities (costs, time) to ensure good project planning and respected timelines, and due to long procurement and decisions making process.

In the portfolio review of AWF 74 AWF projects, 62.2% of the projects had an unsatisfactory timeliness rating for project implementation. However, reporting documents also indicate that there was a significant number of projects that utilized resources efficiently with 67.57% of the total projects scoring a “Satisfactory” or above rating (Figure 7.2). Thus, resources were expended appropriately and as planned for the projects. In contrast, projects were not implemented on schedule due to delays in procurement, securing agreement among parties, and ensuring design and implementation was done appropriately. Consequently, it can be concluded that the timeline for projects should be more realistic. Most project implementation schedules did not factor in or make contingency for potential delays in administrative, structural, procurement and consensus-building areas. Recognizing this, the AfDB and AWF have been working to address these issues. Additional analysis and details are provided below.

Figure 7.1 Efficiency of AWF interventions as assessed in PCREs, PCR, and IPRs (N=74)⁵⁰



Source: Evaluation Team, Portfolio Review

The evaluation team assessed whether or not there was a discrepancy in the project timeline as planned in the PARs in comparison with the actual implementation timeline as reported in the PCRs. The vast majority (86.5%) of projects were not implemented according to the schedule established at the design of the project. Figure 7.3 shows that around 75% of the AWF’s interventions were granted an extension for their completion, with half receiving more than one extension.

⁴⁹ physical implementation based on outputs delivery against resources used)

⁵⁰ This indicator is assessed in PCREs, IPRs, and PCRs. As seen in the column “Not rated”, there were projects for which either a PCR or an IPR was available, but no ratings were provided on the two indicators.

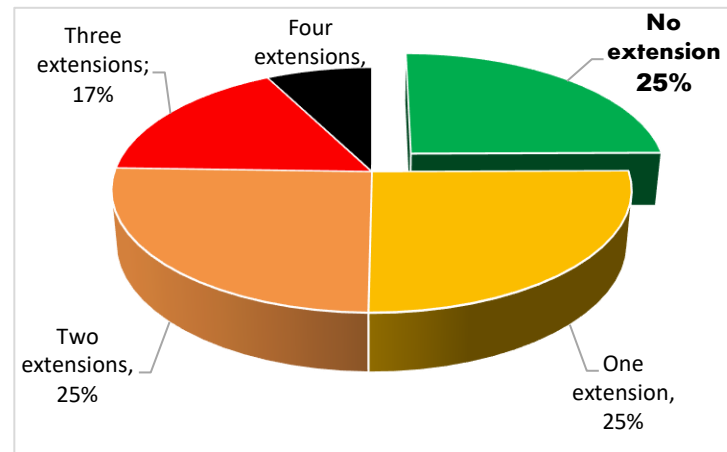
7.3 Disbursement profile

Finding 18: AWF Projects experienced disbursement challenges.

The evaluation team also assessed whether there was a discrepancy in the planned versus actual disbursements of AWF grants. As seen in Table 7.1 below, there was variation in grant disbursements for more than 60% of projects. More precisely, AWF grants were reported as almost completely disbursed for only 37 projects. Based on various reporting documents, a significant number of projects indicated some form of project delay from the original intended timeline. Funding disbursement delays are noted by both parties; bank disbursement delays as well as project grantee

disbursement delays. Various contextual issues have been identified as contributing to the delay of funds, including a lack of project baseline data, unqualified labor, shifting governments, transitioning AWF staffing, delayed communications, and political/social strife.

Figure 7.2 Implementation Challenges Leading to a Number of Extensions Granted to AWF Interventions (N=118)



Source: Evaluation Team, Portfolio Review

Table 7.1 Grant Disbursement in Percent⁵¹

Grant disbursement in %	50% and less	between 51% and 60%	Between 61% and 70%	Between 71% and 80%	Between 81% and 90%	More than 91%	Not Reported
Number of projects	10	1	3	6	11	37	6

Source: Evaluation Team

Challenges in implementing AWF's interventions create frustrations in terms of the AfDB's portfolio management within the Bank. AfDB staff interviewed during the evaluation do not have a good perception of AWF's interventions since they tend to red-flag the overall portfolio.

Overall, the challenges associated with rigid procurement requirements have consistently caused delays in the commencement of projects. This has resulted either in project extensions or in implementing projects within a timeframe that was not realistic, given the complexity of project activities.

⁵¹ This information is based on the evaluation team's review of the PCREs, IPRs, and PCRs. As a result, only 74 projects are represented in the table.

8 SUSTAINABILITY

8.1 Introduction

This chapter examines the sustainability of AWF project results through time. It discusses enabling, inhibiting and contextual factors of sustainability, which points also to how they are entwined. It also provides an assessment of the sustainability of the AWF as a financial instrument.

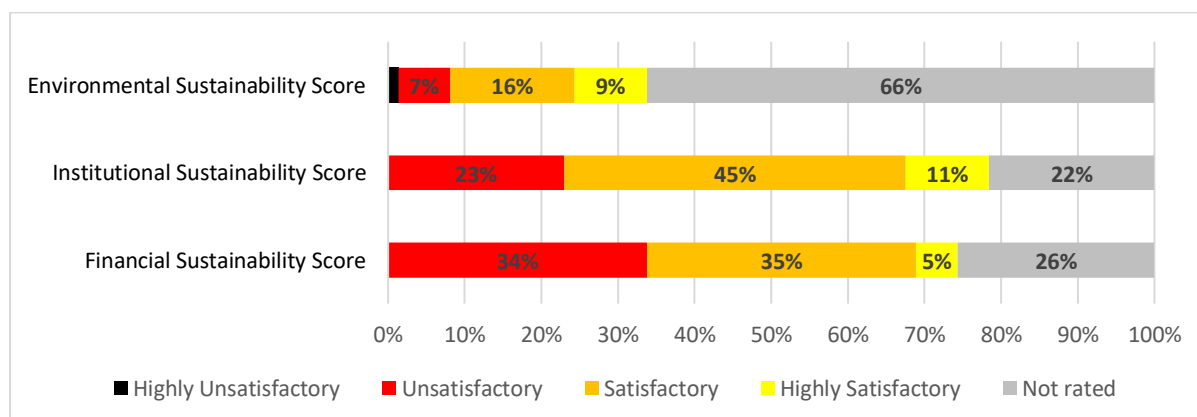
8.2 Sustainability of AWF Project Results

Finding 19: While projects have largely been designed with sustainability in mind, the sustainability of AWF project results, it is unlikely that most of the AWF projects will be enduring, in particular with regard to their environmental and financial sustainability.

This evaluation conducted an assessment of the sustainability of results produced through AWF supported interventions. Sustainability criteria were based on those used in reporting documents and included financial sustainability, institutional sustainability, and environmental sustainability. The evaluation team also assessed whether PARs included a strategy to ensure the sustainability of results.

Based on a review of documents, only 30 projects out of 74 (41%) indicated a positive rating of “Satisfactory” or above on the financial sustainability of projects (see Figure 8.1 below). Also, 41 of 74 projects (55.4%) have a positive institutional sustainability score of “Satisfactory” or higher. However, only 19 of 74 projects (25.67%) have reported positive environmental sustainability scores with a rating of “Satisfactory” or higher. These results suggest that the sustainability of the outputs and outcomes created by the AWF is in question.

Figure 8.1 Sustainability of AWF interventions as assessed in PCREs, PCR, and IPRs (N=74)⁵²



Source: Evaluation Team

⁵² This indicator is assessed in both IPRs and PCRs. As seen in the column “Not rated”, there were projects for which either a PCRE, PCR, or IPR was available, but no ratings were provided on the two indicators.

8.2.1 Institutional sustainability and strengthening of capacities

Finding 20: National, local and transboundary good governance have been advanced through AWF project support. The long view of good governance has been a strong feature in the AWF's transboundary projects by virtue of building the institutional architecture for joint decision-making.

AWF's efforts to address good governance supports projects that address highly complex issues at local, national and regional levels. Issues of property rights, human rights, health, and social conditions, and the high investment costs associated with development in the sector are being grappled with alongside the high degree of territorial and institutional fragmentation, a lack of capacity of local actors, weak legislative, regulatory, integrity and transparency frameworks, limited resource allocation, poor financial management and weak accountability, unclear policy objectives, strategies and monitoring mechanisms in Africa. As this is a priority for the AWF, many of its initiatives have focused on advancing good governance and produced notable achievements.

Embedded within AWF preparation projects, **Integrated Water Resources Management (IWRM)** support strengthened the capacity of local, national, and regional partners to manage their water resources, undertake project development, and establish an investment-conducive environment. In numerous instances, the establishment of joint consultative mechanisms, coordinating, policy and planning mechanisms have created the basis for strong institutional sustainability, monitoring and management of groundwater resources. In total, ten countries have put in place a more enabling investment-conducive environment for the water sector through the preparation and implementation of IWRM plans; enhancement of governance instruments (policies, laws and regulations), development of financing mechanisms; strengthened capacities of institutions, private sector, etc.; or improvements in water management practices. However, no countries are yet benefitting from improved regulation and this will be a specific focus in the next three years.

Transboundary Water Resources Management (TWRM) work in the major river basins across Africa through AWF 24 projects have increased the information and knowledge base of the river basins, improved transboundary institutional capacity, and prepared transboundary infrastructure investment packages ready for financing. These interventions have built trust and forged international cooperation among riparian states contributing to fostering peace and regional integration.

At the **national, provincial and community level**, substantial achievements have been made in improving local governance structures, increasing participation and promoting development within states. Community-Based Organizations (CBOs) and other structures have been established which have stimulated collective action to address the challenges of poor land and water management at local levels. The CBOs have been empowered with skills and resources to implement integrated land and water management technologies to conserve the environment and also for income-generating activities. These activities continuously mobilize and create awareness within catchment areas on diverse issues ranging from soil and water management, afforestation, formation of common interest groups for capacity building and access to funding.

AWF interventions have addressed **irregular migration and displaced persons** in Africa, promoting stability and addressing the root causes. This has been done predominantly through improving living conditions, including the provision of basic water services, irrigation and energy options and productive uses of water.

Finding 21: Convening learning events from AWF partners across different countries in the second strategy phase was very successful in teasing out lessons across different countries in pro-poor sanitation which contributed to new knowledge in the field and strengthened the capacity of implementing partners through peer-learning.

Capacity development has perhaps been the most integrated issue in the design of AWF projects. Indeed, the evaluation found that all AWF-supported projects comprised a capacity development dimension. Depending on the nature of the project, capacity development materialized in terms of institutional strengthening, training of water officers in relevant topics, and/or awareness-raising activities.

Capacity development was particularly a central feature of the knowledge management theme in the first and second strategic periods, as illustrated through the following examples.

- AWF support to the Volta-HYCOS and Niger-HYCOS projects specifically targeted two major areas. The first was capacity strengthening of the two RBOs (e.g. training of relevant hydrological personnel and supervisors at VBA and NHS in the use of the modern tools for collecting and analyzing hydrological data and information), with the understanding that their improved capacity constitutes a major driving force for TWRM and IWRM. The second was on enhancing water information and knowledge systems for the two river basins.
- In Kenya, the ILWMKTC component, which enhanced WRMA's capacity through staff training, provided water quality and quantity measuring equipment and established a meteorological data station, which contributes to improved water quality monitoring. This enabled improved information distribution, awareness and the ability to inform communities of the status of water in the area. The development of seven SCMPs as also provided an opportunity for improved management of the basin.

Because capacity development activities are generally included in the projects' logical frameworks, the AWF project assessment documents (notably PCRs) usually report on the extent to which the associated outputs have been achieved.

8.2.2 Environmental Sustainability

Finding 22: Environmental sustainability has featured strongly in the design of AWF projects. However, while the design included environmental impact assessment studies for category 1 projects, their implementation was not ensured.

Environmental sustainability cuts across most AWF project objectives and therefore features strongly in the design of the AWF projects. Examples are extensive and related to national and transboundary projects. For instance:

- In the *East African Community Lake Victoria Basin Commission Water and Sanitation Initiative (LVWATSAN)*, the Kenya country mission found evidence of progress made in latrine emptying and collection, transport and treatment of faecal sludge, improved solid waste management (including skips, tractors, and landfills), all of which had positive impacts in reducing the pollution of waterways.
- The IRHMCLS project in Kenya improved soil conservation structures. It did this through the establishment of water-friendly tree nurseries, fruit trees (e.g. papaya, mangos, avocados, etc.), fodder production integrated with dairy goats, agroforestry, and conservation tillage, all

intent on increasing foliage cover, with the numerous benefits this entails. Notably, doing so reduces surface run-off and a reduced transportation of nutrients and sediments into watercourses, improving the water quality and quantity as well as improving land use.

- The *Ghana-Effluent* project was well designed to deal with environmental sustainability by diminishing the pollution burden of urban liquid waste through its reuse for agricultural purposes. The main objectives of the initiative dealt with environmental health by reducing waste flows into the environment, while the research activities directly contributed towards achieving food security.

In addition to situations where projects are inherently designed to address environmental sustainability issues for projects of environmental category 1 (around 18% of AWF's projects), many of the AWF projects that aimed at developing the water resource generally included environmental impact assessment studies as a mechanism for ensuring that the envisioned infrastructural projects would not have detrimental environmental effects. The studies were usually expected to generate proposals on appropriate approaches for minimizing and/or mitigating identified negative environmental and social impacts. However, there is a lack of evidence that environmental and social safeguards were adhered to.

8.2.3 Political and governance environment

Finding 23: Governance, political and macro-economic conditions prevailing in RMCs have been significant factors affecting effectiveness and sustainability overall, though having affected AWF interventions differently.

There are a whole host of contextual factors that have shaped the effectiveness and sustainability of AWF supported projects. The discussion below is structured to speak to issues of governance, political instability, and economic conditions specifically.

The quality of governance in RMCs has had a mixed influence on AWF interventions. More specifically, key factors have been identified as the degree of law enforcement, the quality of public institutions, and the ability to limit corruption. Where these governance features have been weak, the implementation of AWF interventions was negatively affected, in some cases leading to the cancellation of projects.

For instance, the very first project granted to Cameroon, *Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Infrastructure Inventory* project⁵³ was terminated by the AWF four years after a Grant agreement was signed with the Ministry of Finance and Economic Planning. The major reason given for project termination was the poor performance of the procurement commission (of the Ministry of Public Contracts) which, for reasons unclear, had failed i) to hire the consulting firm that was supposed to implement project activities, and ii) to acquire other goods and services related to the project.

In contrast, in countries such as Ghana and Senegal, the consulted stakeholders pointed to the clarity and enforcement (at all levels) of procurement rules as being a positive determinant of project performance. Where delays were associated with procurement rules, this was more in terms of length of the processes themselves, not poor enforcement procurement entities *per se*. In a similar vein, the remarkably inclusive culture characterizing the water and sanitation sector in Ghana – in terms of openness to consultation, debate, and engagement – has enabled the uptake of the insights generated

⁵³ Étude d'Inventaire des Infrastructures d'AEPA en milieu Rural du Cameroun.

by the AWF projects at national level, thus influencing the development and adoption of innovative “pro-poor” WASH policies and regulations.

Political instability and other forms of fragility in some RMCs negatively affected AWF interventions.

In that regard, the Arab Spring that erupted in Tunisia in late-2010 and early-2011 created an institutional instability across the country, which had negative implications on most of the projects anchored with the Tunisian government, including those supported by the AWF. In particular, the AfDB/AWF put the SINEAU project on hold in 2012. It also canceled the *Vision and Strategy for the Water Sector in 2050* project in 2014, which was fortunately re-started in 2017.

A similarly negative condition was reported in the *IWRM of the Kayanga-Geba River Basin* project. The implementation and sustainability of results were constrained by factors such as the political crisis⁵⁴ that occurred in Guinea-Bissau in 2012, leading to a suspension of the AfDB/AWF activities in this country. Also, the Ebola virus epidemic (2013–2016) that hit (and led to travel restrictions in) West Africa put a halt on project activities, particularly in Guinea. Due to these circumstances, the donor round table to mobilize follow-on investments could not be organized by Guinea-Bissau as planned and was postponed.

Country economic, business and market conditions prevailing in RMCs have had a mixed influence on the effectiveness and sustainability of AWF operations. At the core of the AWF approach lies the assumption that after project completion, RMC governments and/or other water sector financiers should own project outputs/ outcomes and invest in their sustainability and/or expansion (e.g. implementation of feasibility studies, maintenance of the physical infrastructure provided by AWF projects, etc.). Yet, a recurrent theme in AWF PCRs is that in the case of both national and multinational projects, many RMCs are unable to allocate sufficient budgets to water and sanitation issues, thereby limiting the sustainability of project benefits.

The evaluation found that, generally, all beneficiary countries and/or institutions were initially highly enthusiastic about AWF projects, contributing what they could through project co-financing. However, down the line, RMCs that were economically and financially challenged could not commit adequate scale-up capital, given that these projects usually competed with other government priority sectors for the same national budgets (notably on health, education, and security). On the contrary, in transitional and emerging economies (e.g. Kenya, Senegal, and South Africa), where the country’s lending capacity and other enabling factors such as business environment and market maturity are stronger, the AWF projects proved to have higher chances of attracting follow-on investments from other partners.

The literature and interviews conducted in this evaluation point to the fact that, under their relatively stronger enabling environments, countries such as Senegal and Kenya have seen a steady rise of financial support from development partners, including donors and lending institutions. This has resulted in more investments into previously neglected sectors such as sanitation. Estimates show that for the period 2005-2015, the Government of Senegal mobilized FCFA 1,328 billion for the water and sanitation sector, most of which (74 %) was borrowed from lending partners through concessionary and commercial loans.⁵⁵ Under these conditions, AWF projects implemented in this country (and elsewhere) have been able to mobilize further investments from other financiers, notably AfDB and the World Bank.

⁵⁴ On 12 April 2012, a [coup d'état](#) in [Guinea-Bissau](#) was staged by elements of the armed forces in the middle of a [presidential election](#) period.

⁵⁵ Water RDI Roadmap. 2015. SENE, M. 2017. *Increasing Financial Flows for Urban Sanitation. Case of Dakar City, Senegal, World Water Council.*

8.2.4 Ownership and sustainability of partnership

Finding 24: AWF's approach, flexibility, and manner of operating enables it to be highly relevant to country needs. This responsiveness builds country and regional ownership, contributes to the development, and sustainability of ideas planted and growth enabled by AWF.

AWF's additionality is reflected in its approach that supports multi-faceted innovation. This has manifested in many ways, including an initial piloted approach (e.g. testing out alternative management models of water and sanitation delivery to low-income urban areas in Ghana); modernizing existing and promising pilots (e.g. the social franchising of operations and maintenance with female entrepreneurs in urban areas of the Eastern Cape, South Africa); and scaling-up pilot approaches by implementing across numerous sites simultaneously (e.g. the multiple-use systems approach in rural Limpopo, South Africa). The following quote illustrates this fact:

"MUS (Multiple Use System Project in South Africa) has brought water security to all six of the locations that did not have it before. It has utilized existing water resources and smartly built a reticulation system through multiple use. Also, it is the whole issue about involving a community in the design...They took over the project which allowed it to benefit from a high level of ownership." (Commissioning Agent of MUS in South Africa)

The AWF's promotion of the replicability and sustainability of pilots is undertaken by working with local partners, valuing technologies and methods that are appropriate and adapted to contexts. For instance, the Social Franchising model in South Africa was careful to choose the low-tech biochar model rather than a far more expensive, high tech LaDePa⁵⁶ model for reusing waste, resulting in a sustained use by middle-aged franchisees (owners of their SMEs). They have incorporated the bio-char component of their service offerings into their business model, as it is a fit-for-purpose technology. Here and elsewhere, technology choices have reflected considerations for the sustainability of the model. In the South African case, the AWF task team manager can be credited with bringing forth considerations of a simpler rather than more complex technology, as well as the concept of "beneficiation" for non-sewered sanitation and faecal sludge.

AWF projects have also been mindful to consider scaling possibilities, often through concerted efforts to influence national policy based on a demonstration of success at more local levels. The experience in South Africa was to try to gain traction for the replication of projects through building buy-in with district officials, then provincial officials of relevant departments. This local-level interest in the achievements of projects like the Social Franchising initiative in South Africa's Eastern Cape, or the MUS project in Limpopo were situated in the hopes that they might provide pressure from below, reaching and influencing national ministries at the policy level.

As discussed earlier, the *Social Franchising for Operations and Maintenance of School Sanitation Facilities* initiative produced a guideline on menstrual hygiene management that moved from a metropolitan area to a district area to provincial use. Other provinces across the country have turned to the Eastern Cape to use this guideline. Similarly, the MUS initiative in Limpopo is the first documented implementation of the National Water Resource Strategy policy that speaks to MUS and has influenced policy development through the Department of Human Settlements, Water, and Sanitation.

⁵⁶ LaDePa (Latrine Dehydration and Pasteurization) is a process for the treatment of faecal sludge from pit latrines.

While projects have often been designed for scale-up and influence, financial constraints have proven significant and inhibiting. Several respondents in Senegal indicated that the low funding limits of AWF support and the associated “project-based” approach do not enable economies of scale. These funding limits constrain implementing agencies from covering multiple areas and populations with single projects intent on having greater impact. To wit, a high-level Senegalese sanitation professional explained that while the €1 million project addressed the planning needs in Ziguinchor, a €5 million project would enable the development of Sanitation Master Plans for about 50 small towns in Senegal.

8.2.5 Partnership Development

Finding 25: The sustainability of nationally-based and transboundary AWF projects is heavily reliant on the participation of the right partners. Indeed, having the right partners can mitigate a whole series of other sustainability challenges.

The sustainability of AWF projects is heavily reliant on the participation of the right partners, both for nationally-based and transboundary projects. Indeed, having the right partners can mitigate a whole series of other sustainability challenges, as evident from a wide range of AWF-supported projects. Some contrasting examples are provided below, grounded in insights from case studies prepared for this evaluation.

The selection of the Water Research Commission (WRC) as the Commissioning Agent for the Social Franchising Project in South Africa enabled a domestic partner to champion the advocacy dimensions of sanitation. This was undertaken in the context of advocating its role for a circular economy within national government departments dealing with these challenges (i.e. education, social development, water and sanitation, and housing ministries).

This contrasts with the selection of the Water Resource Commission (WRC) in Ghana as a Commissioning Agent. The WRC was excellent in having the administrative capability for managing compliance with AfDB procurement rules. However, it did not play a significant role in trying to move project outputs to outcomes within a wider set of stakeholders, given that its core mandate was the regulation of water services rather than championing sanitation reuse. It was not, therefore, adequately networked to take sanitation issues forward.

Partnership is of particular importance, having also unique dimensions, on AWF-supported transboundary projects. With such projects, regardless of the commitment of a single nation, success requires drawing in an ecosystem of partners across countries able to keep a shared management system functioning, accommodating strengths and weaknesses of each, as well as funding-related challenges through time.

In Côte d’Ivoire, for instance, the Niger-HYCOS project has reportedly generated national and regional partnerships, particularly between the NBA and the National Hydrometeorological Service (NHS) in the nine countries, as well as synergies between the NBA and other basin organizations (e.g. VBA and HYCOS). The project has also promoted regional cooperation through the exchange of knowledge and experience among NHS managers in riparian countries during qualitative checks and validation of all the hydrometric data. Altogether, these partnerships have produced synergies that have been key to the success and sustainability of this project and others. Nevertheless, the limited ability of member countries to finance the operation and maintenance requirements for the hydrological investments made, let alone the human resources to man the stations and perform other functions, has been a barrier to the sustainability of AWF projects (e.g. related to basin-level infrastructure investment).

8.3 AWF at a Crossroads as a Facility

Finding 26: AWF's capacity for mobilizing further resources has declined in recent years. This has negatively impacted the sustainability of the Special Fund.

The sustainability of AWF projects is heavily reliant on the participation of the right partners.

Over the years, the AWF's capacity for mobilizing further resources has declined. The 2020 budget is lower than in previous years. The AWF has also been less than effective at reporting and communicating with donors, which has also affected its ability to mobilize resources. All of this has translated into concerns for post-2020 AWF operations. Indeed, such issues have together negatively impacted the sustainability of the Special Fund.

One of the biggest challenges facing the AWF is that it no longer has a champion in a continental political body, namely AMCOW. As described before, the strategic role of AWCOW on the continent was not well perceived by stakeholders. Instead of mobilizing financial resources for the Trust Fund, AMCOW has been in competition with AWF for resources from the same partners.

Bilateral support to AWF has diminished since the commencement of the phase 3 strategy. This has partially been due to domestic matters, such as Brexit, providing uncertainty for DFIDs future, and the ADF being constrained due to growing French domestic concerns. There has been a lull in the donor pool for the past few years which has coincided with the commencement of the phase 3 strategy. This demise is not necessarily a reflection of perceived poor performance but is rather a dwindling pie of resources that has to be divided amongst a larger spread of organizations. Organizations with aggressive communication practices have been more effective in flagging the attention of the remaining bilateral programs that are not being channeled into UN agencies. The AWF has not been one of these bodies.

However, the relatively recent AWF leadership formulated Resource Mobilization Strategy & Action Plan (RMSAP), which was presented to the AMCOW GC in 2018 calls for an ambitious and scheduled approach to both bilateral and multilateral donors.⁵⁷

Specific actions in the plan included broadening the base of traditional and non-traditional donors and philanthropic agencies, mobilizing co-funding and conducting a replenishment conference in 2020. The implications and success of this approach is not yet evident.

8.3.1 AWF/AfDB Relationship

Finding 27: Despite the significance of its interventions in the water sector at the country level, the AWF often has little visibility where it has no direct representation. This has constrained the AWF's ability to position itself strategically, expand its pool of donors and create synergies with other water and sanitation partners.

AWF projects tend to be clustered and handled by sub-regionally based AfDB water experts at regional offices in South Africa, Tunisia, Nairobi and elsewhere. This management arrangement does not properly enable adequate support to AWF-supported projects in a way that would have allowed

⁵⁷ AMCOW Governing Council presentation, Resource Mobilization Strategy & Action Plan (RMSAP), November 2019.

the Trust Fund to develop a recognizable, branded and yet more strategic approach. The South African case is illustrative in many respects.

South Africa stood out as a country where the AWF in-country presence received a noted appreciation from implementing agents in supporting their projects through various obstacles. This included helping them clarify how to work through AfDB procurement rules, providing advice on stakeholder management challenges, engaging in supervision meetings, etc. This allowed AWF to draw on relevant experience and insights from other countries tackling similar issues. When the in-country representative left AWF in 2018 without being replaced, all project partners interviewed noted a diminished engagement with the AWF once his functions were relayed to the AfDB water sector expert. While the new AfDB point person brought immense experience and expertise in the region, they also had an existing workload of projects to manage across Southern Africa for the Water Division that were on a much larger scale. Understandably, they were constrained in their ability to sustain the same level of engagement. In allocating this responsibility, Senior management within the AfDB Water Division under-recognized the value of tailored hands-on engagement on AWF projects at the local level.

The evaluation also produced substantial evidence from key informant interviews that when there is neither an AWF nor an AfDB Water Specialist at a country office, engagement on projects (e.g. on Steering Committees) or within the wider sector (related to Sector-Wide Approaches [SWAPS]) is non-existent. Yet, it is evident that countries tend to benefit from the AfDB presence at a country level when a water sector specialist is present. This was the case in Rwanda and Senegal, as these AfDB officials participated in sectoral meetings, played the lead in SWAPS, helping AWF projects navigate wider country contexts.

In Ghana, the participation of the AfDB WASH specialist in Accra in supervision meetings provided insights and support to wider discussions around pro-poor sanitation provision in the country. However, when this post was relocated and never replaced, the *Sogakope-Lome Water Transfer*⁵⁸ project struggled to work through project bottlenecks, without the benefits of sustained in-country institutional support. Further, the situation in Ghana is a cautionary tale of the importance of having AWF/AfDB participation in sectoral discussions, to ensure that invaluable lessons from AWF sector interventions inform and influence relevant wider discussions; this reportedly did not take place in Ghana. Thus, there are cases where projects have been completed to an adequate level of satisfaction but without having generated the desired traction and thus sustainability nationally.

8.3.2 AWF/AfDB Engagement with Stakeholders

Finding 28: The AWF has had limited and unsystematized engagement with both AfDB and stakeholders more widely. This reveals a missed opportunity in its approach to generate the sustainability of results through strategic and meaningful engagement.

Mechanisms for AWF's engagement with stakeholders within and outside AfDB, at different stages from project design through to completion, have not been systematized. For instance, very early in the process, specialists within AfDB are brought in to review AWF Project Appraisal documents on various cross-cutting issues, which is beneficial.

When being implemented, AWF projects often have steering committees that provide support, working through challenges and bottlenecks as required. The committees have been highly valued by

⁵⁸ *Sogakope-Lome PPP Transfert d'Eau.*

Executing Agencies as an important forum for learning. However, there has been uneven participation of the AWF and/or AfDB on these steering committees, which has constrained their ability to draw out insights and feed them into a broader learning loop for other Executing Agencies struggling with similar issues. For instance, the Greater Accra Water Company's steering committee on the Sogakope Transfer Project struggled with bottlenecks in domestic decision-making both in Togo and Ghana that could have been better supported with greater AWF/AfDB presence on the steering committee.

Project Completion Reports are the main tool used for assessment of whether projects have achieved intended results and identifying learning. In reviewing the PCRs, many were found to not contain sufficient information to harvest outcomes or learning and rather were completed as a necessary tool. When viewed alongside the Final Project Reports provided by the implementing agency, a more complete and comprehensive indication of the projects' achievement, performance and potential for learning is evidenced.

8.3.3 AWF/AfDB Reliance on External Consultants

Finding 29: Across all three phases of the AWF, the AWF/AfDB's approach of relying heavily on external consultants to carry out project activities has caused frustration during project implementation and undermined project sustainability.

One of the barriers to sustaining AWF project results has to do with the degree to which the Facility has taken into account the institutional and human resource capacity of beneficiary countries and institutions. The AWF was designed to help African countries strengthen the capacity of their Water and Sanitation Sectors, including building the competence of water professionals and institutions. However, to most local organizations and ministries interviewed in Kenya and Cameroon (and indeed elsewhere, based on other sources), the AWF/AfDB practice of relying on international consultants with approved Terms of Reference (ToR), has had counterproductive effects. This is one of the challenges faced by the AWF in working in countries where there are not enough personnel with the necessary qualifications and experience to undertake the complex technical tasks under the AWF projects.

Indeed, most AWF supported project activities, including training, feasibility studies, construction of infrastructure, and production of knowledge products, are outsourced to consultants. This approach is largely perceived as failing to empower local human resources; that is, not allowing local professionals and/or consultants to learn and benefit from the AWF supported projects. Procurement requirements for such work and the missed opportunities perceived by local implementing agents (i.e. often state departments or NGOs) have resulted in some frustration at seeing their role being diminished to the administrative management of external consultants.

Potential solutions to this challenge AWF has considered include giving a higher score during the tender evaluation process to tenderers that include local staff on their project teams; making it a mandatory requirement for all tenders to have a certain proportion of the project team as locals; and applying local competitive bidding for project tasks that are not overly complex.

9 INTEGRATION OF CROSS-CUTTING ISSUES

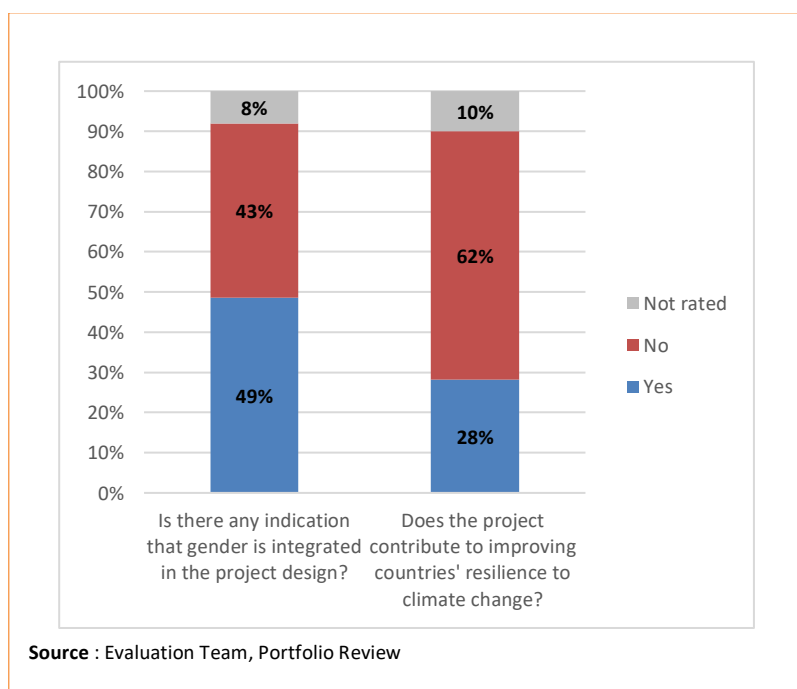
This chapter addresses the extent to which the cross-cutting issues of climate change, and gender equality have been addressed by the AWF. It also shares insights on issues of poverty reduction and income generation, as well as AWF’s work in fragile countries.

9.1 Overall

Finding 30: From a high-level overview perspective, cross-cutting issues were not adequately integrated into the design of projects in a systematic way during the first strategic phase of the AWF. During the second phase, there was a more systematic integration of cross-cutting issues.

Overall, by the very nature of their projects, cross-cutting issues have largely been at the core of project objectives. When asked about whether, and the extent to which cross-cutting issues were concretely considered in the design of their projects, respondents from project implementing agencies rather explained how – by their nature – their projects promoted these matters.

Figure 9.1 Integration of Cross-cutting Issues



For instance, most projects designed to address water resource management addressing laws and policies will have strong climate change effects in terms of greater preparedness of national governance regimes for addressing climate variability. While cross cutters were more thoroughly integrated into the AWFs Project Appraisal systems, the targets set for what good performance in implementing cross-cutters was not spelled out and so did not form a regular part of the project monitoring and evaluation system.

As mentioned in the methodology section, reporting

documents do not include criteria nor ratings on the inclusion of cross-cutting issues in project design and result. The evaluation team included two criteria in the portfolio review template to assess the integration of cross-cutters in each project reviewed: i) “Is there any indication that gender is integrated in the project design, for example by including gender-sensitive indicators, outputs or outcomes directly addressing gender, or other”; and ii) “Does the project include objectives related to improving resilience to climate change?”. As seen in Figure 9.1, while close to 50% of projects reviewed included some indication that gender was integrated in the project design, less than 30% of projects included a clear and explicit contribution to improving countries’ resilience to climate change. The evaluation team found that cross-cutting themes were, in general, more thoroughly addressed in appraisal reports than in reporting documents during the lifeline of a given project.

9.2 Gender Equity

Finding 31: AWF is gender blind. The gender equality dimension in AWF projects was not a focused priority in project proposals and through reporting. Nevertheless, gender considerations were often accounted for at the stage of project implementation.

Drawing on the WHO Gender Responsive Assessment five-point Scale,⁵⁹ the AWF's overall performance on gender has been rated by the evaluation team at level 2. It takes a limited approach relating to gender norms, roles and relations in project design, appraisals, and project completion reports and follows the following approach.

Despite having access to the AfDB's well-developed gender policies to support project design and appraisals, this wealth of institutional resources and expertise has not been sufficiently used.

In a limited way, the AWF has drawn on gender specialists within the AWF to participate in gender appraisals and as such, PARs do pay attention to gender. The limited oversight from within the AWF on how gender has been put into practice has resulted in a lack of monitoring of changes in gender norms, roles and relations as a result of the projects. Thus, while the principle of gender equity is enshrined in most PARs, the lack of instruments available to support technical staff who are implementing these projects has diminished great opportunities for making these dimensions more explicit.

There is little gender disaggregation of data collected across all projects beyond general statements acknowledging that "half the population are women". For the most part, there has been little to no more detailed analysis and reporting on the gender effects and implications of projects. For instance, in the context of the Mbabane Manzani corridor (Nondvo) Multipurpose Dam Feasibility Study, while the PAR addressed the broader principles of gender, this did not translate into the contract of the consultants, nor into the monitoring framework of the project to begin building the evidence on gender dimensions associated with the different dam options. Without such evidence, there are limitations to what kind of gender analysis can be done to inform decision-making. Managerial and technical people reported

Box 4: AWF Approach to Gender and Social Equity

Empowering women, youth and disadvantaged communities

- Committed to promoting social equity and economic integration, the African Water Facility (AWF) supports projects with components designed to deliver special benefits to women, youth and disadvantaged or marginalized communities.

Promoting gender and social equity

- Closing the gender economic gap and empowering women, youth and disadvantaged communities is essential to sustain economic growth.

Water infrastructure projects can be the catalyst for significant social change in the areas where they are implemented. The AWF works with project planners to ensure that gender equity and social equity are being addressed in the implementation and eventual outcome of each program. Typically, this includes:

- Ensuring that the project design includes specific benefits like knowledge transfer or income development for women/ girls/ poor/ young people / vulnerable communities and or the disabled, where possible and relevant.
- Making provision to allow women/girls/poor/young people/vulnerable communities and or the disabled to participate in project planning.
- Ensuring that women/ girls/ poor/ young people/vulnerable communities and or the disabled are involved in the implementation of projects where possible.

⁵⁹ WHO Gender Responsive Assessment Scale
https://www.who.int/gender/mainstreaming/GMH_Participant_GenderAssessmentScale.pdf.

having little support in understanding how to steer these issues more deeply into their work of AWF project.

There are a few projects that stand out as being truly gender-transformative, where gender norms, roles and relations of women and men were considered in light of their positive (or negative) effects in terms of access to, and control over water resources. Recruitment of quite rare female candidates was more usual as an acknowledgment of gender (as in the case of the Niger-HYCOS project). Indeed, South Africa stood out as the only country that was sampled for this evaluation where there was a gender component in all three projects.

The evaluation team considers the Social Franchising initiative as gender transformative. The project was designed to create livelihood opportunities for middle-aged female business owners. Here, AWF staff can take credit for influencing the project team by going beyond minimum standards when thinking about gender issues about school sanitation. Progressive changes in power relationships between women and men resulted in the manner in which Franchisees were groomed as leaders in growing their small businesses in operations and maintenance (O&M) for school sanitation. Their self-confidence built through how capacity development was addressed changed the social relations for these women that were predominantly operating in a man's world in terms of municipal engineers in city council departments. They went from seeking out predominantly male expertise to helping run the bio-char plants themselves.

The behavior change dimension through health and hygiene interventions at schools was particularly empowering for young girls, in terms of changes in attitudes within the school towards menstrual management. The role of school clubs and washroom attendants has had positive implications in decreasing gender-based violence in school toilets. The MUS initiative addresses gender mainstreaming by empowering women to acquire engineering skills. This has increased their social status in their communities, as they have become key decision-makers in planning for the current and future water needs of their communities.

The evaluation team also recognizes the MUS project as gender transformative. Women in the six villages across two provinces were groomed into leadership roles in resolving water security challenges confronting their communities. They became project leaders in designing, planning and implementing water supply infrastructure to ensure it could meet the livestock, agricultural and domestic needs of their communities. This saw a complete transformation of their power within these selected communities.

Concerning a transboundary project, the Lesotho-Botswana Transfer initiative was gender-specific, by considering gender norms, roles and relations through the commissioning of a gender diagnostic regarding how ORASECOM operates as a transboundary institution. Out of this emerged a gender strategy that assigned leadership roles to women in decision-making processes relating to steering committees, ensuring gender focal points and putting in place the monitoring systems to enable gender-disaggregated data regarding access issues.

These are but a few examples of areas where gender was integrated into the project design, there are other examples in Ghana, Kenya, and Niger. Overall, however, there are a minority of instances where gender planning in project design translated into transformation in practice.

9.3 Climate Change

Finding 32: Climate Change has been thoroughly integrated into most AWF projects at the planning phase.

Climate change was well integrated into the design and implementation of most projects. Most projects that aimed at fostering integrated and sustainable development of water resources (at national or transboundary levels) explicitly or implicitly addressed the issue of climate change. Examples of this are extensive, related to national as well as transboundary projects.

In the Lesotho-Botswana project, water needs due to increasing drought and water shortages in Botswana, as well as growing levels of water shortages in some South African towns in the Free State and Northern Cape Provinces are being addressed through the proposed pipeline. In the MUS project, skills acquired through community planning is equipping villages living in areas with no water to adapt by building community resilience through constructing their water pipes, managing the water and creating economic opportunities.

In Tunisia, through the *Vision and Strategy for the Water Sector in 2050* project focused on a long-term strategy and action plan for the sector, climate change considerations have been addressed through a key study examining the effects of climate change in the water sector. A critical feature of this study is looking at how to adapt to extreme weather events, such as flooding and desertification. The study uses modern tools, such as modeling, GIS and satellite imagery to provide scientific evidence for the planned long-term studies.

In Ghana, the *Sogakope-Lome Water Transfer* project aims to enhance water transfers from the Volta River with a projected capacity of 230,000 m³/day. As such, the project will reduce the dependence of four million people on groundwater resources whose sustainability is uncertain. In this way, the initiative addresses environmental security and helps adapt to climate change by providing greater water security to increasingly water-stressed communities.

9.4 Poverty Reduction and Income Generation

Finding 33: As with climate change and environmental sustainability, poverty reduction and income generation is an underlying and sustained objective across most AWF projects without having been singled out as a cross-cutter.

The AWF has certainly taken poverty reduction and income generation seriously, but it has not singled them out as cross-cutting issues. Some projects are used to illustrate this point.

- In Kenya, the *Scaling up of Integrated Rainwater Harvesting and Management and Complementary Livelihood Systems (IRHMCLS)* in Semi-Arid Districts of Kenya project (2012 – 2016) aimed to improve livelihoods through: (i) food security and household income, (ii) health and education, (iii) drought and climate resilience. The project included pastoral communities, schools through Integrated WASH (nine primary schools with over 4,000 pupils in 3 Counties), smallholder farmer's Package and communities through knowledge dissemination.
- The *Social Franchising operations and Maintenance of School Sanitation Facilities* initiative in South Africa sought to create the conditions for SMEs as a job creation mechanism targeting people that had never been able to move into full-time employment, therefore addressing the precariousness associated with piecemeal work.

There is an important distinction to be drawn, however. While project design has certainly paid attention to the under-served and focused on social inclusion, this has been a less consistent feature in the design of transboundary projects.

9.5 Transition Countries

Finding 34: While projects have been undertaken in transition countries and vulnerable contexts, the extent to which they have intentionally been framed as transformative in this regard is limited.

Based on the evaluation team's review of PARs, there is little to mention of the extent to which projects are grappling with fragile country dynamics or intentionally seeking to transform them. The Evaluation team did not select a fragile country as one of the nine case studies conducted due to time-constraints in data collection and the challenges and risks associated with conducting data collection activities in such contexts. Nevertheless, as 36 countries are eligible for ADF funding, 21 are predominantly transition countries. The analysis presented in this evaluation's efficiency section illustrated that ADF has been effective in leveraging ADF grants, which targeted low-income and fragile countries. The governance selection above has also highlighted where difficulties have resided for AWF projects concerning fragile countries.

10 CONCLUSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

10.1 Conclusions

The AWF has been operational for the past 14 years, having supported the implementation of varied water and sanitation projects across 52 African countries. This evaluation has established that, overall, the reporting documents used by the AWF (PCRs, IPRs, and PCREs) provide a positive performance of AWF interventions. For most of the criteria assessed in the reporting documents (through a four-point scale rating system), the projects supported by the AWF have been rated satisfactorily, except for the criteria of timeliness of project implementation and financial sustainability.

The nine in-depth country case studies conducted in this evaluation generated evidence that confirms the AWF's relevance as an instrument, and the positive performance of its operations as reported through PCRs and other AWF reporting documents. No other Facility on the continent has the AfDB as an entry point into collaborating with African state stakeholders to drive innovation in how they prepare projects for further downstream investment as well as trial catalytic projects. This niche has enabled the AWF to reconcile both being demand-responsive to the WATSAN priorities of African governments while channeling these diverse demands into thematic areas of performance that are unique. The added value of AWF support does not lie that much in the amount of the grants itself, but in the strategic activities for which the money is provided. The respondents' accounts in this evaluation suggest that having sound knowledge through feasibility studies and bankable projects remains a preliminary condition for accessing partners' financial support. Thus, the additionality of the AWF lies in its deliberate choice to provide this support in the form of grants and not loans. To the beneficiaries, the financial support fills a huge gap in governments' budgets, as taking a loan for conducting studies in many countries seems to be very unlikely, given the pressure to provide concrete water and sanitation services.

Through a deeper investigation, the twenty-seven projects examined in Cameroon, Côte d'Ivoire, Ghana, Kenya, Rwanda, Senegal, South Africa, Tunisia, and Zambia have created a variety of outputs and outcomes that improved the development, management, and governance of water resources as well as access to water and sanitation services in RMCs. The outputs and outcomes created span from

institutional capacities strengthened, human capital developed, upgraded water knowledge systems at national and basin levels, IWRM plans developed, RBOs created and/or strengthened, testing innovative approaches to water and sanitation, and so on. Evidence from the case studies shows that, over the past two decades, AWF interventions have produced and/or fostered synergies in the management of complex water resources and systems. Through its catalytic interventions, AWF has helped RMCs to experiment with private sector engagement at different levels and to test local service delivery models in rural and urban areas. Relevant stakeholders in RMCs have learned through these interventions how to create an enabling environment for private sector participation and how to foster partnerships for addressing water scarcity issues.

In some countries, the AWF projects have successfully served as a springboard for mobilizing follow-on investments for water resources development, which are easily traceable, thus ensuring sustainability. In other cases, some investments have taken place after AWF projects ended and which focused on addressing the same water and sanitation issues, but it is not easy to unambiguously make direct relationships. Having said that, in many countries, the biggest challenge is on how to sustain the outcomes/ results created with AWF support, especially because of structural budgetary problems that inhibit governments from dedicating sufficient resources to the water and sanitation sector. Such problems notably push trained personnel to leave water institutions for greener pastures or make it impossible to maintain and/or expand water infrastructure set up with AWF support.

Where AWF projects experienced implementation problems, these were due to multiple factors, including but not limited to lengthy procurement processes, delays in AWF approvals and feedbacks, and fund disbursement. Multinational projects tended to be delayed mainly to their multi-country nature and complexity, aspects that are not sufficiently taken into account at the design and appraisal phases of the projects.

AWF recognizes key areas that must be addressed. For 2020, it will enhance operational efficiency (i.e. strengthening the capacity of Executing Agencies) and conduct intensive Performance Monitoring of projects. Through decentralization, it will strengthen programmatic collaboration with Regional Directorates and strengthen collaboration with AfDB institutional units at HQ.

In sum, this evaluation concludes that the AWF has lived up to the aspirations of AMCOW when it was founded in 2004, to prepare projects to help leverage financing into the water and sanitation sector across the continent. Despite these achievements, the AWF is in a fragile stage regarding the lack of resources available to carry it through to the remainder of its phase 3 strategy. There are, however, positive and promising signals regarding the future of the Facility, notably with new leadership in place within the Water Department and the AWF, and the recent filling of critical posts. This capacity is further strengthened by an increasingly appreciative host, the AfDB, that has been providing substantial core resourcing to enable the Facility to function and is committed to furthering the Fund's impact across the continent by leveraging its ADF funds.

10.2 Recommendations

Based on the findings and the general conclusions of this study, the following recommendations have been formulated, specifically aimed at the AWF. The recommendations are categorized into five major areas: Institutional and Managerial Arrangements; Governance Arrangements; Strengthening Human Capacity in RMCs; and Efficiency of AWF Operations; and Knowledge Management and Learning.

10.2.1 Institutional and Managerial Arrangements

Recommendation 1: The AWF should be more flexible, nimble and efficient, to maintain its comparative advantage and fulfill its mandate, in collaboration with AfDB. Accordingly, the AfDB and AWF need to implement a number of measures to enhance the operational efficiency of the AWF. Moreover, the AfDB and AWF operations should be aligned as much as possible to maximize synergies between the two institutions.

The AWF's unique contribution is in its focus on water and sanitation and its flexibility in delivery. This should be maintained to ensure such a mechanism is available to support the AWV 2025 and the AfDB's long term strategic objectives. The fast-tracking mechanisms should be refined to speed up the approval process.

The AfDB should endeavor to take the lead in providing follow-on investments for bankable projects prepared with AWF support, thus maximizing their chance of being implemented. In the same vein, the AWF and the AfDB's Water Department should share information on their respective water and sanitation projects at the design phase, such that projects can capitalize on potential synergies where possible and necessary.

The evaluation found that while the design of AWF interventions was informed by dialogue between AWF task managers and AfDB country office staff working in the water sector, implementation arrangements for AWF interventions were not necessarily done in consultation with AfDB country staff. Involving the AfDB in establishing implementation arrangements, particularly regarding the M&E of AWF interventions, could reduce transaction costs associated with the M&E and procurement procedures for AWF interventions that were heavy compared with other projects at the AfDB. In the projects under review, the AfDB's efforts to streamline the AWF projects into its operation were limited by the fact that AWF has its procedures which it needs to follow. Harmonizing procedures between the AWF and AfDB could allow for a more efficient and effective AfDB support to AWF projects.

10.2.2 Governance Arrangements

Recommendation 2: Given the political origins of the AWF, the composition of the Governing Council should be widened to include a broader set of stakeholders to improve strategic guidance, while the AfDB Board of Directors focuses on operational issues. This suggests reconfiguring the mechanisms of engagement of the AWF and AMCOW, considering their respective mandates. To improve the working relations between the two entities, areas of duplication and comparative advantage should be assessed holistically within their strategic frameworks to forge the needed synergy in the delivery of their mandates.

The importance of the voice of RMCs through AMCOW is vital in leveraging downstream investments at the country level. Nevertheless, the GC, as currently configured is not conducive for a productive relationship. AMCOW should play an influential advisory role that enables its network and produces knowledge to strengthen the strategic deliberations of AWF. Its decision-making functions should be

reduced due to the inability to contribute to informed decision-making that needs to be done in a more timely manner than through an annual GC meeting.

10.2.3 Results Reporting, Communication, and Learning

Recommendation 3: The AWF should improve its results reporting and communication (about the AWF as a Facility, its operations, and achievements) to its range of stakeholders. Outcome monitoring should be intensified to provide the evidence needed to engage proactively with donors in the interest of resource mobilization. This should be done through appropriate communication mechanisms, whilst also increasing efforts to generate and disseminate requisite knowledge on lessons from its interventions to facilitate learning. Accordingly, the AWF should consider developing a sound knowledge management actions plan that is aligned with its intervention strategies, with appropriate staffing and financial resources, and output targets.

Improved data management and an information database should be a priority for AWF. This should include AWF having all Project Appraisal Reports (PARs), Implementation Progress Reports (IPRs), and Project Completion Reports (PCRs), and Project Completion Evaluation Report (PCREs) on hand.

A clear and robust communication policy and strategy (with appropriate staffing), targeting diverse categories of stakeholders (RMCs, grantees, donors, financiers, etc.) is essential. Only then will the AWF be able to position itself strategically, expand its pool of donors, and synergize with other water sector players in RMCs, as well as enabling AWF staff to effectively engage with grantees and attend to their issues in a timely way.

A proportion of all AWF project budgets should particularly be devoted to knowledge generation and learning. Projects that had included this in their work plans developed numerous tools that enabled learning at multiple levels, raising awareness about important issues in water and sanitation, health, innovation, technology, and the environment. Unless budgeted for, the learning dimensions of a project will not be integrated into its design and this will affect the ability to produce and disseminate knowledge. Central to defining this knowledge management function is a reworked Theory of Change for the phase 3 strategy that brings learning and dissemination of such learning to the fore.

10.2.4 Efficiency of AWF Operations

Recommendation 4: The AWF should adopt concrete measures to improve its operational efficiency for optimal delivery on its mandates. Towards this, the AWF should work to improve on i) the core processes and procedures on project assessment, planning, preparation and appraisal in relation to cost and time, ii) procurement and administrative arrangements to minimize and/or avoid procedural delays, and iii) mechanisms to strengthen its capacity and that of Executing Agencies for efficient implementation.

Most project timelines are too short, and there is a gap evidenced between grant approval, contract signature, and implementation (sometimes as much as a year). This has often necessitated project extensions, adding administrative burden and creating unnecessary work. This could be avoided if properly factored into the planning cycle at inception.

There is a need to assign a reasonable number of projects to task managers and to follow water developments going on in countries with more regular monitoring and site visits to projects. This matches with an earlier recommendation on ensuring an appropriate representation of AWF staff.

In the current arrangement, AWF can only contribute to the training of relevant personnel. Yet, if the trained individuals do not remain in their organizations to implement what they learned, the issue of

human capacity will always be a major constraint to the AWF's efforts to address water challenges. This issue goes beyond one specific organization and/or country, and the AWF should engage with relevant players at the continental level, perhaps jointly with AMCOW, to address it.

Taking institutional measures that enable water sector professionals in RMCs to learn from the bulk of work outsourced to foreign and/or international consultants, could be addressed for instance by making it a condition for hired international consultants to work closely with local water professionals from implementing agencies, rather than these being mere coordinators of projects. Doing so would favor local capacity and expertise development so that similar assignments could be undertaken by local professionals in the future.

10.2.5 Visibility and Advocacy Role

Recommendation 5: The AWF should engage more with decision-makers (i.e., politicians, academics research, and the whole range of development partners and actors) in RMCs to increase its visibility, synergies/coordination and deepen advocacy and policy engagement for adequate quantity, capacity and skill levels of professional human resources in the water and sanitation sector on the continent. The AWF should continue to market itself to donors to renew their participation and engagement, thereby increasing its financing.

One of the major findings of this study is that the AWF does not have a distinct identity to many actors in the water sector in RMCs. The AWF is not greatly recognized for its operations and achievements and is closely associated with the AfDB, which is often credited or confused as the funding body for AWF projects. Key reasons are that AfDB personnel often serve a dual-purpose role as AWF representative and AfDB Water Specialists, and the fact that AfDB procurement rules and monitoring and reporting practices are used, to appear and operate similarly as AfDB projects.

This situation raises concerns about the AWF's ability to position itself strategically. This could be done notably by strengthening its political and strategic presence on the continent by formally engaging more with policymakers and key water sector players (notably through formalized partnerships). The AWF should also aim to have representatives at the most appropriate levels (e.g. create a position at the regional level [equivalent of an AfDB Water Specialist]), such that it can ensure AWF visibility, increase direct support to implementing agencies, as well as closely follow (and influence) what goes on in the sector at country/ regional level. This strategy should be complemented by sound partnerships with relevant actors and donors in countries that are of strategic interest to the AWF.

Ensuring implementing partners' commitments to advocacy and policy engagement would significantly address the sustainability of AWF outputs after projects have ended. Indeed, projects reviewed that included advocacy and policy engagement were both more effective and sustainable and had a greater impact on national and country-level plans and strategies.

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