



IDEV

Independent Development Evaluation  
African Development Bank

# Mid-term Evaluation of the African Development Bank's Jobs for Youth in Africa Strategy 2016-2025

CONCEPT NOTE (DRAFT)

June 2021



AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP

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## INTRODUCTION

The mid-term evaluation of the Jobs for Youth in Africa Strategy (2016-2025) is part of the Independent Development Evaluation's (BDEV) work program 2019-21 approved by the African Development Bank's (AfDB) Board Committee on Operations and Development Effectiveness (CODE). This Concept Note presents a broad approach to carry out the proposed evaluation over the period April 2021 - March 2022.

### Background and context

Achieving inclusive economic growth in Africa, one of the two overarching objectives of the AfDB's Ten-Year Strategy 2013-2022, requires intentional targeting of Africa's greatest asset, the youth.<sup>1</sup> Over the last decade, Africa's population under age 20 increased by 25.6% and is projected to become the largest share of the continent's population by 2070.<sup>2</sup> In 2019, nearly 77% of the youth living in extreme poverty across the world were from Africa.<sup>3</sup> One in five of Africa's youth neither has a job nor is enrolled in education, employment or training.<sup>4</sup> Underemployment and unemployment of youth in Africa is constraining their ability to meaningfully contribute to economic growth and lift themselves out of poverty. It is also estimated that close to 50% of employed youth in Africa perceive their skills as mismatched to their jobs. Up to 95% of the employed youth work in the informal sector, plagued by low wages, job instability and lack of social protection.<sup>5</sup> The COVID-19 pandemic has worsened this situation, as recent data from the African Economic Outlook 2021 indicates that the youth and other vulnerable groups predominantly engaged in the informal sector have been affected disproportionately. In the year 2020, the African economy shrunk by 2.1%. It is estimated that 20-30 million jobs will be lost by 2021 due to COVID-19.

In 2016, the African Development Bank (AfDB) launched the Jobs for Youth in Africa (JfYA) strategy that was expected to create 25 million jobs and positively impact 50 million youth by 2025. This strategy directly contributes to the AfDB's Ten-Year Strategy objective of achieving inclusive growth by expanding economic opportunities for all youth irrespective of gender, age, socioeconomic strata and geography. The Jobs for Youth in Africa Strategy 2016-2025 is expected to achieve this goal through three strategic interventions: i) Integration, by applying a youth employment focus across Bank projects, investments and work with regional member countries; ii) Innovation, through working with private and public sector partners to incubate, implement and scale up promising ideas for creating youth employment; and iii) Investment, i.e. catalyzing private capital to stimulate the youth employment and entrepreneurship ecosystem. The JfYA Strategy further aligns with the Bank's ten-year strategy by making specific considerations for gender and improving opportunities for all youth in fragile contexts.

The Strategy is accompanied by a coherent implementation plan, dedicated financing and human resources as well as mechanisms for monitoring and evaluation to enable timely and effective execution. The initial resource envelope required for implementation of this plan was estimated at 3.5 billion UA, to be financed by the Bank and external funders.<sup>6</sup> Strategy implementation is phased over

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<sup>1</sup> AfDB adopts the African Union description of youth to cover persons 15-35 years.

<sup>2</sup> African Development Bank (2020). African Economic Outlook 2020.

<sup>3</sup> Kristofer Hamel and Constanza di Nucci (2019). Future Development. More than 100 million young adults are still living in extreme poverty. Brookings Institution.

<sup>4</sup> ILO (2020). Report on employment in Africa (Re-Africa) Tackling the Youth Employment Challenge.

<sup>5</sup> ILO (2019). Advancing Social Justice: Shaping the future of work in Africa.

<sup>6</sup> African Development Bank (2016). Jobs for Youth in Africa Strategy.

the ten-year period 2016-2025, starting with the establishment of systems and structures, then initial activity implementation and going to scale in the last five years.

## PURPOSE AND OBJECTIVES OF THE EVALUATION

As the Bank reaches the mid-point of implementation of the JfYA strategy, BDEV will conduct a formative evaluation to assess the progress made so far and provide lessons on the effectiveness of the strategy. Findings of this evaluation will inform the Board and management on possible improvements and emerging priorities to be considered in the second half of the strategy period.

Specifically, the evaluation will:

- Assess the continued relevance and validity of the theory of change and planning assumptions given contextual changes and shifts over the past five years;
- Assess the coherence, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of achieved results of the strategy at mid-term and probability of achieving intended results in the remaining period;
- Identify enabling and hindering factors to achievement of expected outcomes; and
- Draw lessons and provide actionable recommendations on areas of improvements, mid-course correction, if necessary, and/or new opportunities to be explored over the remaining course of the strategy.

## Evaluation Questions

Preliminary evaluation questions that align with the international evaluation criteria have been defined below. These questions will be reviewed and finalized in consultation with key stakeholders during the in-depth evaluation design phase.

Key Evaluation Question	Sub questions	Evaluation Criteria
1. How well has the JfYA positioned the Bank to contribute to improving employment outcomes of youth in Africa?	1.1 To what extent are the theory of change, underlying assumptions and risks relevant and valid in the remaining strategy period? 1.2 Are intervention areas and implementation approaches suited to the needs of the continent and yet adaptive to a changing global context? 1.3 What's the Bank's comparative advantage in promoting youth employment and entrepreneurship? 1.4 How does the JfYA Strategy compare with similar strategies of other key development partners? 1.5 To what extent does the JfYA strategy align with and add value to other Bank strategies and policies? 1.6 Are Bank resources, systems and structures adequate to support achievement of intended results? 1.7 To what extent is the strategy producing or likely to produce the expected results in a timely and cost-effective manner and in compliance with operational standards? 1.8 Are partnerships and collaboration mechanisms (i.e. both internal and external) contributing to achievement of results?	Relevance, Coherence, Efficiency, Effectiveness
2. Is JfYA making progress towards	2.1 Are the strategy interventions and actions delivering or likely to deliver intended results	Effectiveness

Key Evaluation Question	Sub questions	Evaluation Criteria
improving youth employment?	<p>and outcomes? How do these results differ across gender, socio-economic status and fragility contexts?</p> <p>2.2 What key factors have influenced the achievement or non-achievement of intended outcomes?</p> <p>2.3 What unintended outcomes (positive and negative) have been achieved so far?</p> <p>2.4 Which interventions started under the JfYA have been scaled up and/or are ready for scale up?</p>	
3. Are JfYA results sustainable or likely to be sustainable?	<p>3.1 How well did intervention strategies and implementation address issues of sustainability?</p> <p>3.2 Which of the results achieved so far are more likely to be sustained? Why?</p> <p>3.3 What are key risks to sustainability of other intended outcomes going forward?</p>	Sustainability
4. What are we learning about what works?	<p>4.1 What are emerging lessons, working and/or promising approaches that can be carried forward?</p> <p>4.2 What other evidence exists from comparator organizations about promising/best practices?</p>	

## Methodology and Approach

This evaluation will adopt a theory-based approach to conduct a contextual analysis, assess the design, planning assumptions, implementation approach and establish achieved results, emerging lessons and opportunities. As a midterm evaluation, this exercise is formative in nature with an end focus on building evidence that can inform performance improvements in the remaining half of the strategy period.

A robust methodological approach using both qualitative and quantitative data collection and analytical methods will be applied to build the evidence base to answer the key evaluation questions. These methods will include amongst others a structured document review, portfolio analysis, benchmarking study, policy review, online surveys, focus group discussions and key informant interviews. Targeted country case studies will be conducted to provide opportunities for generation of concrete lessons and actionable recommendations.

Meaningful stakeholder engagement will be critical throughout the course of the evaluation. In collaboration with AHVP, AHHD and Country Offices, the evaluation team will seek opportunities for engaging youth as active participants of the evaluation. This may include participation of the Youth Advisory Council and or the Africa Evaluation Association Emerging Evaluator network in the evaluation design, engagement of youth researchers as members of the evaluation team, gathering of youth perceptions and views on the strategy's relevance and implementation through key informant interviews and focus group discussions, sharing and dissemination of findings with youth groups and CSOs amongst others. Quality assurance of the evaluation process and products will be carried out in line with the Bank's evaluation policy.

## BDEV EVALUATION TEAM

Task Managers	Girma Earo Kumbi – Chief Evaluation Officer May Mwaka – Principal Evaluation Officer
Team Member	Eric Olaniran Yai – Evaluation Officer

Internal peer reviewers	Andrew Anguko – Chief Quality and Methods Adviser Eustace Uzor – Evaluation Officer
Knowledge Management	Jayne Musumba – Principal Knowledge Management Officer Najade Lindsay – Knowledge Management Officer

## STAKEHOLDERS

The primary stakeholders in this evaluation include the Bank’s Board, Management, the core implementing departments and complexes including the Agriculture, Human and Social Development Complex (AHVP), Department for Delivery, Performance Management and Results (SNDP), Regional Development, Integration and Business Delivery Complex (RDVP), Private Sector, Infrastructure and Industrialization Complex (PIVP) and regional member countries. Other stakeholders will include civil society organizations, MDBs and other development agencies engaged in similar development efforts in Africa.

## TENTATIVE TIMELINE

EVALUATION ACTIVITY	TIMING
Concept Note	June 2021
Establishment of an inter-departmental evaluation reference group	June 2021
Recruitment of an external peer reviewer	June 2021
Scoping	July 2021
Approach Paper	July 2021
Terms of reference for recruitment of a consultancy firm	July 2021
Recruitment of a consultancy firm	August 2021
Inception report	September 2021
Data collection – headquarters and field work	September 2021
Technical report	December 2021
Summary report	March 2022