

**OPENING REMARKS BY THE EVALUATOR GENERAL  
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AT THE OPENING OF THE BANK'S 2022  
EVALUATION WEEK  
ABIDJAN, COTE D'VOIRE, 28<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2022**

Members of the AfDB Board of Directors and Senior Management,  
Participants from governments, parliaments, multilateral institutions, development organizations, academia, civil society, the private sector,  
Dear colleagues and friends, good afternoon!

Today, it warms my heart to see you join us for the AfDB's Development Evaluation Week 2022. Allow me to extend a big welcome to all of you, from the entire African Development Bank, and especially from Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV).

This year's theme, "*Building a stronger and more resilient Africa*," follows on from the discussions we had during the 2020 Evaluation Week, where we identified how effective learning from evaluations is linked to the delivery of sustainable development results. Key among the topics discussed was the need for institutions to learn from evaluations, and for these lessons to inform development policies, strategies and programs going forward.

I am glad to share with you that this is a practice we have taken on passionately here at the AfDB. Over the past 42 years, knowledge from the 2,380 evaluations conducted across the Bank has been used in developing its policies, strategies, frameworks, processes and operations. In 2021 for example, IDEV's independent evaluations have informed new Bank policies and strategies in the areas of Water, Climate Change and Green Growth, Private Sector Development, assessing Additionality and Development Outcomes, Public-Private Partnerships, Sustainable Borrowing, Trust Funds, Sovereign Operations Restructuring, Environmental and Social Safeguards, and Addressing Fragility in Africa.

Kindly allow me to appreciate the Bank's Board of Directors, Management and staff for ensuring that lessons from evaluations play an important role in shaping the Bank's interventions.

Ladies and gentlemen, building a stronger and more resilient Africa calls for constant and robust transparency and accountability for using our time and resources. It is evaluators' fundamental role to provide credible and timely evidence on what is working and what is not to allow the Bank as well as its Regional Member Countries and partners to improve

interventions and strive for a continent that is prosperous, environmentally sustainable, inclusive to all its people, and able to effectively deal with economic, social, and climate-related shocks. Therefore, in tandem with our 2022-2024 work program, IDEV is not only conducting more evaluations of the Bank's interventions, but also strongly focusing on the utility and use of these evaluations, on knowledge sharing and collaboration with stakeholders, and developing national evaluation capacities across the African continent.

As African countries emerge from the COVID-19 pandemic into a new reality that few would have predicted only a year earlier, the toll on human lives and health has been lower than in other parts of the world. This is not in small part due to bold actions by African countries. However, their efforts came with a cost, and the economic toll has been more significant. Countries today face economic challenges of public debt and resource mobilization, infrastructure needs for energy, transport, health, water and sanitation, social challenges such as youth unemployment, fragility, food insecurity, the consequences of climate change, and insufficient resilience to regional or global shocks. We will hear more about these challenges in the first presentation.

Africa is thus at an important moment, at a time when the African Development Bank is developing its new Ten-Year Strategy for 2023-2032. It is considering pillars such as enhancing agricultural technologies and value chains, renewable energy, productive industries and private sector investment, and regional connectivity, to catalyze the crucial task of building a more resilient Africa. IDEV is ready to provide the necessary evaluative knowledge to help ensure that the African people will benefit from these investments.

This Evaluation Week provides a unique forum through which we can harness our intellectual capital and collective knowledge, and inspire honest conversations that examine where we are, where we should be, and where we want to be as a continent. The tools we need to get there are also crucial, and we should be able to identify them from such discussions.

We have invited a variety of speakers to help us examine different development issues in six virtual sessions over three days. The sessions will focus on the key challenges facing Africa and the role of evaluation in tackling them. These include providing better access to a higher quality and quantity of energy; maximizing the impact of agriculture investments on food security and people's lives; managing debt burdens and building economic resilience of African countries; and ensuring Africa's growth is inclusive, empowering women and creating jobs and a promising future for its youth. In addition, to ensure the continued growth of a

culture of evaluation in Africa, we held a professional development workshop aimed at Young and Emerging Evaluators this morning.

We also count on the active participation and contributions from audience members. You all have your own knowledge, expertise, views, and experience, and we encourage you to share these. I believe that the discussions in this virtual space can yield transformational ideas for the African continent, that the AfDB can make good use of in the next ten years.

Thank you once again for joining us, and I wish you fruitful deliberations.