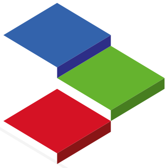

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Summary Report

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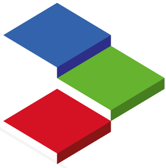

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About the AfDB

The overarching objective of the African Development Bank Group is to spur sustainable economic development and social progress in its regional member countries (RMCs), thus contributing to poverty reduction. The Bank Group achieves this objective by mobilizing and allocating resources for investment in RMCs and providing policy advice and technical assistance to support development efforts.

About Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV)

The mission of Independent Development Evaluation at the AfDB is to enhance the development effectiveness of the institution in its regional member countries through independent and instrumental evaluations and partnerships for sharing knowledge.

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Acronyms and Abbreviations

ACFA	Accelerated Co-Financing Facility for Africa
ACSP	African Carbon Support Program
ADF	African Development Fund
ADFI	Africa Digital Financial Inclusion Facility
AfCOP	African Community Practice
AFD	Agence Française de Développement
AfDB	African Development Bank Group
AFT	Agriculture Fast Track Fund
AfTra	Africa Trade Fund
AGTF	Africa Growing Together Fund
AHVP	Agriculture, Human and Social Development Complex
AIF	African Investment Fund
ALSF	African Legal Support Facility
APRM	Africa Peer Review Mechanism
AsDB	Asian Development Bank
ATF	Africa Trade Facility
ATRS	Activity Time Recording System
AWF	African Water Facility
BPPS	Bank-Wide Program Processing Schedule
BTF	Bilateral Trust Fund
C&C	Coordination & Cooperation Partnership
CAS	Country Assistance Strategy
CBFF	Congo Basin Forest Fund
CF	Co-financing (Agreement)
CIF	Climate Investment Fund
CSO	Civil Society Organization
CSP	Country Strategy Paper
CTF	Clean Technology Fund
DBDM	Development and Business Delivery Model
DFI	Development Finance Institution
DFID	United Kingdom Department for International Development
EBRD	European Bank for Reconstruction and Development
EC	European Commission
ECG	Evaluation Cooperation Group
ECGF	Governance and Public Financial Management Coordination Office
ECOWAS	Economic Community of West African States
ECREEE	Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
ECVP	Economic Governance and Knowledge Management Complex
EIB	European Investment Bank
EITI	Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative
EOI	Expression of Interest
EPSA	Enhanced Private Sector Assistance
ESS	Environmental and Social Safeguards
ESW	Economic and Sector Work
EU	European Union
FAPA	Fund for African Private Sector Assistance
FIF	Financial Intermediary Fund
FIRM	Resource Mobilization and Partnerships Department
FIST	Syndication, Co-financing, and Client Solutions Department
FIVP	Finance Vice-Presidency
FRMB	Resource Mobilization and External Finance Department
FP	Financing Partnership
GAFSP	Global Agriculture and Food Security Program
GCF	Green Climate Fund
GEF	Global Environment Fund
HQ	Headquarters
ICA	Infrastructure Consortium for Africa
ICT	Information and Communications Technology

IDB	Inter-American Development Bank
IDEV	Independent Development Evaluation
IFAD	International Fund for Agricultural Development
IFC	International Finance Corporation
IFI	International Financial Institution
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IsDB	Islamic Development Bank
JAEI	Japan-Africa Energy Financing Facility
JICA	Japan International Cooperation Agency
KASP	Knowledge, Advisory Services, and Policy Dialogue
KMS	Knowledge Management Strategy
KOAFEC	Korea Africa Economic Cooperation
LIC	Low-Income Country
MARS	Management Action Record System
M&E	Monitoring and Evaluation
MDB	Multilateral Development Bank
MDTF	Multi-Donor Trust Fund
MENA	Middle East and North Africa
MfDR	Managing for Development Results
MIC	Middle-Income Country
MOPAN	Multilateral Organization Performance Assessment Network
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding
MTS	Medium-Term Strategy of the AfDB Group
NEPAD	New Partnership for Africa's Development
NEPAD-IPPF	Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility
NFP	Non-Financing Partnership
NGO	Non-Governmental Organization
NSE	Non-sovereign Entity
NTCF	Nigeria Technical Cooperation Fund
NTF	Nigeria Trust Fund
OECD	Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development
OECD-DAC	Organization for Economic Cooperation Development-Development Assistance Committee
OPEV	Operations Evaluation Department (now IDEV)
ORMU	Resource Mobilization Unit
ORRU	Partnerships and Cooperation Unit
ORVP	Operations I Country and Regional Programs and Policy Complex
PAGODA	Pillar Assessed Grant or Delegation Agreements
PCR	Project Completion Report
PECG	Climate Change & Green Growth Department
PERN	Department of Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency
PHRDG	Policy and Human Resources Development Grant
PIDA	Program for Infrastructure Development in Africa
PIFD	Financial Sector Development Department
PPP	Public-Private Partnership
PSO	Private Sector Operation
RBM	Results-based Management
RDGN	North Africa Regional Development and Business Delivery Office
REC	Regional Economic Community
RMC	Regional Member Country
RMF	Results Measurement Framework
RWSSI	Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative
SCP	Standing Committee on Partnerships
SDG	Sustainable Development Goal
SEFA	Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa
SMCC	Senior Management Coordination Committee
SME	Small and Medium Enterprise
SNSP	Strategy and Operational Policies Department
TCFR	Technical Cooperation Fund Reform
TF	Trust Fund
TM	Task Manager
ToC	Theory of Change
TOR	Terms of Reference
TTF	Thematic Trust Fund
TYS	AfDB's Ten-Year Strategy

UA	Unit of Account
UK	United Kingdom
UN	United Nations
UNDP	United Nations Development Programme
UNECA	United Nations Economic Commission for Africa
UNWOMEN	United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women
USD	United States Dollar
VfM	Value for Money
WB	World Bank
WHO	World Health Organization

India

Executive Summary

Background

This report presents the findings of the evaluation of the Development Partnerships (DPs) of the African Development Bank Group (the AfDB or the Bank). In its Ten-Year Strategy (TYS, 2013–2022), the Bank considered effective development partnerships as one of the key approaches through which it would deliver its development objectives. Considering the growing importance of DPs, Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV) launched this evaluation to shed light on the overall performance of the partnership ecosystem over the past decade (2008-2019).

DPs at the Bank fall into two categories. Financing Partnerships (FPs) combine financial resources from partners to support development efforts in Regional Member Countries (RMCs) through Trust Funds (TFs) and Co-financing agreements (CFs). Non-Financing Partnerships (NFPs) are composed of Coordination and Cooperation (C&C) and Knowledge, Advisory Services, and Policy Dialogue (KASP) partnerships. While these categories were used for analytical purposes, the evaluation recognizes that there is a continuum of partnerships, which generally have both financing and non-financing objectives. Annex 1 of this volume presents key concepts of partnerships used in this report.

Purpose and Scope: The purpose of this evaluation was to assess the performance of various partnership initiatives at the AfDB and provide the Board of Directors and Management with lessons and recommendations to improve the effectiveness of present and future DPs. The review covers 75 active DPs and the Sovereign Operations (SOs) and Non-Sovereign Operations (NSOs) they funded from 2008 to 2019, with a comparative analysis between 2008–2012 and 2013–2019, before and after the adoption of the TYS. The evaluation did not systematically assess the implementation of all DPs but focused on active partnerships with agreed and clear results frameworks. While the topic of convening power was initially planned to be covered, it could not as it was too broad for this evaluation.

Methodology: The evaluation was based on a reconstructed theory of change detailing the Bank's overall results framework for DPs. The sources of evidence included: (i) a desk review of AfDB documents and external literature on FPs and NFPs; (ii) a portfolio analysis and mapping of partnerships; (iii) interviews with over 300 internal and external stakeholders; (iv) six country case studies of Cameroon, Liberia, Rwanda, Senegal, Tunisia, and Zambia; (v) a review and rating of 39 out of 75 partnerships; and (vi) a benchmarking with the World Bank (WB), the Inter-American Development Bank (IDB), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (EBRD), and the Asian Development Bank (AsDB). The sample used was determined based on the concentration of partnerships that could help to assess development results at the country level, sector level, and partnership level. The evaluation used a four-point rating scale ranging from Highly Satisfactory to Highly Unsatisfactory to assess both specific partnerships and overall performance.

This report is structured in two volumes. Volume 1 focuses on the findings, lessons, and recommendations, while Volume 2 contains the technical annexes.

Limitations: The lack of granular and historical data on CFs and TFs, particularly for the period between 2008 and 2014; the inability to conduct a partners' survey due to delays in accessing a comprehensive

list and making contact with partners; and the lack of specific documentation filed in the Bank's systems on some DPs were the main limitations of this study. They were addressed through an increased verification and reconciliation of the accessible data for consistency, and the inclusion of more sources of information in the portfolio analysis to strengthen the rigor and credibility of the analysis.

Main Findings

Mapping partnerships

A detailed mapping is presented in Annex 1 of Volume 2. The scope and number of the Bank's DPs have increased over time. From a total of 89 initiatives in the initial review, the evaluation identified 75 that qualify as partnerships where the Bank collaborates with at least one partner. The main criteria included the existence of a formal partnership agreement, the presence of one or more external parties in the governance structure, and the use of joint resources. The 75 active DPs include 51 entered into during the evaluation period (2008–2019), 32 before the start of the TYS in 2013 and 19 after.

FPs (47, or 63 percent) dominated the Bank's partnerships relative to NFPs (28, or 37 percent). TFs accounted for 30 (64 percent) and CFs for 17 (36 percent) of FPs. TFs were dominated by Thematic Trust Funds (TTFs) (50 percent) and Bilateral Trust Funds (BTFs) (33 percent), with a few Special Funds (13 percent) and global funds (4 percent). Within the CFs, three were Global Financial Intermediary Funds,[1] in which the Bank is an implementing partner, while the rest were agreements with bilateral and multilateral institutions. In total, over the period, the Bank was a signatory to CFs for an estimated financial value of US$ 30.9 billion and has received US$ 1.5 billion through Trust Funds, excluding the Nigeria Trust Fund (NTF).

When categorized by High 5s, 47 DPs were focused on Industrialize Africa, 36 on Improve the Quality of Life for the People of Africa, 35 on Light Up and Power Africa, 33 on Feed Africa, and 33 on Integrate Africa. In total, 17 partnerships cut across the High 5s, while four were generic and did not align with the High 5s. A further breakdown by partnership categories shows that FPs predominantly financed Improving the Quality of Life of People in Africa (TFs, 22 percent) and Light Up and Power Africa (CFs, 25 percent). On the other hand, NFPs mainly supported Integrating Africa, with 33 percent for C&C and 67 percent for KASPs.

Relevance

The Bank has not developed a specific partnership and resource mobilization strategy despite initial plans to do so. However, the overall partnership approach reconstructed by the evaluation is rated as Satisfactory. Partnerships align with the Bank's strategies and were consistent with international development agendas and continental initiatives.

The partnerships reviewed show that the relevance and strategic alignment of FPs and NFPs were generally satisfactory. The Bank has been able to mobilize different types of partnerships to support its operations. However, there is still a lack of coherent approaches to specific C&Cs and KASPs, which tend to be less formalized. The alignment of the Bank's partnerships is limited by the lack of a Bank-wide Partnership Policy, Strategy, and Action Plan. As a result, the strategic function of partnerships as vehicles for development is diluted and remains largely uncoordinated across the Bank's operational complexes.

A series of reforms has improved the relevance of partnerships in the Bank. Notably, the creation of the Standing Committee on Partnerships (SCP) in 2012 played a significant role in strengthening the relevance and alignment of new partnerships.

The quality at entry and design of most operations financed through the Bank's partnership arrangements is rated as Satisfactory. The available evidence shows that projects funded through

partnerships generally have the same quality standards as core Bank operations. The limited selectivity and lack of a clear results framework for partnerships were the key challenges in designing operations funded by partnerships at the Bank.

Effectiveness

Over the evaluation period, the overall performance of partnerships was considered Satisfactory.

The effectiveness of the co-financing facilities reviewed is rated as Satisfactory. When partnerships were prioritized and better resourced, they provided increased added value for the Bank.

However, the performance varied over the evaluation period. The Bank recorded the most co-financing in 2015, with UA 17,642 million against a target of UA 8,000 million. Co-financing through comprehensive framework agreements involving International Financial Institutions (IFIs) such as the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB), International Fund for Agricultural Development (IFAD) and WB, and the Africa Growing Together Fund (AGTF) yielded the highest level of partner collaboration with minimal transaction costs. In general, co-financing was more effective when paired with grant funding, especially a project preparation facility. Effective and promising CFs include the AGTF with China, the Climate Investment Fund (CIF), the Global Environment Facility (GEF), and the EU Africa Investment Platform (PAGODA), now the largest source of grant co-financing in the Bank.

Trust funds have been instrumental in strengthening the Bank's lending and non-lending portfolios. In the six countries visited, the evaluation found that TF grants supported key projects, including in sectors such as innovation, knowledge production, policy dialogue, and providing technical assistance to help operations in the social and governance sectors. TFs supported new initiatives such as the African Development Fund (ADF) Lab, as well as cross-cutting themes such as climate change and green growth. TFs also allowed the Bank to remain relevant in transition countries and regions where it is unable to conduct normal operations. However, internal stakeholders argue that resources were increasingly difficult to access. The number of projects financed by TFs has declined over time.

The achievement of results by NFPs was also Satisfactory. In the six countries visited, C&C and KASP partnerships contributed to adding analytical and technical rigor to the Bank's interventions, including promoting policy dialogue and more robust engagement with clients in RMCs. The Bank maintained active inter-agency coordination with key multilateral and bilateral agencies at the country level. African governments recognized the Bank as the preferred partner of choice. Similarly, partners in countries viewed the AfDB's capacity to partner as excellent and its contribution as useful. All considered that the Bank has the potential to play an even more prominent role in the development architecture.

Implementation challenges that limited effectiveness were linked to the perceived culture of approvals in the Bank. Indeed, despite the political push for more leveraging, sector staff were mainly focused on delivering the Bank's lending program and thus prioritized AfDB loans and Board approval of their projects. Co-financing faced the unwillingness of Task Managers (TMs) to bear the additional workload and risk of leading co-financed loans. TMs considered that the Bank's ecosystem was not entirely capable of supporting the responsibility of leading on co-financing, especially in the case of joint co-financing. Other challenges for some CFs were the limited interest of the partner to fund some deal proposals and the time taken to approve deal proposals, which could lead to cancellation or the financing of the Bank tranche without the partner.

Weak planning of TFs and project implementation challenges in co-financing constituted limiting factors for the best use of resources allocated to the Bank. Other challenges included insufficient communication with partners, inadequacy of

the reporting to partners' needs, failure to respect commitments made, delays in project implementation, and lack of dedicated teams for some partnerships.

The benchmarking helped identifying some good practices that could be beneficial to the effectiveness of the Bank's partnerships considering there was still has some margin for improvement in terms of resource mobilization, monitoring, and reporting. On average, amounts mobilized by other institutions were more significant. Institutions such as the World Bank, IDB, and AsDB have implemented reforms aimed at increasing the share of co-financing in their operations and these have led to positive results. These reforms included a greater emphasis on key performance indicators (KPIs) promoting systematic co-financing and the use of TFs, better organization into umbrella programs, enhanced reporting mechanisms, streamlined processes, and greater autonomy in using TFs for project preparation, coordination, and policy dialogue. Common challenges were also found regarding the fragmentation of TFs and the lack of coordination of CFs.

Efficiency

The Bank's partnerships were rated Unsatisfactory at the institutional and operational levels, due to weaknesses in organizational performance.

The Bank's institutional governance framework for partnerships has evolved from a very centralized to a decentralized structure, in large part as a result of the Development and Business Delivery Model (DBDM) initiated in 2016. This evolution has contributed to increased partnership activities and outreach. The move towards more decentralization in partnerships management, however, lacked adequate guidance, coordination, and demarcation of the roles of sector complexes vis-à-vis the Resource Mobilization and Partnerships Department (FIRM). It has proved a significant issue for the adequate mobilization, monitoring, and reporting of partnerships.

While it is too early to conclude on its full impact on partnerships, it appears that the DBDM has increased the capacity of operations complexes to implement partnerships. but also weakened internal coordination, leadership, and ownership. Furthermore, as part of the DBDM reforms, the Bank has created some partnerships units within sector complexes with the mandate to mobilize additional resources for these specific sectors. However, the evaluation found no evidence of clear mandates of these newly created units. There was also no evidence of a clear delineation of roles and collaboration rules or reporting lines with FIRM. Consequently, these reforms had the adverse effect of weakening the coordination of partnerships within the Bank. The current architecture, while functional, needs significant improvements to allow FIRM to fully play its central role and to address capacity gaps in the Country and Regional Offices. The evaluation therefore concludes that the Bank is yet to establish a fully functional, well-coordinated organizational setup that works and is suited for its needs and architecture.

Over the period, partnerships in the Bank suffered from inadequate resourcing and weak incentive structures, including inadequate KPIs. Furthermore, internal stakeholders' perceptions of the Bank's management of partnerships were mostly negative. Projects financed by the Bank's partnerships often experienced significant implementation delays. The conditions precedent to grants disbursement, especially for BTFs, were said to be complex and sometimes unique to specific TF agreements and the commitments made with the partner. Although the time spent to reach these milestones has decreased over time, the processes for partnership projects continue to be lengthy and onerous for stakeholders. The lack of uniformity in partnership requirements, especially TFs, creates a disincentive to usage. Multiple studies pointed out the persistence of low disbursement rates, complex disbursements and procurement procedures, and the lack of incentives for Bank staff to devote time to small-scale but management-intensive TF projects.

A performance measurement system to measure and track the cost-effectiveness of partnerships is not yet in place at the Bank. To date, the Bank's systems are not designed to support swift implementation and systematically capture the transaction and agency costs related to the process of establishing and implementing a partnership arrangement. While significant progress has been made in TF reporting, the Bank still lacks an adequate partnership information system to provide exhaustive information to partners on the resources mobilized, their utilization, and their development impact. The evaluation has identified the deficits in systems to manage partnerships in the Bank as one of the crucial weaknesses to be addressed.

Some commendable efforts have been made to promote knowledge management and learning. Partnership outreach actions have been implemented, including a combination of internal and external knowledge events for the attention of staff on CFs and TFs. However, the Bank still suffers some gaps in these areas. There was also little lateral learning and dissemination of best practices and management experience among partnerships teams which would allow partnership managers to be more effective.

Sustainability

The Bank's partnerships were rated as Satisfactory for sustainability. The sustainability of a large majority of the partnerships reviewed (73.7 percent) was Satisfactory at the project level.

Both FPs and NFPs, as well as their respective sub-categories, were rated as Satisfactory. TFs were rated as Satisfactory in technical soundness, whereas co-financing facilities were more institutionally sustainable. However, while the ownership and sustainability of NFPs were Satisfactory, they were usually affected by insufficient human resources to support their implementation. The high turnover of consultants exacerbates the challenges.

Partnership projects were less sustainable when implemented under the following conditions: (i) as standalone project(s) without a link to the Bank's project pipeline; (ii) a weak or inexistent exit strategy in project design and implementation; (iii) insufficient or lack of built-in budget for building the capacity of implementing agencies; (iv) no clear strategies to mainstream gender and youth, mitigate environmental impact, and engage with end beneficiaries; and (v) a lack of results orientation and reporting that hindered collaboration and mutual accountability between partners.

Lessons

At the strategic level

A more precise definition of strategic direction contributes to the successful mainstreaming of partnerships. Partnerships should be created and managed based on clear high-level priorities. They were found effective when well-coordinated and in line with the Bank's core strengths.

Clarification of roles and coordination from Senior Management are essential to achieve efficiency. Defining and delineating clear mandates and ensuring sector complexes receive smooth coordination reinforces the capacity to deliver the strategic objectives of the Bank and improves the Bank's image.

Decentralizing partnership management strengthens the Bank's capacity to mobilize additional resources. However, it can only achieve optimal effectiveness if adequately supervised and coordinated at the central level.

Formalized and mainstreamed partnerships are likely to be more successful. Partnerships that were an integral part of the Bank's core program were likely to be more effective than non-formalized partnership initiatives, or those that involved small resources. Also, when signed with a clear results framework and commitments, Memorandums of

Understanding (MoUs) have a higher chance of being integrated and executed.

At the Operational Level

Dedicated resources are an essential contributing factor to the success of partnerships. Partnerships with dedicated teams are more likely to achieve results and communicate better, while partnerships with fewer staff struggle. The integration of these partnerships in operations complexes is likely to ensure adequate staffing and use of systems.

Investing in adequate systems is expected to have a cross-cutting impact for partnerships and more TFs. Inadequacy of systems has been a central issue in the Bank. Developing the right systems has the potential for positive ripple effects on the implementation of all partnerships.

Effective M&E, transparency, and accountability promote strong alliances. Partnerships are strategic alliances that affect the Bank's attractiveness and relationships with development partners, including their confidence, especially in the context of the ADF. To ensure that relationships are sustained, complementary and fair, partnerships necessitate close tracking of the alliance and country presence, together with adequate systems and resources.

Recommendations

The Bank is advised to further reform its partnerships governance framework. Resource mobilization and partnership initiatives should be selected, designed, and implemented in alignment with the expected development results of the Bank and the RMCs. This approach will help the Bank, the partners, and RMCs to maximize synergies and demonstrate value addition and value for money of the various partnerships, while holding organizational units and staff accountable for the achievement of the results assigned to each Bank complex.

Among the top challenges to address to improve the management of partnerships in the Bank, attention should be given to an adequate institutional setup, clear strategic framework and division of roles, and effective management systems and incentives. Thanks to the collaboration during this evaluation, the findings of the evaluation have already informed the work done by FIRM on the new Trust Fund Policy, which will address to some extent the issues raised, such as implementation, systems, accreditation of fund managers, cost recovery and others. However, the policy applies mainly to Trust Funds, while the whole ecosystem of partnerships still needs further attention.

The evaluation makes the following recommendations:

1. Define and set out the strategic directions for partnerships and resource mobilization, clarifying priorities and ensuring coherence.

It is crucial to strategically rethink the Bank's relationships with partners in order to be more effective and develop more win-win partnerships. The Bank could consider:

- Developing a Bank-wide action plan to better coordinate partnership and resource mobilization efforts for the achievement of the High 5s.
- Applying a more coherent programmatic approach to the partnership's portfolio, building on their potential synergies.

2. Review the current partnerships framework and institutional arrangements with a view to achieving strong coordination, greater efficiency, and better results.

It is suggested that the Bank consider:

- Affirming the coordinating role of FIRM and strengthening the SCP's role.

- Conducting an organizational study to identify the best options that would fit the Bank's structure and ensure the success of partnerships management in the Bank, to inform a possible finetuning of the partnership's framework.

- Assessing and establishing a shared platform of services for partnerships, with adequate human resources and harmonized tools, processes, and information systems.

3. Provide adequate resources, KPIs and incentives for the management of partnerships.

A strong resource management should back up any reform and proper attention should be given to efficient management of resources. The following additional measures could be considered:

- Ensure that regional directorates are sufficiently equipped to perform resource mobilization, coordination, partnership management, and advisory services tasks.

- Establish adequate incentives (such as rewards, compensation, individual partnership KPIs) for staff and complexes, targeting the quality of partnership activities and accountability for their results.

- Ensure, through the implementation of the new Trust Fund Policy, that the management fees charged for TFs reflect the Bank's costs associated with these TFs. ■

Management Response

Management welcomes IDEV's evaluation of the Development Partnerships (DPs) of the African Development Bank Group (AfDB or the Bank). The evaluation is timely because the Bank is developing a number of corporate strategies and policies including the successor to the Ten-Year Strategy and a new Trust Fund policy. The Bank has also undertaken steps to further develop the operation guidelines for the implementation of co-financing facilities. Management notes the satisfactory rating and recognizes that the recommendations will help to improve ongoing reforms on managing partnerships and co-financing. Overall, Management agrees with the recommendations of the evaluation.

Introduction

Management appreciates this comprehensive Partnership Evaluation by IDEV and acknowledges the good spirit, as well as the collegial and constructive way the review was carried out. Management is pleased with the overall satisfactory rating of the Bank's DPs. Management recognizes more can be done to fully maximize the potential of the Bank's engagement with Development Partnerships. This will be important not only to be more efficient and effective as an institution, but also to enable the Bank to meet its development objectives. This will allow the Bank to better serve its Regional Member Countries and the African continent as a whole. The impact of partnerships is and will continue to be hugely significant in terms of trust funds as well as for co-financing mobilization and syndications.

As the Bank argued in its updated African Economic Outlook 2020, the impact of Covid-19 can be limited if development partners can respond in a coordinated, targeted, and rapid manner. With a persistent $2.5 trillion annual financing gap that stands in the way of the Sustainable Development Goals, bridging that gap requires that development banks must work in partnership. This will help catalyze new sources of financing and leverage the comparative advantages of all stakeholders.

Management notes that the Partnerships Evaluation and the new Trust Fund Policy have informed one another and have a directional consistency. Both have a common objective of learning from and improving on the Bank's resource mobilization efforts. The thrust of the evaluation categorizes the challenges and opportunities at a strategic and operational level. Each level needs to be prioritized and resourced in order to maximize partnerships across the Bank; and, if done consistently, will increase the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency and sustainability of the Bank's DPs.

With these perspectives in mind, Management has responded to the findings and recommendations from the Evaluation of the DPs.

Relevance

Management welcomes IDEV's evaluation of the Bank's overall partnership approach as "satisfactory" including the relevance and strategic alignment of the partnerships. Indeed, this was one the main objectives in the establishment of the standing committee on partnerships (SCP) in 2012. Management recognizes and agrees that there is a need for a more strategic approach to partnerships across the Bank as a whole. However, Management believes that partnerships need to be defined in a way that enables all stakeholders to understand how

to ensure they deliver results. For example, from a partnership perspective there is a significant difference between the various forms of collaboration across the Bank. The donor experience can differ depending on their level of engagement in single-donor or multi-donor trust funds, Memorandum of Understandings, or Co-financing arrangements among others. The SCP will continue to review MOUs and ensure that partnerships are classified appropriately.

Management notes the Evaluation's comprehensive partnership mapping which found that the scope and number of the Bank's DPs have increased over time. From a total of 89 initiatives in the initial review, the evaluation identified an additional 75 that qualify as partnerships where the Bank collaborates with at least one partner. This increase can be explained by the growing need and demand to work in partnership in order to achieve the Bank's goals. However, with the increasing number of partnerships it becomes more important to have the right people, systems and processes in place to for the partnerships to be successful.

Management agrees there is a need to update the Trust Fund Policy that was developed in 2006. The updated policy was presented to CODE/AUFI in October 2020 and should be resubmitted by May 2021. Guidelines for implementing the policy will subsequently be produced by end Q1 2022. One outcome of a more strategic approach to partnerships will be that the partner experience is consistent no matter what their relationship with the Bank or financial platform through which they engage. At the same time this will facilitate the development of a results framework to enable the Bank to monitor progress, track results and assess the overall success of that partnership.

Effectiveness

Management welcomes that overall performance of partnerships was considered "satisfactory". Management is particularly pleased to see the recognition that larger, prioritized and better resourced partnerships not only yield better results, but also reduce transaction costs. This therefore provides better value for money to the donor, to the Bank and to beneficiaries. This observation is consistent with the findings of the benchmarking exercise with Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs) carried out to inform the new Trust Fund Policy. Management notes the reference to and suggestion to implement "umbrella programs" which have been adopted by the World Bank and is consistent with recommendations in the Policy. For example, the Policy increases the establishment threshold for a trust fund in an attempt to reduce the amount of fragmentation across the Bank's trust fund portfolio.

Management also agrees with the renewed focus on co-financing and believes this is an area of opportunity for the Bank. A more co-financing focused strategy will ensure that the Bank plays its catalytic role in attracting DPs in the financing of the Bank's projects, while minimizing the Bank's usage of its own risk capital.

Efficiency

Management notes that the Bank's partnerships were rated "unsatisfactory"–at the institutional and operational level due to weaknesses in the organizational performance. The evaluation highlights that as institutional partnership governance evolved to a decentralized structure, there was a lack of adequate guidance, coordination, and demarcation of the roles of sector complexes vis-à-vis FIRM. There is, therefore, as the Evaluation suggests, a need for better internal coordination, leadership, and ownership of partnerships.

Management does not view the issue as the decentralization process or DBDM per se, more that systems and functions need to be deployed more efficiently. As stated earlier, adequate resources such as the establishment of a FIRM back office shared services platform and global partnership collaboration and tracking systems are necessary to provide exhaustive information and reporting on all Bank partnerships and co-financing.

Management reaffirms the lead role of FIRM to coordinate and ensure collaboration across DPs. Management further recognizes the need to update and widen the scope of responsibility of SCP through the Administrative Instruction[1] which will help to address the issues raised in relation to the efficiency of the Bank's DPs.

Sustainability

Management notes that the Bank's partnerships were rated as "satisfactory" despite concerns regarding aspects of human resources. During the development of the new Trust Fund Policy, it was also noted that under-performing trust funds – in particular from a resource mobilization and partnerships perspective – often had high turnover of staff and consultants and had management roles vacant for significance amounts of time. Management believes that by focusing on larger thematic trust funds they will be better resourced, prioritized and sustainable.

To remedy this, Management will ensure that each facility is properly resourced with the requisite trained staff. In this regard, Management has introduced a new Trust Fund and Co-Financing Accreditation online training which all Trust Fund Managers and staff are required to successfully complete. In addition, as a part of its knowledge management programme since 2014, FIRM has been conducting Brown Bag sessions which have been attended by over 2100 staff. Due to Covid, in 2020, a new online Brown Bag webinars series was launched featuring more than 40 sessions on trust funds. These ongoing efforts will ensure that staff are better placed to comply with the trust fund and co-financing obligations of partners.

To ensure that the various partnership functions have the proper resources, management believes that the Bank's time recording System (ATRS) and Cost Accounting Systems (CAS) can help. ATRS can accept recording of Bank staff time spent on trust fund and partnership deliverables. In addition, the CAS provides total costs per deliverable. It already facilitates the Bank's ability to evaluate and cover the true costs associated with establishing, managing and implementing trust funds. Management will ensure data is inputted accurately and timely across all Cost Centers; including Legal, finance, M&E, communications, IT and procurement.

Conclusion

Management appreciates the constructive way the evaluation was undertaken. The evaluation provides valuable recommendations, many of which are in line with recent Management actions. Important policy and operational changes that are in process will assist in making positive advances in this important area for the Bank and for Africa. ■

<table>
<tr><th colspan="2">Management Action Record</th></tr>
<tr><th>Recommendation</th><th>Management Response</th></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Recommendation 1: Define and set out the strategic directions for partnerships and resource mobilization, clarifying priorities and ensuring coherence.</td></tr>
<tr><td>It is crucial to strategically rethink the Bank's relationships with partners in the search for more win-win partnerships. It could consider to:

a. Develop a Bank-wide action plan to better coordinate partnership and resource mobilization efforts for the achievement of the High 5s.

b. Apply a more coherent programmatic approach to the partnerships portfolio, building on their potential synergies.</td><td>Agreed – Management agrees there is a need for greater strategic direction in terms of engagement with development partners. There should also be more clarity and guidance on how the Bank approaches partnership management from an internal and external perspective, and in terms of people, processes and systems. Management actions include the following:

Actions:
❙ FIRM will complete the New Trust Fund Policy for Board Consideration by Q3 2021.

❙ FIST to develop a co-financing framework and guidelines by Q4 2021.

❙ SNSP/FIRM will develop a dedicated section in the successor of Bank Group Ten-Year Strategy on Partnerships, by Q3 2022.

❙ FIRM will coordinate the development of an action plan for partnerships based on the orientations of the new Bank Group Strategy by Q4 2022.</td></tr>
<tr><td colspan="2">Recommendation 2: Review the current partnerships framework and institutional arrangements with a view to achieving strong coordination, greater efficiency and better results</td></tr>
<tr><td>It is suggested that the Bank considers:

a. Affirming the coordinating role of FIRM and strengthening the SCP's role.

b. Conducting an organizational study to identify the best options that would fit the Bank's structure and ensure the success of partnership management in the Bank, to inform a possible finetuning of the partnerships framework.

c. Assessing and establishing a shared platform of services for partnerships, with adequate human resources and harmonized tools, processes, and information systems.</td><td>Agreed – Decentralization of partnership functions is important given that many donors also work in a decentralized way. Management believes that strengthening the standing committee on partnerships (SCP) will ensure the decentralized functions are better coordinated and that the partnerships deliver greater results and impact.

Actions:
❙ FIRM to lead on revising the Administrative Instruction on the Standing Committee on Partnerships (SCP) to extend its role to coordination and monitoring the implementation of partnerships. Q1 2022.

❙ FIRM to commission an organizational study to identify the best options that would fit the Bank's structure and ensure the success of partnership management in the Bank. Q1 2021.

❙ FIRM/FIST/CHIS will coordinate an assessment of options for establishing a shared services platform for partnerships. Only once the assessment is complete can the platform be established. Q2 2022.</td></tr>
</table>

Management Action Record	
Recommendation	**Management Response**
Recommendation 3: Provide adequate resources, KPIs and incentives for the management of partnerships	
A strong resource management should back up any reform and proper attention should be given to efficient management of resources. The following additional measures could be considered: a. *Ensure that regional directorates are sufficiently equipped to perform resource mobilization, coordination, partnership management, and advisory services tasks.* b. *Establish adequate incentives (such as rewards, compensation, individual partnership KPIs) for staff and complexes, targeting the quality of partnership activities and accountability for their results.* c. *Ensure, through the implementation of the new Trust Fund Policy, that the management fees charged for TFs reflect the Bank's costs associated with these TFs.*	**Agreed** – Management agrees with the necessity to better allocate resources across the partnership ecosystem, including people, processes, and systems critical to ensure the successful implementation of its goals. **Actions:** - **FIRM.** Management agrees to provide support to regional offices for resource mobilization and partnerships. In line with the DBDM objectives one FIRM staff will be located in each of the Regional Centers. **First quarter following return to office.** - **FIRM/CHHR:** CHHR to assign the Trust Fund and Co-Financing Accreditation training to all staff managing Trust Funds and co-financing. FIRM will monitor and follow-up as required. **Q4 2021.** - **SNPB/FIRM** to assess the accuracy of TF management data entry into the Bank's time recording System (ATRS) and Cost accounting Systems (CAS) for relevant Cost Centers to ensure that TF management fees charged reflect all Bank cost. **Q2 2022.**

Introduction

Background

This summary report presents the key findings, lessons, and recommendations of the evaluation of the African Development Bank's (AfDB) development partnerships (DPs) over the period 2008–2019. The AfDB's DPs are vast and complex due to their interrelationships with operational activities across the Bank. They are critical to the Bank's efforts, as they contribute to deepening its multilateral organization role and provide regional and continent-wide private and public goods for the benefit of Regional Member Countries (RMCs).

This evaluation was carried out in the context of changes in the development aid environment, the emergence of non-traditional development partners, and the shift of traditional development partners toward bilateralism. It was preceded in an initial phase by an evaluation synthesis on the effectiveness of development partnerships (see Annex 8 in Volume 2 for the main lessons from this synthesis). The evaluation comprehensively assessed the Bank's approach to DPs to support its efforts to achieve the Ten-Year Strategy (TYS) objectives and the High 5s.

This report is structured in two volumes. Volume 1 focuses on the findings, while Volume 2 contains the technical annexes. The findings in this report are a summary of the assessments of Financing Partnerships (FPs) and Non-Financing Partnerships (NFPs) active in the Bank. They are presented in the following chapters, starting with the background and framework of the evaluation, including the methodology and the limitations. Then Chapters 2 to 5 focus on the key findings, while Chapter 6 concludes with lessons, critical takeaways, and recommendations. To support the implementation of these main recommendations but also address operational issues, the evaluation also prepared a table of issues and proposed set of suggested actions that can be found throughout the report.

Development partnerships cover a range of collaborative relationships designed for a specific purpose and signed between one or more partner organizations sharing mutually agreed objectives. In the Bank, two main categories of partnerships exist. On one hand, there are FPs. These comprise Co-financing agreements (CFs) and most of the Trust Funds (TFs), which primarily seek to mobilize additional funding for development interventions. On the other hand, NFPs, such as Coordination and Cooperation (C&C) and Knowledge, Advisory Services, and Policy Dialogue (KASP) partnerships, primarily seek to improve aid effectiveness through harmonization, coordination, and knowledge-sharing. Annex 1 of this Volume 1 defines key partnership concepts used in this report.

The Bank's Partnerships from 2008 to 2019

Mapping: This evaluation defines partnerships as formal agreements between the Bank and one or more external parties that are resourced by the Bank and other partners, with activities or a results framework, for the objectives of funding or supporting the Bank's interventions in the RMCs. Based on this definition, from an initial total of 89 initiatives, the evaluation identified 75 partnerships managed by the Bank during the review period. The 14 others are either initiatives solely managed by the Bank and erroneously categorized as partnerships, or Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs) without

proper implementation content and governance structure.

In addition to 24 pre-2007 partnerships, the Bank entered into 32 new partnerships in the 2008–2012 period. From 2013 to 2019, the Bank signed an additional 19 partnerships. Of the 75 partnerships, 47 are FPs (Trust Funds and Co-financing agreements), while the remaining 28 are NFPs. In total, over the period, the Bank was a signatory to CFs for an estimated financial value of US$30.9 billion and has received US$1.5 billion through Trust Funds, excluding the Nigeria Trust Fund (NTF). Additional details on the mapping of partnerships can be found in Annex 1 of Volume 2 of this report.

Policy and strategy: Beyond the formulation of its primary partnership objectives in the TYS, the Bank has no specific formal partnership strategy or policy that covers all types of partnerships. An earlier attempt to develop such a partnership strategy was abandoned due to organizational changes in 2013–2014. In 2006, the Bank approved its Trust Fund Policy that provided the basis for the Bank's engagement in TFs and technical cooperation funds. From 2008 to 2012, the Bank's FPs were mainly anchored to its Medium-Term Strategy (MTS, 2008–2012). Following the adoption of the TYS 2013–2022, the Bank clarified its vision by identifying four strategic objectives guiding its partnerships approach, which aimed at the Bank being: (i) a catalyst, convener, and a connector for development finance; (ii) a trusted advisor; (iii) a credible knowledge-broker; and (iv) a voice for development in Africa.

Major reforms: In response to the dynamics of development cooperation, the Bank implemented several policies, guidelines, and structural changes over the period from 2008 to 2019. These outputs aimed at increasing and improving the contribution of partnerships to the Bank's work. The reforms included: (i) Administrative Instruction No. 01/2012 (2012) concerning the establishment of the Standing Committee on Partnerships (SCP); (ii) the Framework for Enhanced Engagement with Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) (2012); (iii) the Guidelines for Partnerships with Non-Sovereign Entities (2015); and (iv) the Policy on Non-Sovereign Operations (NSOs) (2018), addressing the mobilization of resources from NFPs with non-state actors, such as global foundations, corporations, social investors, and philanthropic funds. Through its 2006 Trust Fund Policy, the Bank made a strategic shift toward Thematic Trust Funds (TTFs) and reducing the recourse to Bilateral Trust Funds (BTFs). Finally, it should be noted that an IDEV evaluation on the management of trust funds (2013) led to the implementation of several reforms regarding the institutional setup, the management of partnerships, and the revision of processes and activities.

Standing Committee on Partnerships: Starting in 2012, the Bank created the SCP and hosted it within the Finance Vice-Presidency (FIVP). Its responsibilities were to review and clear all meaningful transactional partnerships, trust funds, and special initiatives. The SCP was established to ensure that all DPs aligned with the Bank's TYS and, from 2015, with the High 5s.

Institutional setup: Three evolutions can be noted in the institutional setup of partnerships. First, in 2008–2010, the Partnerships and Cooperation Unit (ORRU) and the Resource Mobilization Unit (ORMU)[2] were together responsible for the coordination and management of partnerships under the then Operations I Country and Regional Programs and Policy Complex (ORVP). Later, in 2012, the Resource Mobilization and External Finance Department (FRMB) was created by merging ORMU and ORRU. Its responsibility was to manage the replenishments of the African Development Fund (ADF), MoUs, trust funds, and co-financing, under the VP Finance Complex. Finally, following the implementation of the DBDM in 2016, the Bank decentralized the partnerships function to broaden the Bank's capacity to partner and mobilize additional resources at the sectoral and country levels. Under the VP Finance Complex: (i) FRMB became the Resource Mobilization and Partnerships Department (FIRM) and was assigned the responsibility for resource

mobilization of the ADF, the management of BTFs, and the monitoring of MoUs; and (ii) the Syndication and Client Solutions Department (FIST) was created in 2017 to manage the Bank's co-financing agreements, loan syndications, and client solutions. In the current architecture, Multi-Donor Trust Funds (MDTFs) are managed by sector complexes. Annexes 3 and 4 in Volume 2 present excerpts of the evolution of the Bank's organogram during the period under review.

Decentralization of partnerships: FIRM is accountable for coordinating and providing advisory functions on DPs. FIST manages key partnership activities related to providing financial solutions and co-financing arrangements. While FIRM and FIST share the main components of the central functions, the DBDM mainstreamed partnerships across the Bank's operational complexes and regional directorates. Other supportive departments included for DPs are the Strategy and Operational Policies (SNSP), Performance Management and Results (SNDR), and Private Sector Development (PINS) Departments. Sector complexes now handle partnership missions in their own sectors, conduct resource mobilization, and manage TTFs relevant to their sectors. The reform intended to increase the contribution of resource mobilization and partnerships to achieve the High 5s and other development priorities, such as gender mainstreaming, youth employment, climate change and reducing fragile situations. Partnerships units were also created in some departments in order to spearhead their resource mobilization efforts.

The Evaluation Framework

Objectives

The objectives of the partnership evaluation were:

i. To analyze the relevance, effectiveness, efficiency, and sustainability of the Bank's DPs.

ii. To identify the factors affecting the performance of DPs and the conditions under which they could achieve better results; and

iii. To provide the Bank's Management and the Board of Directors (or the Board) with lessons and recommendations to improve the effectiveness and sustainability of present and future partnerships.

Scope

What was covered: The evaluation included FPs and NFPs through the four types of DP agreements in force in the Bank, namely Co-financing (CF), Trust Funds (TFs), Coordination and Cooperation (C&C), and Knowledge, Advisory Services and Policy Dialogue (KASP)[3]. The evaluation recognizes the continuum of such partnerships in which the Bank is involved. For instance, TFs can have a CF component, as well as KASP and C&C purposes or activities. The review covers the period 2008–2019 with a comparative analysis of the 2008–2012 and 2013–2019 periods. These two periods were seen as assessing the performance before and after the adoption of the TYS in 2013.

What was not covered: This evaluation does not include ad-hoc CF activities[4] carried out with partners irrespective of, or outside the scope of, specific CF agreements signed by the Bank. Partnerships activities occurring outside the scope of an MoU or a particular cooperation framework were likewise not covered. Specific initiatives and instruments that do not qualify as partnerships were also removed from the evaluation portfolio. IDEV's previous evaluation of TFs in 2013 focused on the *management* of the funds. Consequently, this topic receives limited attention in this evaluation, which instead focuses on the *development effectiveness* of TFs and other partnerships. Also, MoUs received limited attention due to the low evaluability of the commitments they contain and challenges in accessing credible information on their implementation.

Evaluation Questions

This evaluation applied the standard evaluation criteria. Its approach is inspired by evaluation approaches applied by comparable institutions in evaluating partnership. The review attempted to answer the following key questions.

- **Relevance:** Is the AfDB's approach to partnership consistent with the international, regional, and national contexts, the Bank's strategies, and the objectives of the other partners?
- **Effectiveness:** Has the Bank been effective in using its various DPs to mobilize additional resources and deliver better results through the operations funded by these partnerships?
- **Efficiency:** Have partnerships been managed optimally to ensure results delivery using the most cost-efficient and effective means?
- **Sustainability:** To what extent were the Bank's partnerships and their effects sustained over time?
- **Lessons learned:** What lessons can the Bank learn from its partnerships to make the AfDB a partner of choice in Africa?

The detailed evaluation matrix is presented in Annex 5 of Volume 2 of this report.

Methodology

This theory-based evaluation used existing literature, research, and the Bank's relevant documentation to reconstruct a theory of change of the Bank's approach to partnerships that served as a roadmap to assess the achievement of results. When possible, the partnerships theory of change was simplified by streamlining the wording and the understanding of short, medium, and long-term outcome indicators (see Annex 6 in Volume 2 for more details on the methodology). The analysis in this report builds on quantitative data obtained on TFs and CFs from the Bank's systems, and a qualitative review based on secondary data and interviews with stakeholders, including end beneficiaries (see Annex 9 in Volume 2). The evaluation team undertook: (i) a desk review of AfDB documents and external literature on FPs and NFPs; (ii) a portfolio analysis of CFs and TFs; and (iii) a desk review and rating of a sample of 39 partnerships. Quality assurance was supported by a reference group, and as well as internal and external peer reviewers.

Following the mapping exercise, initiatives of the Bank that had been erroneously identified as partnerships were removed from the initial population of partnerships, bringing the total number down from 89 to 75. The main criteria included the existence of a formal partnership agreement, the presence of one or more external parties in the governance structure, and the use of joint resources. The principle of mutual objectives and resources is inherent to partnerships. Therefore, only initiatives in which the Bank was engaged with other partners, and that were not under the sole management and governance of the Bank, qualified as partnerships. The initial error in the number of partnerships is goes back to an unclear definition of partnerships in the Bank that has led to some specific instruments and initiatives to be mistakenly identified as partnerships, such as the Middle-Income Countries Technical Assistance Fund, the Social Bond Program, and others.

The evaluation selected an initial sample of 50 partnerships for an in-depth review based on the concentration of partnerships in countries and the category of partnerships. The in-depth review ultimately focused on 39 partnerships out of the 50 initially selected due to insufficient documentation or the maturity of operations that could facilitate assessment of the achievement of results. The sampling approach used focused on determining countries where the contribution of partnerships to development results could be observed based on a concentration of partnership activities. Partnerships

were selected based on their financial importance, the number of operations, geographic and sector coverage, and presence. The approach was to ensure the assessment of results at the country level, the sector level (High 5s), and the partnership level. The sampled countries ensured the representativeness of the different African regions and different levels of development: Low-Income Countries, Middle-Income Countries, Fragile States, and Small and Landlocked Countries.

The evaluation used a four-point rating scale ranging from Highly Unsatisfactory (1-HU) to Highly Satisfactory (4-HS). This rating scale (see Annex 7 in Volume 2) was used both for the individual partnership reviews and the assessment of overall performance. Two separate analyses of FPs and NFPs in thematic reports contributed to the preparation of the present summary report.

Limitations

The evaluation faced some challenges that signal the weak state of the Bank's information systems on partnerships as one of the findings of this evaluation.

Lack of granular data: The poor availability of information on the majority of CFs and TFs was a major challenge. Most historical documentation on TFs and CFs could not be found or accessed for various reasons. Responsible sector complexes did not consistently track CF and other partnerships data systematically. Some data were also reported to be lost due to staff leaving their departments. Moreover, inconsistencies and contradictions across multiple datasets, indicators and measurements were challenging to reconcile. These limitations were valid mainly for the period between 2008 and 2014 (i.e., pre-DBDM reforms).

- To address these limitations, the team verified and reconciled the consistency of the accessible data and included more sources of information in the portfolio analysis. The analysis was strengthened with more interviews and external documentary sources. In cases where it was not possible to validate the data, these data were purposely left out, thus preserving the possibility of making comparisons.

Inability to conduct a partners' survey due to delays in accessing a comprehensive list of partners.

- The evaluation relied on the interviews conducted with different partners in the RMCs. In all countries visited, the evaluation reviewed the extent of cooperation, knowledge of existing partnership agreements, and perceptions of the Bank's partnership performance and capacity.

Lack of specific documentation: The partnership reviews also faced serious documentation availability challenges. Many partnerships had minimal documents filed in the Bank's systems.

- The evaluation team sought the help of the CF and TF management teams but, even then, had to rely on individual cases to access the necessary information. Consequently, some partnerships had to be removed from the review process to ensure rigor in the analysis. Moreover, the mapping exercise helped identify some initiatives that the Bank had erroneously classified as partnerships.

Narrow scope of MoUs: MoUs did not receive full scrutiny due to the low evaluability of the commitments that they contain and challenges in accessing credible information on their implementation.

Convening power: The evaluation could not adequately assess the convening power of the Bank. The evaluability of this topic was too broad to be covered in this evaluation.

- As such, the evaluation acknowledges the convening power of the Bank and partially analyzed it in the report. However, an in-depth analysis would require a separate review. ■

Relevance

This chapter discusses the relevance of the Bank's partnerships. The assessment focused on the extent of the alignment of the Bank's strategic approach to partnerships regarding the TYS (2013–2022) and the High 5s, and the ability of partnerships to contribute toward mobilizing and leveraging resources for the Bank. Following an overview, the chapter presents the assessment of the strategic alignment, the quality of the design of partnerships and their projects, and finally the key issues identified regarding relevance.

Overall Relevance

The AfDB's approach to partnerships is rated Satisfactory. In the absence of a dedicated partnerships strategy, the evaluation established what could be referred to as the Bank's broad partnerships approach and practice in order to analyze the relevance criterion. This partnerships approach emerges from different policies, guidelines, sector policies and strategies, annual budgets, and work program documents. The Bank, through its approach, demonstrates strong potential to make the AfDB the partner of choice in Africa, considering the comparative advantages of the Bank and its unique position in development financing on the continent. However, the relevance of the Bank's approach lacks a precise and innovative strategy and a more robust partnerships framework.

The AfDB's partnerships approach from 2008 to 2019 reflects the nature of its business, with an over-reliance on financial leverage. DPs are part of the economic strategy that is assumed to support the TYS. As a financier, the Bank sought DPs first as a solution to mobilize additional funding and increase its leverage. While applicable formal policies/guidelines acknowledge that collaboration with external entities is for the benefit of the RMCs, in practice the emphasis is more on the mobilization of resources than on implementation and transformation. The vision of becoming the partner of choice in Africa requires the AfDB to: (i) mobilize more resources for Africa; (ii) strengthen coordination and knowledge-sharing; and (iii) act as a networker and a convener around crucial development priorities for Africa (TYS 2013-2022). However, these bold objectives are not translated in design into baselines, expected results, and targets.

The strategic context of partnerships has mutated in many ways over the decade. The new focus on results and the vision to move from billions to trillions to achieve the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) have made resource mobilization a central issue. The financing gap for developing countries is estimated at US$2.5 trillion per year, according to a discussion note prepared by the major Multilateral Development Banks (MDBs).[5] For Africa, the Bank estimated in the High 5s agenda that the investments needed to implement its top priorities amounted to US$170 billion over a period of five years, making partnerships a crucial and indispensable part of the Bank's strategy. The leveraging of partnerships and their coordination were correctly identified as the first upscaling measures of the High 5s agenda. However, partnerships in the new development landscape are complicated by: (i) the decreasing level of Official Development Assistance (ODA); (ii) the rise of new development partners, such as private institutions and new economic powers; (iii) the increasing competition among development institutions for scarce resources; and (iv) the multiplicity of partners and development priorities, such as climate change, equity, and inclusiveness. In this context, the Bank has made commendable efforts to ensure strategic

coherence of its partnerships. Significantly, the introduction of the SCP played a contributory role in improving the alignment of the existing partnerships with the High 5s and managing the creation of new ones. Other reforms achieved through the DBDM were intended to improve streamlining and to make partnering more agile through the reorganization of various offices, most notably FIRM, FIST, and the sectors' partnerships units. However, these reforms lacked clarity on mandates and operational links among the various units.

Strategic Alignment

Alignment with the Bank's strategies. The partnerships portfolio is relevant to the Bank's TYS, the High 5s agenda, Country Strategy Papers (CSPs), and the needs of the RMCs, and fits within national priorities and development partner policies. It is also consistent with the international development agenda. Both FPs and NFPs are satisfactorily aligned. However, not all reviewed MoUs fit well with the strategic priorities of the Bank, although the more recent MoUs fit somewhat better than the older MoUs.

From 2008 to 2013, the Bank entered into multiple TFs and CFs intending to mobilize more funding sources, focusing on TFs as the main instrument for partnerships. This evolution was consistent with the changes in the development landscape, and the growing needs of those African countries that required significant resources and expertise that the Bank could not provide alone. From 2013 to 2019, DPs have primarily aligned with the TYS to create more co-financing opportunities in line with the principles of the Paris Declaration and the vision of the Bank to play a catalytic role in development financing in Africa. While the TYS laid out the pillars of interventions cited above, the High 5s strategic documents correctly identified existing or new partnerships that should emphasize the catalytic role that the Bank can play in the sectors in which it intervenes.

Strategic coherence. The Bank has undertaken periodic reviews on the issue of partnerships, starting with a strong focus on the management of TFs. These successive reviews have identified concerns and weaknesses that the Bank has attempted to address. One of the reforms at the strategic level was the introduction of the SCP in 2012, which contributed to a significant improvement in the alignment with the TYS and other relevant strategic directions of the Bank. In a context in which partnering has become increasingly complex, the SCP, through its established procedures, has played a role in ensuring strategic coherence. In addition, institutional changes have been introduced to further improve the focus on various components of partnerships management, such as resource mobilization, management, and monitoring.

Creation of partnerships. The creation of new initiatives or their revision during the period was in accordance with the Bank's strategies. DPs were embedded in sector strategies and policies, and remained valid despite their evolution, considering the constant need for additional resources. The mapping exercise confirmed that the financing partnerships created during the period were linked with the High 5s. Examples were the Africa Growing Together Fund (AGTF) with the People's Republic of China, the Enhanced Private Sector Assistance with Japan, and the Pillar Assessed Grant or Delegation Agreement (PAGODA) with the European Commission and the 2010 MoU between the Bank and the Islamic Development Bank (IsDB). NFPs, such as KASP and C&C partnerships, have also been assessed as being aligned with the regional and national contexts, and broadly consistent with the Bank's strategies and beneficiaries' needs in the areas of technical assistance, knowledge exchange and advocacy, convening power, and policy dialogue.

Quality of Design

Quality of partnership design. The quality of the design of FPs and NFPs is rated as Satisfactory. The Bank has developed considerable experience in

identifying, preparing, and negotiating partnerships. For the criterion of the quality of design, out of the 39 DPs reviewed, 98 percent were rated as Satisfactory or above. Considered separately, each type of partnership confirms this pattern. Out of 22 reviewed TFs, 77 percent were rated Satisfactory or above, while 100 percent of the CFs was Satisfactory or above. Examples of well-designed partnerships include the Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa (SEFA), which is structured in three components to provide grants, seed/growth equity capital, and technical assistance. Another example of a relevant and well-designed partnership is the New Partnership for Africa's Development–Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility (NEPAD–IPPF). This facility seeks to address the massive deficit of infrastructure in Africa through bankable projects.

Quality assurance. Long-established processes have helped shape the quality of existing DPs and create internal capacities for designing new ones. Since 2012, the process of developing new partnerships within the Bank has included a review by the SCP, then clearance by the Senior Management Coordination Committee (SMCC), before final approval by the Board of Directors (or Board of Governors in the case of Special Funds). Since 2016, the DBDM has allowed sector complexes to develop partnerships and mobilize external resources. Nevertheless, the Bank's partnerships approval process, especially in those cases where the Bank manages external funds, continues to follow a centralized approach through the SCP. Since 2013, standard formats and guidelines for the review of partnerships have existed. However, as the partnership reviews revealed, these have not been systematically applied. Reviewed partnership agreements were not always sufficiently detailed, despite some improvement to the quality of their design over time, notably following the creation of the SCP.

Quality at entry of projects. Most operations funded through partnerships were aligned with partnership objectives, sectoral policies, and the needs of the beneficiaries. Evidence collected from desk reviews and country case studies shows that projects funded through partnerships have the same quality standards as core Bank operations. In the case of co-financed projects, the projects reviewed tended to be of better quality due to the attention paid to the projects by with various partners. Interviews with partners flagged design as an issue, but this has been improving over time. Overall, it appears that other partners' involvement does play a role in improving the design of partnership projects. However, the difference is not significant compared with regular Bank projects, as these are prepared using the same process and guidelines.

Interviews with AfDB Management suggest that the Bank focuses on using partnership projects primarily through TFs to supplement the Bank's resources whenever necessary for project preparation, feasibility studies, technical assistance, or economic and sector work (ESW). To support the lending and non-lending pipeline, the Bank improved the design of its Country Strategy Papers to ensure that potential partnership resources were identified during the design phase. In the countries visited, the alignment of partnership projects with the needs of the beneficiaries was rated Satisfactory. Projects in sectors such as transport, agriculture, social, and energy have addressed the alleviation of development constraints at the national or regional levels. Some projects in Liberia, Rwanda, and Zambia revealed limitations that later impacted their performance. Weaknesses in project design mainly involved the inadequate targeting of beneficiaries' needs, as well as a lack of realism in the intervention logic and project assumptions. The sample reviewed shows that, while project results frameworks were generally relevant and likely to achieve the expected results, they were over-ambitious, given the duration and funding, and did not always factor in the identification of implementation barriers at the country level. While the majority were well-designed, CF projects also faced challenges that later resulted in severe delays due to a lack of realism in the intervention logic and the integration of the complexities inherent in the joint or parallel CF mode in the planning.

Key Issues

Lack of a dedicated strategy. The main challenge identified at this level is the lack of a coherent strategic framework that speaks to partnerships at the Bank level. Interviews with staff and Management suggest that previous attempts to define a resource mobilization strategy were abandoned for a variety of reasons (although this would have only partially covered the issue of partnerships), including confusion over roles and responsibilities, and prioritization issues.

No document in the Bank provides a clear breakdown of the partnership vision presented in the TYS into objectives that are measurable and how partnerships should be rolled out at the institutional level. Following the adoption of the High 5s Agenda, the Bank has not updated its model with a strategy that responds to the new context or defines how it would achieve the objectives of being a convener and the partner of choice in Africa, as stated in the TYS. The evaluation concluded from interviews and the recurrent issues presented in previous reviews that the overlapping of development partners across partnerships, together with inconsistencies in the management of partners across partnerships, weakened the strategic approach of the Bank. This weakness, linked to the lack of a strategy, is a missed opportunity, given that the Bank lacks the bigger picture to become more strategic in building coherent alliances, and identifying which partnerships to promote and prioritize by sector and why.

Clarity of the partnership framework. There are ambiguities in concepts and definitions that are a source of confusion among internal stakeholders. While the Bank has different types of partnerships, these were not organized into categories to ensure proper monitoring, coordination, and synergies. The definition of partnership categories and how they should be handled is one of Management's prerogatives. While addressing this lack of clarity is not an explicit mission of the SCP, this issue could have been resolved to help sector complexes in setting up the appropriate types of partnerships and facilitating their management. It was gathered from interviews that the SCP did a great deal to assess and align previous partnerships with the Bank's new strategies but did not create a robust framework that could further guide sector complexes in their quest for new partnerships. Furthermore, the changes made as part of the DBDM reforms did not provide the clarity needed by defining clear, adequate, and complementary terms of reference for the various sector complexes that would have helped to strategize, initiate, and manage partnerships.

Limited selectivity. The evaluation could not conclude that the Bank has always been selective in entering partnerships. Notwithstanding the work of the SCP, the review found little clarity on which types of DPs the Bank was willing to promote and why. Moreover, interviews with Bank staff revealed that partnership initiatives were not always supported by careful analysis by the SCP. There is a broad perception among staff that partnerships receive more attention and resources based on political considerations other than their real potential, demonstrated results, or reputational risks for the Bank. Several were top-down and lacked proper consultation with staff, as well as inadequate consideration of the implementation arrangements and the transaction costs, among others. The low durability and ownership of MoUs signed by the Bank indicate this lack of selectivity. A 2017 retrospective review of the Bank's MoUs by FIRM found that 21 percent, or one-fifth, of the existing MoUs had only low to medium alignment with the Bank's TYS and the High 5s. It also alerted the SMCC to ownership and accountability issues. While FIRM knew of 63 active MoUs at the time, the review reported 72 MoUs under implementation, against 30 not implementing MoUs and 49 MoUs of unknown status. ■

Effectiveness

The evaluation of effectiveness tested the validity of the anticipated links between partnerships' activities, outputs, and intended outcomes (the results chain). Actual, expected, and unintended results were also included in the assessment of effectiveness. The assessment of outputs was based on the output-execution ratio and the quality of outputs throughout the evaluation period. It considered the planned (targets) and actual outputs or those that are on track toward achievement. The chapter also discusses the additionality of partnerships by looking at their contribution to the Bank's overall development effectiveness in various sectors. Finally, it examines the factors affecting partnerships' performance, and the perceptions of partners of the Bank as a partner.

Overall Performance

The effectiveness of the Bank's partnerships is deemed Satisfactory over the evaluation period. FPs appear to be more effective than NFPs. However, both FPs and NFPS seem to be more effective when they are: (i) linked in the same projects rather than separated; (ii) in economic sectors rather than social and governance sectors; (iii) co-financing rather than grants; (iv) joint co-financing; and (v) multi-partnership, especially with financial institutions. A comparison with previous evaluations reveals that the effectiveness of partnerships is not significantly better or worse than standard Bank operations. Effectiveness also compares well with that of the Bank's sister International Financial Institutions (IFIs). Notwithstanding the variations in partnership performance against each area of results and the effectiveness of outputs, outcomes, and unintended outcomes, if any, the rating average is Satisfactory for both NFPs and FPs.

While partnerships achieved results, these were insufficient given the level of ambition of the Bank for Africa. A more meaningful contribution of the Bank's partnerships to leveraging was notably inhibited by the relatively small size of the resources mobilized compared with the needs, the relatively small number and narrow scope of the projects financed, and the long delays and low rates of disbursements. The potential for outcome synergies or cost savings was insufficiently exploited across all types of partnerships, but even less so in parallel co-financing, which dominates the infrastructure sector.

Overall Resource Mobilization

The Bank has significantly increased its resource mobilization efforts and capabilities over the past 10 years in response to the development challenges in Africa. The resource mobilization through partnerships is rated as Satisfactory. Major achievements were recorded in the mobilization of new partnerships and resources.

The mobilization of resources for CFs and TFs has also improved significantly over the years, thus reaffirming the positive image that the Bank has with its partners. As an illustration, since 2010, the Climate Investment Fund (CIF) deployed around US$1 billion in a total of 26 projects currently under implementation or closed in sectors such as climate change mitigation and adaptation. The Bank co-financed these projects with around US$2.7 billion of its own resources, part of a total cost of over US$10 billion.

The technical annex 1 in the Volume 2 of the report presents details of the resources mobilized. In sum, even without any information on the targets over the period, it seems clear that the Bank has been very active and effective in resource mobilization through TFs. This proactivity has resulted in several successes in interacting and maintaining good

partnership relationships with both sovereign and non-sovereign partners. Other innovative initiatives for mobilizing resources for business development also included the Africa Investment Forum (AIF). Some of the NFPs have also contributed to increasing the Bank's lending and non-lending portfolios.

Effectiveness of Financing Partnerships

Co-Financing

The reviewed co-financing facilities are rated Satisfactory in the achievement of outputs and outcomes. Overall, the Bank steadily increased its leverage and resource mobilization through co-financing. Cumulative co-financing (active and passive) leveraged by the Bank's public and private sector operations between 2011 and 2019 stood at UA 65,285 million, averaging an annual financial leveraging effect of UA 9,326 million and an implementation rate of 148 percent of the target (see Annex 1 in Volume 2). Although the Bank has performed well in co-financing on average, its performance has been uneven. The highest co-financing levels were achieved consecutively from 2014 to 2016. This performance then dropped in 2017 and 2018 but saw a rebound from 2019. The significant increase in 2014–2016 was due to major operations approved by the Bank and also the definition of co-financing at the time.[6] On the other hand, the early years of implementation of the High 5s and the DBDM resulted in a downward performance due to the implementation challenges of the reforms and the prioritization by operational teams of achieving the Bank's lending targets, thus investing less in co-financing.

Case studies and reviewed partnerships show links between the FP activities and outcomes achieved at the country level in various sectors. In Zambia, about 55 percent of projects approved have included some degree of co-financing, and the Bank managed to secure co-financing of 220 percent of the original ADF allocation from 2014 to 2016[7]. Regarding the leveraging of funds, the Bank has served as the lead arranger for three projects, namely, the Itezhi-Tezhi Power Generation and Transmission Project, the Nacala Corridor Road Project, and Kazungula Bridge. Through these projects, the Bank was able to leverage its contribution by factors of 16, 3.68, and 1.82, respectively[8]. In Senegal, the Bank has made efforts to raise additional resources through co-financing to fund its operations with other partners, including the World Bank, IsDB, EIB, the French Development Agency (AFD), and the OPEC Fund. Out of UA 357 million approved by the Bank, co-financing from the main partners is about UA 796 million, representing a ratio of 1:2.

The achievement of outputs is deemed Satisfactory for 70 percent of the co-financing partnerships reviewed. These include facilities such as the Accelerated Co-Financing Facility for Africa (ACFA), the MoU with the IsDB, and the EU Africa Investment Platform. Financial Intermediary Funds (FIFs) such as the CIF and the Global Environment Facility (GEF) also contributed to this assessment. The outputs achieved cover various sectors. In the transport sector, the Bank co-financed with the Japan International Cooperation Agency (JICA), through the ACFA, multinational transportation and trade facilitation programs such as the Nacala Road Corridor—a total of 1,033 km of road networks from Lusaka in Zambia through Malawi and Mozambique to the Port of Nacala. With phases 3, 4 and 5 still ongoing, this program has so far delivered more than 700 km of roads, as well as two one-stop border posts between the three countries, improving access to transport for more than 3 million people and creating more than 2,500 jobs (albeit temporary). In the energy sector, the Sere Wind Farm Project of UA 252.14 million funded by the Government of South Africa, the Bank, the CIF, the World Bank, and AFD delivered a 100 MW wind power plant installed with a generation capacity of 219 GWh.

The achievement of outcomes is also rated Satisfactory or above for more than 70 percent of the reviewed co-financing agreements. From reviewed projects, it appears that a significant number of projects are still ongoing. However, their

prospects for achieving outputs and outcomes are promising. Projects such as the Nacala corridor have contributed to enhancing competitiveness and socioeconomic integration between the three countries Zambia, Malawi, and Mozambique, with notably reduced travel times, transport cost savings, and shorter turnaround times for international cargo freighters. Another example is the Liberia Integrated Public Financial Management Reform Project (IPFMRP) launched in 2012 to provide support to Public Financial Management (PFM) operations for four years. The overall funding of the project amounted to US$31.5 million with initial contributions from the World Bank, the Swedish International Development Cooperation Agency (SIDA), the AfDB, the EU, and USAID. Closed in June 2017, the project achieved its expected results, given that Liberia made significant progress in strengthening its capabilities in PFM. Other prominent CF agreements with the EU (PAGODA), the AGTF, and others still have a substantial number of ongoing projects.

The evaluation also noted in the six case-study countries visited that several of these ongoing co-financed projects have posted promising results. Following the Medupi Coal Power Project in South Africa in 2009 and 2011, the Bank, with the support of the Clean Technology Fund (CTF), approved financing for clean energy projects, helping the country to embark on a transformational path toward sustainability. In Mozambique, CIF operations helped to significantly reduce poverty through increased agricultural productivity, as a result of improved water and land management practices such as enhanced irrigation infrastructure, market infrastructure for agro-processing and the promotion of farm diversification, and increased production and food security. Box 1 illustrates the experience of a collaboration between the Bank and other partners in Senegal.

Trust Funds

The effectiveness of the Bank's Trust Funds is rated as Satisfactory. At the output level, the majority (86 percent) were rated as Satisfactory or above based on the achievement of outputs. The evidence from both the case studies and the partnerships reviewed shows clear linkages between TF activities, their outputs, and the implementation of the CSPs. By supporting project preparation, studies, and technical assistance, TFs have contributed to strengthening the Bank's lending and non-lending (see Box 2). At the outcome level, 10 percent of TFs were rated as Highly Satisfactory and 75 percent were rated as Satisfactory.

However, for this sub-criterion, 10 percent are considered to be Unsatisfactory, and 5 percent are Highly Unsatisfactory.

In the countries visited, TFs have been instrumental in strengthening the lending and non-lending portfolios. In Senegal, the GEF, the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and Clim-Dev have been utilized in financing essential projects. In Zambia, the African Water Facility (AWF) has developed 27 schemes through the feasibility studies that it financed. Based on the lessons learned from the Small-Scale Irrigation Project, the Bank leveraged US$32 million in grants from the Global Agriculture and Food Security Program (GAFSP). Of this financing envelope, US$15 million was budgeted for developing irrigation schemes, while the remaining US$ 17 million was deployed for livelihood and value-chain development activities.

The primary perception of staff is that the Bank should use TFs to prepare good projects and ensure quality at entry (QaE). Access to project preparation funds is the most cited reason to request TFs. TFs were considered by key informants to have been vital in improving the Bank's upstream analytical work and project bankability. However, some of the reviewed TFs' areas of grant funding are unsuitable for typical banking interventions such as innovation, studies, conferences, support operations, and standalone projects/programs in social, governance, and policy sectors notably due to the ineligibility of such activities on these funds. Other partnerships pioneered new initiatives/focus areas such as the ADF Lab, governance, and renewable energy. They ensured high visibility for both development partners and the Bank, while also allowing the Bank to remain

Box 1: Improve the quality of life for the people of Africa: A transformative water supply & sanitation partnership at work in Senegal

Established by the Bank in 2006 to scale up rural water supply and sanitation programs, the Rural Water Supply and Sanitation Initiative (RWSSI) is a flagship mixed (financing and non-financing) partnership of the AfDB with the WB/IDA and the WB-WSP (Water and Sanitation Program). The WB and the AfDB have been co-financing the water sector in Senegal through a national program (Programme Eau potable et Assainissement du Millenaire, PEPAM): the AfDB finances rural water and sanitation projects through the RWSSI, while the WB/IDA finances rural and urban water supply and sanitation, as well as institutional development and capacity building. WB-WSP, which led the generation of an evidence base for framing the RWSSI, continued to closely collaborate with the AfDB on value-adding knowledge management, creative finance, and monitoring, through its liaison office located at the Bank. The AfDB and the WB co-financing of PEPAM was supported by coordinated activities, including the promotion of private sector participation in the operation and maintenance of both urban and rural water supplies. WB support for rural sanitation was implemented by AGETIP (a private non-profit agency up with support from the WB) under an agreement with the Department of Sanitation in the Ministry of Water and Sanitation. WB support also included grants to communities and households in rural areas to improve their sanitation facilities. AfDB sanitation components included the construction of public toilets in schools and health centers, as well as facilities for new family latrines. At the regional level, WB-WSP continued to share lessons with other West African and Francophone countries, notably Congo Republic and DRC. The concretization of these partnership synergies and their transformation into water supply access grew increasingly stronger in Senegal, notwithstanding persistent challenges. The increased access to water resulted from the dedication, teamwork spirit, qualification, and commitment to delivery on results on behalf of the task managers of the four primary partner institutions (AfDB, WB, WSP, Government of Senegal). Collaboration proved to be a key individual and collective performance marker for these incentivized professionals, capable of "blurring" institutional boundaries, who have been working in close cooperation from the partnership outset. In the case of the WB-WSP team co-located with the AfDB's HQ, this included unleashing their influential expertise as "facilitator, networker and coordinator to build bridges and support the platforms."

Source: World Bank/AfDB (2009:29 — 30), other document reviews and interviews (2019), Evaluation team's reviews of individual partnerships.

relevant in transition countries/regions where it is unable to operate normally, such as Zimbabwe (ZimFund), Somalia (Somalia Infrastructure Fund), Middle East and North Africa (MENA Transition Fund), and the Great Lakes (Special Fund for the Reconstruction and the Development of the Great Lakes Region).

Many challenges persist with Trust Funds. For instance, the Bank did not effectively utilize all readily available resources in TFs,[9] and this could negatively affect resource mobilization and the additionality of funds going forward. Sufficient caution was not always exercised, in discharging the fiduciary responsibility of the Bank, to avoid ineligible funding activities from a TF. The lack of autonomy of the Bank to decide allocations and delays in obtaining "no objection" confirmations from development partners affect the ability of the Bank to use the funds effectively. These issues make the need for the Bank to streamline its operations, negotiate an extension of its authority to allocate TF resources and build the capacity of staff to use them all the more acute.

Task Managers (TMs) complained of instances where requests to TFs and proposals sent in response to calls for proposals went months without an answer, thus halting the proposed operation or prompting recourse to internal resources. Besides the planning, the use of TFs has been weak, with the tendency to sometimes work on an urgency basis, therefore making it difficult for

Box 2: Example of facilities instrumental in leveraging the Bank's investments

Since 2006, the African Water Facility (AWF) has contributed to implementing the Africa Water Vision. It facilitated the leveraging of financial commitments of €1,527 million in 2018 (a leverage rate of 1:32), as well as 25 follow-on (catalytic) investments from 2006 to 2018 for more than €22 million.

The New Partnership for Africa's Development–Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility (NEPAD–IPPF): For every US$1, IPPF brings US$1,000. IPPF only puts in US$2–3 million to prepare projects for bankability, and then helps them reach financial closure. Since 2005, 91 projects have been approved, of which 60 have been finalized, 22 are in progress and nine have been canceled for various reasons. Of the studies that targeted investments (about 50), 30 have reached financial closure.

As a project preparation facility, the current average leveraging ratio of the Agriculture Fast Track Fund (AFT) stands at 1:30, or US$30 for each US$1 spent. Broadly, this implies that the Fund is achieving outcomes beyond the delivery of feasibility studies, engineering designs, environmental and social impact assessments.

Source: Evaluation team's reviews of individual partnerships.

all partners to organize themselves effectively. While understaffing of partnerships management could be a contributing factor, there were other disincentives to the use of TFs. Some TMs avoided using specific TFs entirely if they perceived their processes to be too cumbersome or if they required a heavy workload in order to access resources. They reported a lack of information on available resources and opportunities for TFs, and challenges in accessing timely and adequate support for the processes. In addition, the implementation of projects did not always receive strong enough involvement from the Regional Offices.

The 2013 IDEV evaluation of Trust Funds Management[10] assessed the procedural effectiveness of TFs and identified unrealistic expectations at the stage of the establishment of the fund. These issues were pertaining to the delivery of results and high transaction costs for Trust Fund management that were not covered by the management fees of the TFs. It also found weak internal Bank performance indicators on TF disbursements, costs, and processing times. Specific recommendations were made to address these issues. This evaluation assessed the level of implementation of the recommendations from the above-mentioned evaluation of TFs (2013) and subsequent reviews conducted by Management as being moderately ineffective. While the Management Action Record System (MARS) reports that most of these recommendations have been implemented or are ongoing, it is noticeable that the same issues were still unresolved and repeated for each subsequent review. The major positive update on this aspect is the revision on the Trust Fund Policy initiated in 2020 by FIRM, which is expected to be in effect from 2021.

Effectiveness of Non-Financing Partnerships

Overall, the achievement of project outputs for completed projects across each sector for NFPs is rated as Satisfactory. For the NFPs reviewed, the achievement of outputs is found to be, respectively, Highly Satisfactory (28.6 percent), Satisfactory (42.9 percent), and Unsatisfactory (28.6 percent). For the achievement of outcomes, 14.3 percent of NFPs are found to be Highly Satisfactory, 71.4 percent are Satisfactory, and 14.3 percent are rated as Unsatisfactory.

At the strategy level, the Bank's interventions have made tangible contributions toward the development of an enabling business environment and increasing access to basic infrastructure and services. Such partnerships include ALSF, EITI, GTF, ICA, NEPAD-IPPF, and the Power Africa Initiative.

Nonetheless, only limited progress has been achieved in strengthening PFM, and promoting agricultural productivity and diversity.

The review of project results concluded that some NFPs, such as ALSF, NEPAD-IPPF, NTCP, and PHRDG, had been successful in achieving their objectives. In the six case-study countries, despite challenges, the AfDB's partnerships contributed to enhancing policy dialogue and providing complementary expertise in addressing operational dimensions. In addition, the AfDB maintained active interagency coordination of partnerships with multilateral and bilateral agencies such as the UN, WB, IMF, IsDB, OECD, AFD, EBRD, EIB, IFAD, JICA, and KFW, among others.

Some NFPs leveraged the Bank's resources via investments. For example, the Power Africa Initiative leveraged Bank resources by supporting the ECOWAS Centre for Renewable Energy and Energy Efficiency (ECREEE) to become Africa's first regional organization to roll out legal instruments for gender in energy, thus supporting increased gender and environmentally sensitive knowledge, innovation, and policy advice. The Governance Trust Fund (GTF) increased its Bank resources leverage through support to civil society organizations (CSOs).

Notable outcomes regarding influencing policies, practices, or systems were also identified, such as the AIF contributing toward increasing the Bank's lending and non-lending portfolios by seeking co-financing from the private sector and other development entities. Through the AIF, the AfDB has committed more than US$1.65 billion in energy infrastructure funding to its six priority countries over the past five years. Notably, the NEPAD–IPPF has demonstrated significant political standing and convening power and is regarded as the premier African infrastructure fund (see Box 3). The facility also contributed toward gender and environmentally sensitive policy and system-level changes, which were being implemented in several RMCs. Furthermore, the facility designed legislation, defined regulatory approaches, identified institutional reforms for infrastructure development, and enhanced the competitiveness of African economies and supported trade.

In the governance sector, the African Legal Support Facility (ALSF) provided legal advice to African countries regarding creditor litigation, strengthened the capacity of African lawyers, and improved best practices relating to the legal negotiations on complex commercial transactions. At the same time, the RMCs adopted the clear and highly credible Extractive Industries Transparency Initiative (EITI), leading to an improved investment climate and increased aid flows, while also promoting a fairer government share of revenues. The EITI also increased natural resource revenues through reduced corruption and enhanced governance of the oil, gas, and mining sector, by publishing robust data for public debate.

A significant proportion of partnership outcomes were perceived to have been achieved with RMCs, most of them in the areas of influence, alignment, and knowledge. Key partners, including the United Kingdom's Department for International Development (DfID), the European Bank for Reconstruction and Development (ERBD), United Nations Entity for Gender Equality and the Empowerment of Women (UNWOMEN), and the United Nations Development Programme (UNDP) were important, particularly for achieving leverage, knowledge, influence, and synergies. CSOs were essential partners for improved partner capacities, knowledge, and influence, although the AfDB's partnerships with CSOs need further improvements[11]. Other NFPs contributed to convening, building alliances, exploiting complementarities and synergies. Examples include the AIF, which built an alliance of leading multilateral partners for Africa's economic transformation through collaborative leadership and strategic partnerships with the Development Bank of Southern Africa, African Export-Import Bank, Trade and Development Bank, IsDB, Africa 50, the Africa Finance Corporation and EIB.

Generally, C&C partnerships have led to positive relationships with development partners and the harmonization of development efforts in countries

such as Rwanda, Senegal, Tunisia, and Zambia. The country case studies show that the AfDB's NFPs established Africa-wide coordinating and convening mechanisms. For example, coordination around shared issues of interest has been developed and is effective in countries such as Tunisia and Zambia. Similarly, the Bank has been participating in various KASP and C&C partnerships within the framework

Box 3: Integrating Africa: NEPAD–IPPF performance in helping to bridge Africa's infrastructure gaps

The New Partnership for Africa's Development–Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility (NEPAD–IPPF) Special Fund was established in 2004 for the preparation of critical regional infrastructure projects across Africa. It was expected to address the quality of project preparation and the related stakeholder coordination, which are major bottlenecks to mobilizing the required funding for infrastructure in Africa.

An evaluation conducted in 2019 found that the IPFF is largely relevant. It is the only dedicated regional preparation fund and its linkage with the AfDB and the African Union give the IPPF significant political standing and convening power. At the same time, with over 40 public funds and many more private funds active across Africa, project preparation has become a competitive market. It has therefore become a challenge for the IPPF to remain relevant and be seen as a market leader. The IPPF was also rated as effective for its implementation from 2004 to 2018. Since inception, the fund has approved 89 projects across the four focus sectors, among which 60 were completed, for a total of US$61.23 million in IPPF contributions. Of the 60 completed projects, 10 were related to capacity building with 50 considered investment-related projects. To date, 30 of the 50 investment-related projects have reached financial close showing a success rate of 60 percent. These projects successfully mobilized downstream financing to the tune of US$24.6 billion to build assets ranging from power plants, bridges, ports, roads, hydropower schemes, among other catalytic support to infrastructure on the continent. By the end 2019, of these 30 projects, 16 have been constructed, nine are under construction and two are yet to commence. The IPPF has also worked to introduce more effective and sustainable funding measures, such as targeting higher levels of co-funding, a mandatory contribution from beneficiaries and a proposal to introduce cost-recovery windows at project financial close. The IPFF has also largely contributed by co-finalizing project preparation with the other facilities of the Bank, AWF and FAPA. Co-financing is also done with external facilities such as the World Bank, the EU, and the Japanese International Cooperation Agency (JICA). Despite this, however, the amount of available funding from development partners has declined in recent years and so too has the number of grants disbursed.

The partnership was, however, rated as being inefficient due to the inadequacy of the policies and processes currently used. Combined with the largely manual based systems, they are not suited for managing the complexity and scale of the IPPF portfolio, as well as the demands of multiple stakeholders, beneficiaries, and development partners. Task managers should be the spearhead of IPPF delivery but appear to be thinly spread, as well as not engaged full-time on IPPF deliverables. They are absorbed in too much administrative work rather than focusing on technical review and beneficiary delivery management. A review of the timelines for delivery showed that the average timeline of projects to reach the IPPF's classification as "completed" is 33 months for project inception, 47 months for the pre-feasibility stage and 50 months for the bankability stage; and there is a long lead time required for infrastructure projects to achieve the end of their lifecycle and financial closure. Overall, the IPPF has meaningfully contributed to both the number and value of iconic regional projects, 16 of which have already been constructed and are bringing benefits to Africans, with a further seven having reached financial close.

Source: Independent review of the NEPAD-IPPF Special Fund (August 2019) and interviews from data collection.

of existing grant facilities/TFs. In some sectors, including, but not limited to, energy and agriculture, the Bank has finally become a partnership champion for development in Africa. The review of documents of the AfDB, its partners, and stakeholder consultations suggest that successful KASPs related to collaboration on specific initiatives paved the way for a more systematic relationship, which ultimately resulted in the joint financing of activities. It seems to be a typical pattern for the Bank's partnerships with IFIs and similar development organizations (IFAD, WBG, IsDB, EBRD, OECD, and WWF).

Development partner coordination. The Bank has also been active in-country with development partner coordination initiatives and platforms. The situation is variable depending on the particular country, and the leadership and policy of each government toward development partner coordination. Box 4 summarizes the various perceptions on policy dialogue and country engagement by both RMCs and non-RMCs.

Rwanda is a good example of strong government leadership in development partner coordination. In addition, coordination around issues of common interest has been established and is effective in countries such as Tunisia and Zambia through Partners Groups comprising MDBs and bilateral partners. In Senegal, the development partners coordination group named G50 exists with 50 active partners, including the AfDB. Its role is to coordinate development partners' actions and positions and advise the Government of Senegal. In most of the countries visited, there was a notable division of labor between development partners. Countries with less active coordination or less structured coordination include Cameroon and Liberia. There were, however, some highly successful opportunistic coordination initiatives among development partners, especially when the situation required development partners to speak with one voice.

Despite being active in partner coordination, the Bank still has limitations in assuming some leadership roles. Staff reported in all visited countries that the Bank struggled in the country to respond positively to most coordination initiatives and tended to decline leadership and coordination roles. This was due to the Bank's culture of focusing primarily on the lending program and Board approvals. One Bank Country Manager summarized the concerns of his peers saying: *"The resource constraints do not allow me to play a more active role despite the demand by both the government and the partners. When I receive requests, I must decline sometimes because the lending program is my priority. Coordination and networking require staff time and a small budget for meetings, reporting, and communication, and these were not always available or budgeted. So, we have to leave the lead to a bilateral agency or other embassies because they have more flexibility to finance this kind of activity. Partnering requires resources, and the Bank must understand that."*

Box 4: RMCs' and non-RMCs' perceptions of policy dialogue and country engagement

RMCs are most appreciative of the Bank's knowledge, expertise and to a lesser extent its business processes (procurement, disbursement, decision-making, and portfolio performance management) which, they say, have improved since the DBDM's introduction in 2016.

Non-RMCs, on the other hand, tend to be less appreciative of the Bank's overall performance and perceived changes since the DBDM was introduced. A large majority sees a strong need for further improvement in the Bank's overall capacity to deliver, as well as its contribution to policy dialogue, priority setting, responsiveness to changing circumstances and in-country engagement with partners. Non-RMCs are also more critical of the ease of doing business with the Bank, its expertise and source of knowledge.

Source: IDEV Evaluation of DBDM (2019), confirmed with key informants and most recent literature.

Additionality of Partnerships

Increased crowding in of public and private sector financing. To a large extent, concessional funds, including funds from development partners, governments, and philanthropic organizations, were used to crowd in public and private sector financing. These resources would otherwise not have been available to the Bank to support projects with a high development impact. Both FPs and NFPs using such funds helped to bridge the gaps and address market barriers that prevent private sector development in areas of strategic importance and high development impact for RMCs, including through corporate or project co-financing and equity investments.

Paris Declaration implementation. The Paris Declaration on Aid Effectiveness (2005) and the Accra Agenda for Action (AAA, 2008) both sought to make aid more effective, including through harmonizing partnerships and making them more inclusive. To this end, the Bank's partnerships added satisfactory value to RMCs when leveraging financial assistance and expertise for investment and active development. This was accomplished through a reduction in the administrative burden on the Bank's clients in dealing with multiple partners and support for the Bank Group's commitment to improving development partner alignment and harmonization. A 2017 MOPAN report, among others, noted some progress but suggested that more should be done to improve Managing for Development Results (MfDR) and mutual accountability, the Bank's procedures, and the use of country systems, as well as participation in joint missions and support for government-led program-based approaches.

Improved national and regional economic and social infrastructure. The contribution of the Bank's partnerships to the development of economic and social infrastructure in Africa has been significant overall. The Bank's partnerships in this area, particularly in the energy and water subsectors, were among the most effective,[12] achieving their targeted outcomes and impacts, with the benefits likely to be sustained, notwithstanding some implementation delays and shortfalls in quality. More effective coordination can minimize the long delays and transaction costs of parallel co-financing and increase the extent of project outcomes and the development impact.

Improved national and regional food security. The evaluation found that both the Bank's FPs and NFPs contributed to the improvement of national and regional agricultural value chains and food security in RMCs. Key partnerships in which resources and project activities had positive effects in this area of results included AFT (TF), AfTra (TF), AWF (CF), EPSA (mixed CF, ACFA and FAPA), GAFSP (mixed TF), and PHRDG (non-financing). Box 5 illustrates the case of the Structural Transformation of African Agriculture and Rural Spaces (STAARS) and its contribution in the agriculture sector.

Entrepreneurship development and socioeconomic inclusion. The Bank's partnerships have been increasingly sensitive to the principles of socially and environmentally sustainable development. Overall, at different stages of their lifecycle, either systematically or in a more ad-hoc manner, the funded projects addressed job creation and income generation, including for vulnerable groups such as women, youth, rural populations, or entire underdeveloped regions. Far more development partnerships were focused on these issues by 2019 than was the case a decade ago.

Resilience to climate change. Since 2013, the Bank has built a relatively large sub-portfolio of partnerships dedicated to climate change and green growth. These mostly resulted from the domestication of global alliances, of which the Bank is an implementation agency. At the project and program level, the example of financing energy access mentioned above could also illustrate how the Bank's partnerships have evolved. However, consultations indicate that mainstreaming of the topic still needs improvement by maximizing synergies inside the sub-portfolio at both the outcome and cost levels, through groupings or by merging some of the dedicated partnerships. As an example, the

Box 5: STAARS: Generating knowledge to support the Feed Africa priority

Structural Transformation of African Agriculture and Rural Spaces (STAARS) is a partnership launched in 2014 between the AfDB, the World Bank, the Partnership for Economic Policy, the African Economic Research Consortium, and Cornell University (USA). It received financial support from the Rep. of Korea, via the Knowledge Sharing Program of the Korea EXIM Bank and the Korea-Africa Economic Cooperation (KOAFEC) Trust Fund. Its purpose is to support policy-oriented agricultural research, capacity building in agricultural research and policy outreach in Africa.

STAARS has produced more than 40 articles, working documents, policy briefs, and non-technical reports and disseminated these during conferences, workshops, and seminars in Durban, Abuja, Addis Ababa, and other cities. The information provided has been useful to the AfDB's operational departments that are involved in deploying the "Feed Africa" strategy, for development organizations that work closely with ministries of agriculture and rural development, and ultimately the farmers themselves. In terms of capacity building, **since 2016 about 10 young African researchers per year have benefited from visiting Cornell University** in the United States in order to exchange ideas with global experts in the agriculture sector, and to produce rigorous scientific articles with innovative solutions on important subjects relating to the agriculture and rural sector in Africa.

Source: STAARS project team briefs (2019).

case of SEFA and its contribution to Power Africa is presented in Box 6.

Strengthened partnership capacity in the AfDB and RMCs: The Bank's NFPs, significantly but not exclusively, contributed to increased awareness, knowledge, and skills regarding Africa's financing needs. Interviews during the country case studies showed that most of the AfDB's NFPs with KASP objectives were perceived as adding partnering capacity in the RMCs. Despite significant limitations discussed in the efficiency section, the evaluation found that the Bank's partnerships have contributed to a continuous improvement in its ability and in the confidence of external partners. At the individual level, interviewed TMs and senior managers across various partnerships demonstrated awareness, knowledge, and the use of technical, organizational, and behavioral competencies needed to achieve development results. Such capacities were also developed as a result of the activities carried out through partnerships.

Box 6: Light Up and Power Africa is increasing the Bank's footprint in renewable energy through SEFA

The Sustainable Energy Fund for Africa (SEFA), established in 2011, seeks to promote energy access and local economic development by unlocking investments in small and medium-scale renewable energy and energy efficiency projects. SEFA delivers support through three windows: project preparation, equity investment and enabling environment. SEFA's interventions are structured around three pillars: (i) Green Baseload, increasing the penetration of renewable energy in power; (ii) Green Mini-Grids, accelerating electricity access; and (iii) Energy Efficiency, improving the efficiency of energy services.

SEFA has raised US$126 million from the Governments of Denmark, the United States, the United Kingdom, Italy, Norway, Spain, and Sweden since its inception. To date, the Fund has committed US$81.5 million across 56 projects in 30 countries. The Fund's investments are expected to leverage in excess of US$1.5 billion in investments in new capacity and connections across the continent. SEFA has been credited for pushing the envelope for the Bank in terms of renewables, notably green mini-grids, and new technologies, which were absent from the Bank's work program until SEFA started providing TA.

Source: SEFA reports (2018).

Unintended Outcomes

The number of unexpected results reported across the sample of partnerships reviewed was not significant. However, when these did occur, they could potentially have been consequential. Weaknesses in coordination and leadership challenges have led some partnerships into difficulties and unforeseen consequences, such as the duplication of efforts, and partnership ineffectiveness or termination. The experience in Box 7 of a partnership management entity is illustrative of the difficulties encountered by three African institutions in the coordination of their partnerships with international partners.

Factors Affecting the Performance of Partnerships

Factors that affected performance positively were the improved quality of design of partnerships and increased supervision from the various partners involved. Co-financing was also effective when paired with grant financing funds, especially a project preparation facility. Public co-financing was found to be effective in crowding in resources. CFs were more effective than other types of DPs when they were joint and non-tied, rather than parallel. In joint co-financing, the AfDB and its financing partners finance a common list of goods, works and services required for a project in agreed-upon proportions under the Bank's Procurement Policy governing the procurement of goods, works and services. However, in parallel co-financing, a project is divided into specific, identifiable components or contract packages, each of which is separately financed by the Bank and the financing partners. Under these conditions, financing of the components assigned to the financing partners can be either on untied or tied terms. If it is untied, it can be administered by the Bank, and its policies and procedures apply. If it is tied, however, it cannot be administered by the Bank, and the financing

Box 7: Difficulties in Intra-African KASPs/C&Cs

The AfDB, the African Union Commission (AUC) and the United Nations Economic Commission for Africa (UNECA) are assumed to be natural partners. They set up a Joint Secretariat Support Office (JSSO) in 2011 with funding from the Danish Ministry of Foreign Affairs as a platform for more effective coordination, collaboration, and synergy in furtherance of continental priorities. However, they also engage in some duplications, such as of African flagship knowledge products, resulting in high transaction costs. The African Economic Outlook was originally a single report, but now has three different publications and at least two versions of country profiles. Also, the UNECA finally stopped its collaboration in the is partnership with the AfDB to work more closely the AUC. The 2016 Evaluation of the African Union Commission considered that "the failure of the Joint M&E Unit to fulfill its functions was due to lack of institutional and political ownership of the Commission's work, little oversight."

The 2018 mid-term evaluation of the African Minerals Development Centre (AMDC), originally a partnership between the three African institutions, Canada and Australia for the implementation of the Africa Mining Vision (AMV), indicates that the Bank's contribution was to focus on infrastructure and, through the African Legal Support Facility, on contract negotiations. The mid-term evaluation reported that AUC and UNECA saw the AfDB's African Natural Resources Center (ANRC) as a departure from the AMV and a competitor of the AMDC. The AfDB refuted the perception of competition between ANRC and AMDC on the grounds that ANRC should be rather seen as a complementary partner to the AMDC, based on a strategic relationship that could be strengthened in the future. To the AfDB, the strategic objectives of the ANRC are distinct from those of the AMDC and well aligned with its TYS, as the ANRC's coverage extends beyond the minerals sector, which is the focus of the AMV, and AMDC.

Source: Reviews of individual partnerships.

partners implement and administer the assigned components in parallel with the Bank-financed ones by using their own procurement guidelines. Also, for operations covered by a comprehensive framework agreement, the level of collaboration was high, and transaction costs for the Bank and the partners were reduced when they involved MDBs (IsDB, IFAD, WB) rather than export-oriented bilateral agencies. In contrast, beneficiaries reported an increase in their transaction costs, mainly due to the reporting and monitoring requirements of the various agencies.

The IDEV Comprehensive Evaluation of Development Results showed that the AfDB's co-financing is not sufficiently oriented toward mobilizing additional resources for the Bank and its projects. However, in some cases, positive practices were encountered, for example, promoting and attracting private sector financing into private-public partnerships (PPPs). However, leveraging in projects was more ad hoc than driven by strategic goals outlined in the country strategies. Despite improvements, results were not yet at the expected levels.

Some factors also adversely affected the implementation of CFs, thus offering a mixed picture of performance. **The application of CFs was often hampered by procedural challenges, differences in the culture and interests of the partners, onerous approval processes, and poor communication and quality standards. Lack of dedicated staff to manage partnerships and a low awareness of the existing opportunities offered by financing facilities were also contributing factors.** However, such challenges were most notable in the first years of implementation of CFs. Low implementation rates relative to the targets in the early years were often explained by the need to assign dedicated resources and create a strong pipeline of projects. Following a learning curve and addressing identified challenges, most CFs can reach optimal implementation speed. **Co-financed projects were also faced with significant delays,** notably in the infrastructure sector, which led to several extensions in the implementation of these projects. An illustration of these delays is the construction of the Lom Pangar hydroelectric dam foot plant and spillway, and in the rehabilitation and extension of power transmission and distribution systems (PRERETD). The Electricity Project (PRERETD) used AfDB-JICA financing starting in 2011 for four years, but this was extended up to eight years and is still not completed even today.

Implementation challenges that limited effectiveness were also linked to the perceived culture of approvals within the Bank. This means that, despite the political push for more leveraging, sector complexes are mainly focused on delivering the lending program of the Bank, and thus prioritize AfDB-only loans and Board approval of their projects. TMs are unwilling to take on the additional workload of a co-financed loan and risk the reputation of the Bank. They consider the Bank's ecosystem[13] to be less than entirely capable of supporting the responsibility of leading CFs, especially in the case of joint CFs.

Other challenges for some CFs were the limited interest of the partner in investing in the projects that the Bank proposed, and the time taken to approve deal proposals, which could lead to cancellation or the Bank funding its tranche without the partner. When dealing with parallel co-financing, while there could be more interest from partners, approval processes of the partner organizations varied, and the monitoring of the partnership tranche was not the responsibility of the Bank. This could lead to discrepancies between expected co-financing at the inception of the project and actual amounts raised through co-financiers. These delays stemmed from the use of joint and parallel CFs. While offering the best alternative for opportunity and transaction costs, each of these co-financing modes have proved challenging to implement due to difficulties in aligning the rules, processes, and reporting requirements of the partner with the Bank. While these challenges have prompted the increased use of parallel co-financing, joint financing remains the best option when all the conditions are met.

The benchmarking helped in identifying some good practices that could be beneficial for the effectiveness of the Bank's partnerships. On one hand, when partnerships are prioritized and well resourced, they have provided increased added value for the organization. The Bank still has some margin for improvement in terms of resource mobilization, monitoring, and reporting. On the other hand, on average, the amounts mobilized by other institutions were more significant than the Bank's. Institutions such as the World Bank, IDB, and AsDB have implemented reforms aimed at increasing the share of co-financing in their operations that have led to positive results. These reforms included:

- Greater emphasis on KPIs promoting systematic co-financing and the use of TFs.
- Better organization of TFs into umbrella programs and enhancing reporting mechanisms.
- Streamlined processes to reduce bottlenecks for approvals and disbursements; and
- Greater autonomy in the use of TFs for project preparation, coordination, and policy dialogue.

Common challenges were also found regarding the fragmentation of TFs and the lack of coordination of CFs. It appeared that larger TFs that were better resourced and managed produced better results, and partnerships were more likely to perform when they were embedded in the relevant sector complexes. At the same time, the coordination and strategy functions remained centralized.

Partners' Perceptions of the Bank as a Partner

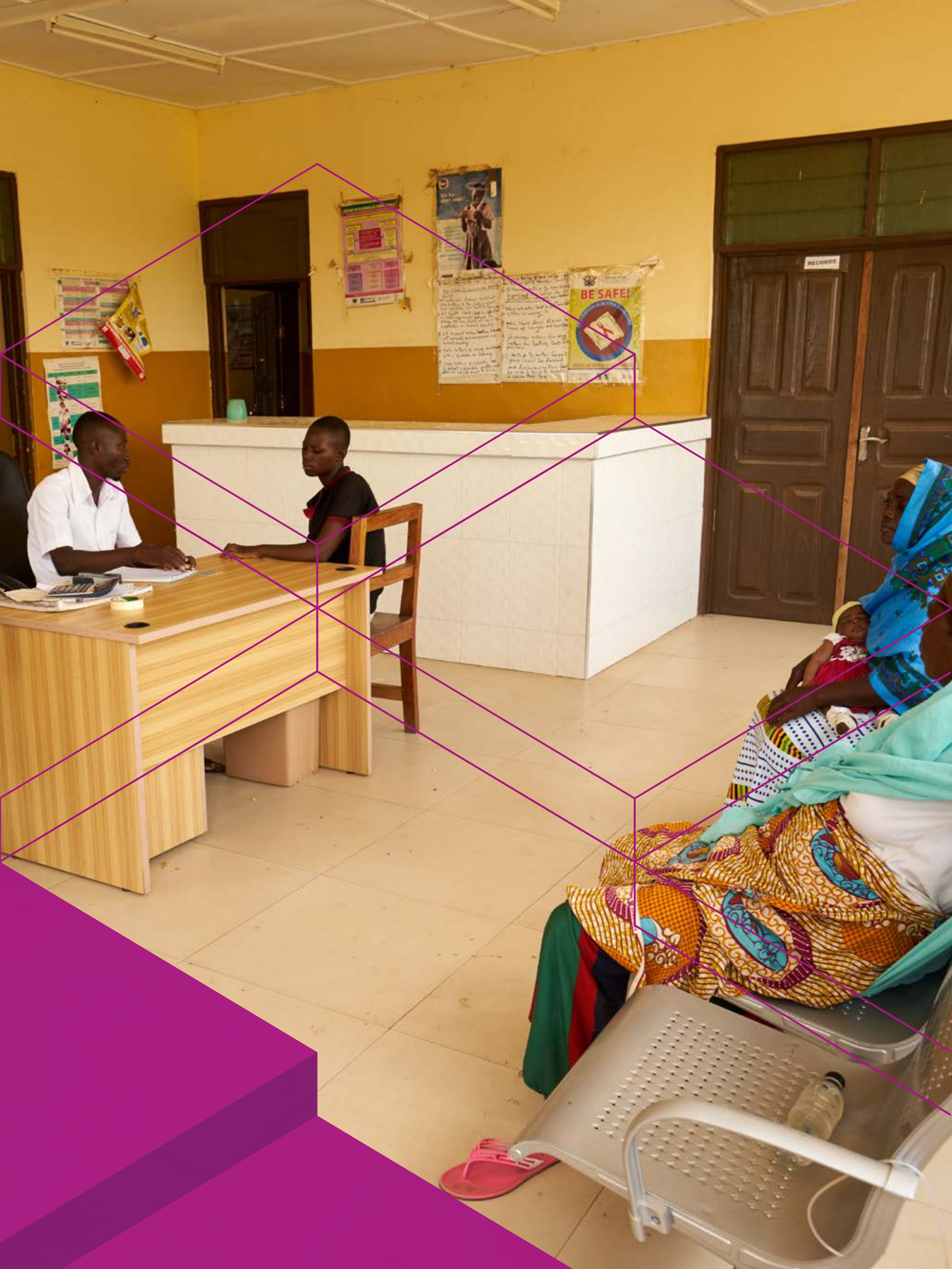
Partners are generally positive about their partnerships with the Bank in terms of its support for coordination and policy dialogue, and notably its image and financial resources. Most see the Bank as a partner of choice for their large-scale interventions in Africa and consider it to have the potential to become an even larger player in the current development architecture. The presence of the AfDB in all African countries and its now extended network of country offices are seen as advantage. The Bank also enjoys a strong image as the "African" bank with a strong alignment with the development agendas of African governments which brings significant goodwill and influence that other partners, including foundations, see as a comparative advantage. Finally, the Bank is considered by partners as an organization that has developed a strong expertise in complex settings in Africa especially in focus areas which are highly relevant for meeting the SDGs such as infrastructure, energy and governance.

For example, the World Health Organization's (WHO) office in Liberia noted that the Bank's support in coordination and policy dialogue, and most importantly its financial resources, have been vital in the health sector. Meanwhile, UNDP recognizes the AfDB and the World Bank as key players in Rwanda's international development architecture. In Cameroon, the Bank's collaboration has been cited as positive and useful by all bilateral and multilateral partners. Multilateral partners such as the EU and the World Bank have concluded that the AfDB provides excellent value for development support. UNOPS has commended its cooperation with the Bank as effective and useful in several countries such as Cameroon, Zimbabwe, The Gambia, Somalia, etc.

Specific complaints were linked to weaknesses in communication and delays in contributions or responses from the Bank. Recurring criticisms relate to delays, weak reporting, and communication. While the Bank in principle has a strong result focus, it is seen by some partners to be more process-oriented than result-oriented. This means that in some cases the immediate delivery of outputs and a high disbursement rate seem to overshadow considerations around project sustainability. For instance, while they praised the quality of the AFDB's Project Appraisal Reports (PAR), they indicated that there is very little flexibility to change the content or direction, pointing to some

organizational inertia in opposition to adaptive management that could lead to even better results.

Also, some teams in the Bank dealing with partners are perceived to have a limited understanding of their counterpart's organizations and their business model thus making partnership dealings difficult, therefore making necessary closer technical ties and the existence of a knowledge base of partners. Finally, partners indicated that at the implementation stages, their counterparts in the AfDB (task managers) were not always aware of all details of rules and processes, were junior staff or did not have the appropriate level of authority to make decision leading to confusion and delays impacting projects' timelines. ■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Efficiency

The evaluation of efficiency examined whether the Bank's partnerships have been managed with optimal resources to ensure results delivery in the most cost-effective manner. It considered aspects of partnership implementation that either contributed to, or reduced, adequacy of links between resources and results. The analysis was based on interviews, partnership reviews, previous TF reviews and audits, and partnerships' budget commitments and disbursement rates. The timeliness of partnership implementation was based on a comparison between the planned and the actual period of implementation from the date of effectiveness.

Attention was paid to human resources management, existing systems to support partnership management and implementation challenges, and how they were addressed in a timely fashion. The chapter is structured in four sections discussing the overall performance, the adequate use of resources, the organization performance, and learning, innovation, and partnerships capacity-building.

Overall Performance

The overall efficiency of AfDB partnerships is rated as Unsatisfactory. Despite continuous reforms and improvements to systems and coordination, weaknesses in the management of partnerships, notably the lack of flexible procedures, insufficient staff resources, and inadequate communication, coordination and incentives, undermined the capacity of the Bank's partnerships to achieve their full potential.

The Bank has been effective in initiating partnerships and mobilizing additional resources. However, it faces a severe bottleneck in the process of transforming partnership agreements into projects and thereby development results. In general, projects funded through partnerships experienced long delays in the first disbursement. Additional challenges were due to complex procurement procedures. These were not tailored to the distinct nature of partnership activities, and not adapted to the size and nature of the beneficiaries. For instance, a TF granting US$100,000 to small-sized projects sponsored by local communities requires the application of Bank procurement, disbursement, and audit rules. This sometimes led to major delays and cancellations of acquisitions of goods and services due to non-compliance with Bank rules. With insufficient monitoring and coordination of partnership agreements, the Bank is left with an inventory of partnership initiatives that have not translated into actual projects.

The review of the Bank's partnerships management function reveals barriers to efficiency in the implementation of partnership framework activities, which could be associated with the shortcomings identified earlier in the evaluation of the relevance and effectiveness of partnerships. The management of the Bank's partnerships exhibits a relatively high level of fragmentation (lost synergies) that makes it a candidate for reorganizing some aspects of the partnership's management function, such as identifying strategic options, coordination, reporting, and institutional communication. A formal resource mobilization and partnerships coordination strategy, and the clarification and enforcement of the mandates and ToR of the partnerships departments, could lay the basis for this.

Use of Mobilized Resources

Timeliness of partnership operations. Overall, the evaluation could not capture enough granular data to assess the differences in timeliness (in terms of time between approval and disbursement) between TTFs

and BTFs. It did find that project implementation under various partnership arrangements encountered delays across the Bank's partnerships portfolio. The average time between project approval and loan and grant effectiveness over the evaluation period was found to be 415 days (14 months). In contrast, the average time from loan effectiveness to the first disbursement was 175 days (five months).

The implementation of Presidential Directive PD 02/2015 has significantly decreased the time between approval, entry into force (effectiveness), and first disbursement. However, challenges remain, which are mostly related to the readiness of projects, the quality at entry, and the availability of the required staff capacity to conduct business efficiently. Thus, in some cases, planned activities could become redundant or run the risk of cancellation. Also, the conditionalities for grant disbursements, especially on BTFs, were sometimes found to be problematic. These conditions are not uniform and are usually specific to each TF agreement and commitments with the partner. Moreover, while general agreements are signed according to prescribed guidelines, each legal document of the sub-agreements is further made complex by more constraints that are inserted, making them less flexible. The clause that brings the most constraints is one that requires the non-objection or the prior green light of development partners. While the Bank strives to honor these specific commitments, according to staff, they can create a particular burden that becomes a disincentive in requesting funding from particular TFs. In the case of CFs, duplication of the systems of the partners, or the limited effort in the harmonization of procedures, were the primary reasons for the prolonged time until the first disbursement.

Disbursement rates. The conclusions of successive TF reviews, audits, and evaluations[14] highlight low disbursement rates and complex disbursement and procurement procedures, as well as the lack of incentives for Bank staff to devote time to relatively small-scale but management-intensive TF projects. The same persistent challenges have been repeatedly reported in individual reviews and evaluations of CFs and NFPs, although they are seen as being more problematic for CFs.

The measurement of disbursement rates in the Bank is weak and rather basic. Trust funds are better monitored than co-financing and non-financing partnerships. As at the end of September 2010, a total of 147 operations supported by BTFs were ongoing, with a disbursement rate of 16 percent. In comparison, as at the end of December 2018, the overall disbursement rate of TFs was 69 percent, equivalent to an average growth rate of more than 330 percent from the 16 percent disbursement rate of the BTFs in 2010.

While high approvals were observed in BTFs mainly before 2013, disbursements remained high in TTFs over the entire period. This is explained by an increase in amounts received from development partners for TTFs during the study period compared with the amounts received for BTFs. Over time, the figures for disbursements across the Bank's partnerships portfolio show that the level of disbursement increases with project maturity. For instance, the level of disbursement of the Africa Trade Fund (AfTra) jumped from 20 to 66 percent in less than 18 months.

Such a pattern of high disbursement rates for projects that are more mature could reflect the nature of some operations, such as knowledge products that tend to be disbursed at project completion. However, it is more likely to be related to the poor planning of disbursements and delays in procurement. Indeed, the conditions needed to trigger the first disbursement are a notorious issue due to country context-related factors and implementation agencies' capacity issues. The slow or underutilization of TF resources is regularly reported, always with a warning about the risk of damage to reputation and a reduction in the Bank's capacity to mobilize more resources for the development of the continent. The efficiency of partnerships in terms of resource utilization differs across categories, contexts, and countries. However, overall, partnerships face a vicious circle of slow

and underutilization of resources, with long delays in the availability of funds committed at the corporate level, long delays in committing project funds, first disbursements, and adjusting plans, and long delays in subsequent disbursements, and the renegotiation of new planning horizons and resources.

Co-financed projects are also faced with significant disbursement issues. These issues are reported, especially in the case of joint CF projects where one organization processes all the payments of the other partners. However, CF projects were less likely to face these issues once the learning curve of the partners had been completed. Staff are then better acquainted with the processes and procedures of each organization, and therefore spend less time in processing the project's payments. Box 8 provides insights into the disbursement performance of some partnerships.

Bank support ecosystem. The implementation of partnerships faces significant bottlenecks due to the capacity of the Bank's ecosystem, especially procurement, legal and audit teams. As per the application of the Bank's rules, each TF, irrespective of its size, requires that each project has an AfDB procurement specialist, an AfDB disbursement specialist, and an AfDB audit specialist. Each procurement must be validated by the Bank's procurement team, and every legal document must be reviewed by the Bank's Legal Department, irrespective of the amount of the TF sub-project, which is often limited and under US$1 million. As a result, these activities create a critical additional workload for the departments with limited staffing, causing delays and the prioritization of larger projects over small ones.

Box 8: Examples of delays, low commitments, and disbursements across the Bank's partnership portfolio

The Africa Fertilizer Financing Mechanism (AFFM, co-financing) Annual Report 2018 (page 8, 16) indicated that a recent survey (2018) conducted by the FAO recognized that the AFFM's implementation has been satisfactory, given the recent improvements that had occurred during 2018. However, as of 31 December 2018 (11 years after its establishment), the AFFM had received €12.1 million, representing 67 percent of total pledges, had committed 54 percent of the funds, and had utilized only €565,652 (disbursement rate of 4.70 percent).

As of 30 June 2018, SEFA (established in 2006), one of the best performing TFs on commitments, had committed 85 percent of its funds. The cumulative disbursement rate at the program level was estimated at 43 percent of the cumulative commitments at the same date.

In 2015, the disbursement rate for the RWSSI (grants and co-financing TF, established in 2003) was 22 percent, and it was close to the disbursement rate of previous years. At the time of its four-month extension in 2018, the disbursement rate had reached 98 percent.

As of 13 July 2016, the total amount of resources approved under EPSA (grant and co-financing TF established in 2006) was US$1,224.64 million, but the amount disbursed was US$56.01 million for only three projects.

According to the independent review of NEPAD Infrastructure Project Preparation Facility (IPPF) (2019), on average, projects can take up to seven years to reach the project implementation stage, and, as a result, this has a direct impact on the returns achieved from a Project Preparation Facility (PPF) perspective. Furthermore, for some of the managers, the meaning of completion was dependent on the PPF mandate and did not always result in the implementation of the project.

Source: Reviews of individual partnerships.

Organizational Performance

Institutional Architecture

Overview. The Bank's institutional framework for partnerships has evolved from a highly centralized structure to a decentralized one. This decentralization and mainstreaming of partnerships were a major part of the DBDM reforms initiated from 2016 onwards. The main attributes of these reforms were the separation of functions between FIRM, FIST, and the sector complexes, and the co-responsibility of all structures in resource mobilization and partner engagement. It is only to be expected—as it is the case in other organizations—that, while some functions such as resource mobilization can be decentralized to sectors, the coordination of all mobilization activities and development partner engagement is centralized with FIRM. However, the evaluation finds that this has not always been the case, especially since implementation of the DBDM reforms. As a result, this has led to non-coordinated approaches to development partners that carry a critical reputational risk for the Bank. Given the current and expected global dynamics of development cooperation, the evaluation concluded that the partnerships process at the Bank is reactive and more silo-driven than formalized within a consolidated results-based framework. The current architecture, while functional, needs significant improvements to allow FIRM and FIST to fully play their central roles in mobilizing resources and coordinating partnerships in the Bank.

Clarification of roles. FIRM does not yet have an explicit partnerships policy, strategy, or implementation action plan. For instance, the evaluation could find no clear ToRs delineating its roles and mandates following the DBDM reforms. The move toward more decentralization in partnerships management with insufficient guidance and demarcation of the roles of sector complexes vis-à-vis FIRM is an important issue for the adequate mobilization, monitoring, and reporting of partnerships. Furthermore, as part of the DBDM reforms, the Bank has created some partnerships units within sector complexes with the mandate to mobilize additional resources for those specific sectors. However, the evaluation found no evidence of clear mandates of these newly created units. There was also no evidence of a clear delineation of roles and collaboration rules or reporting lines with FIRM. Consequently, these reforms had the adverse effect of weakening the coordination of partnerships within the Bank. It was therefore concluded that the Bank is yet to establish a fully functional, well-coordinated organizational setup that works and is suited for its needs and architecture. Nevertheless, this conclusion is not definitive since partnerships units are still being reorganized as part of the continuous improvement process of the DBDM.

Partner engagement coordination. During interviews with Bank staff and TMs, the institutional positioning, and the separation of functions between FIRM and FIST were raised. Both departments sit in FIVP, which clearly highlights the financial resources mobilization view of partnerships in the Bank. However, their positioning is different.

In the case of FIRM, the department holds a strategic position, overseeing relationships with institutional partners, mobilizing resources, and replenishing the ADF, among others. Its main mission today is mobilization and supporting the mobilization efforts of other (sector) complexes. From its previous implementation mandates, FIRM has only kept the management of BTFs in-house. To achieve its mission effectively, FIRM needs strong positioning to ensure that it can guarantee that commitments from the various partnerships are met and resources properly utilized with appropriate reporting.

However, as a line department itself, FIRM does not have sufficient authority to effectively monitor or coordinate resource-mobilization initiatives from sector complexes and partnerships units. Roles among actors are not clarified, and FIRM lacks a clear mandate to organize all the Bank's partnership initiatives effectively. Such a level of authority is required if the Bank is to maintain trust and reduce transaction and agency costs in its partnerships.

Conclusions of successive trust fund reviews, audits, and evaluations, including the 2009 TCFRP Mid-Term Review and the 2013 IDEV evaluation of the management of Trust Funds, reported several issues regarding the coordination of partnerships. Guidelines, that sometimes-preceded policies, were tailored to individuals and categories of partnerships and did not always integrate lessons learned from existing instruments. In addition, the existing processes suffered from limited mechanisms to exploit potential synergies between FIRM and other partnerships units of the operational complexes involved in development cooperation. In many instances, partnerships units or operational divisions have launched partner engagement missions and initiatives without prior coordination with FIRM, raising concerns and questions among development partners over the extent to which the Bank internally coordinates its partnerships and outreach.

In the case of FIST, the department has taken on the role of managing CFs previously handled by FIRM. This role is focused on the implementation of CFs rather than their management (mobilization, negotiation and reporting). This implies a need for a clear delineation of roles and attribution between the two departments, as well as the set-up of a reporting and monitoring platform to ensure that both can play their roles adequately. The collaboration of FIST with other sector complexes had also proved challenging at the start, but with noticeable improvements in the past year due to increased communication and support from Management to promote co-financing and loan syndication.

Effect of the DBDM. As the current setup is still being adjusted, the evaluation could not confirm whether the DBDM reforms to partnerships were optimal, as enough time had not yet elapsed. In the absence of a definite results framework, a conclusion could not be reached. It will arguably take a few more years from the time of inception for the DBDM to achieve results. There are, however, indications that the results so far are mixed. While there has been a boost in resource mobilization, issues relating to a lack of coordination have affected the image of the Bank with various partners. The overlap of partnerships, and the limited range and versatility of partnership instruments, is seen to restrict the potential to achieve better development results. In this context, some sector complexes have been rethinking the role of their partnerships units.

The institutional setup has been reformed several times but is still not working as expected. The evaluation finds that the institutional setup that will be appropriate for partnerships to function optimally in the AfDB and ensure a smooth coordination is yet to be put in place and will need a deeper analysis and diagnosis. Furthermore, the current situation bears the risk of adversely affecting the quality of the internal collaboration among partnership structures (see Box 9). An example is that, in the institutional positioning, FIRM and FIST are central functions, especially FIRM as partnerships are used across the Bank. However, being both under the Finance Vice-Presidency (FIVP), they are not seen as having sufficient authority to compel other (sector) complexes to report on their activities or strictly follow guidelines and standards. The institutional positioning is similar to that in other organizations such as the AsDB, the World Bank, and IFC, with IDB being one of the exceptions whereby the structure is located in the President's Office. However, the benchmarking shows that these institutions do not have a significant issue in enforcing coordination measures despite periodic challenges. Examples of some lessons from these organizations can be found in Box 10. Going forward, the challenge for the Bank would be to identify the most suitable institutional setup and the adequate tools that could ensure an effective coordination mechanism.

Perceptions of the staff: In interviews with staff, they expressed a largely negative view of partnerships management in the Bank. The staff attributed the performance achieved mostly to their commitment to deliver and satisfy Management's requests, rather than the existence of effective systems and resources. Interviews suggest that adequate advisory and support staff needed to navigate TF processes are not always available from FIRM. The perception from country offices was that accessing this expertise is not always timely and could be improved

Box 9: Lack of synergies throughout a fragmented partnership process

- Only trust fund resources that have been approved by development partners can be embedded in the Bank's budget allocation. Furthermore, activities are implemented over several years, which may cut across one or more budgeting cycles.
- Not all approved trust fund activities or confirmed co-financing resources are systematically included in the planning and budgeting process. Operations departments already have full control of most trust funds (i.e., three out of four), but accountability for all trust fund utilization primarily lies with FIRM.
- Lack of a clear point of contact/focal point for the trust fund and co-financing in the operational complexes amplifies the potential reputational risks of uncoordinated proliferation of requests to external partners.
- Weak relationship between FIRM and User Departments, with high staff turnover that jeopardizes effective management.
- Absence of effective coordination mechanism for submission of projects to multiple co-financiers/donors/partners to avoid duplication and multiplication of originating and supervision departments, thus shifting a significant share of the day-to-day activities to the user department interface (including low coordinated application to syndication, if any, of associated co-financing facilities, such as AGTF, PSF, EPSA, NTF, climate funds, etc.).

Source: FIVP SMCC Presentation, September 2017; Review and benchmarking of TF Policy (2019).

if partnership officers were present in the field. The image of FIRM among operations staff is adversely affecting the collaboration process and the interest in using TFs. Nonetheless, good practices underline that synergies are vital to internal and external coordination for effective two-way collaborative trust. These issues of "misaligned interests" and a lack of coordination are already known. They have been flagged several times in the conclusions and recommendations of TF reviews, audits, and evaluation reports from 2009 to 2019. They are also well known to consulted stakeholders, who view TF reforms in the Bank as incomplete.[15]

Human Resources and Partnership Culture

Staffing. The evaluation found that the guidelines and policies that govern the Bank's partnerships were generally not supported by appropriate partnership skills, culture, and incentive schemes. Several reviews and studies during the period highlighted that the partnerships function has been understaffed both in numbers and skills despite recent efforts to bolster it. In 2018, the Bank was close to its target of 54 percent of operations staff based in Country Offices and Regional Hubs (53 percent achieved) in pursuit of strengthening policy dialogue with the RMCs and other development partner agencies. However, there is still an absence of partnerships Task Managers and Procurement Officers in the Bank's country offices, as reported in all six countries in the evaluation's case study sample. At the same time, all managers interviewed in Country and Regional Offices confirmed the need for such expertise locally, or at least at the regional level, to ease the pressure on their operations. Reports from FIRM and its predecessors, FRMB and ORRU, indicate that the staff assigned to partnerships increased from 14 focal points and managers in 2009 to 22 in 2019.

Regarding co-financing and loan syndication, a presentation by FIST in 2017 reported a glaring shortage of specialists at the decentralized level, with only one Professional Staff (PL) in place as opposed to the nine that were deemed necessary over three years. Significant efforts have been made to improve staffing and the vacancy rate by 2020. It

is hoped that staffing will become less of an issue in the coming years if the Bank is able to ensure effective staff retention in those departments.

Another area of concern is the apparent variation in the staffing of various partnerships. While some partnerships have dedicated teams, others complain of being handled by only one staff member and sometimes by consultants with no access to critical Bank systems. As a result, while some partnerships have the necessary resources to plan, implement, and communicate, some TMs face challenges in operating their partnerships. These challenges range from a lack of authority to communicate with external parties, to hiring a consultant or being proactive in their management. These challenges could carry reputational risks for the Bank. Box 11 shares some opinions of staff on managing partnerships in the Bank.

Partnerships skills. Although successive reviews and studies highlighted the need to establish required minimum qualifications, improve the skills of staff involved in the area of partnership and TF management, and set up guiding tools to mitigate the Bank's reputational risk, the Bank did not adequately address the skills and tools gaps. These included an accreditation system, which was planned for the past decade but was not yet in operation at the time of the evaluation.[16] Other components of an aligned incentive scheme included KPIs for co-financing and leveraging at the level of Task Managers and Investment Officers. As the 2019 DBDM Evaluation observed, "...the framework of KPIs provides a suite of top-level indicators that can be tracked at an executive level, with joint KPIs showing some evidence of breaking down aspects of known "silo working" within the Bank and encouraging elements of team ownership and joint working."

Box 10: Management of partnerships: Practices from other IFIs

- The Asian Development Bank (AsDB) has a decentralized approach to partnerships, with five regional departments and seven other departments and offices responsible for partnerships, and policy, coordination, implementation, and reporting functions split among them.
- The World Bank and Inter-American Development Bank have centralized structures for partnerships. The TFs and Partnership Department is directly under the Vice President for Development Finance at the World Bank. While at the Inter-American Development Bank the Office of Outreach and Partnerships is under the President's Office.
- At the World Bank, the Trust Funds Department centralizes the key functions of policy, coordination, negotiation, and reporting. However, daily management and use of Trust Funds and Financial Intermediary Funds resources are handled by the Global Practices.
- At the IDB, the Office of Outreach and Partnerships coordinates all engagements, negotiations, and policy issues. Trust Fund Managers work as a resource pool. While operations can engage with partners, all must report to the Office about any partnership's engagement.
- The EIB has implemented from 2012 a more centralized approach to ensure the functions of origination, design, and reporting of mandates (equivalent of Trust Funds). Dedicated structures have been created to manage advisory mandates and investment mandates. According to a recent evaluation, this reform has resulted in greater coherence, standardized implementation models and quality mandate services focusing on auditability, accountability, and organizational stability.

There is no uniform approach. However, it seems that for consistency and strategic positioning, some level of centralization is beneficial to ensuring effectiveness and efficiency.

Source: Benchmarking Exercise.

Box 11: Partnerships management: quotes from different key stakeholders

1. An Investment Officer

"When I must process a deal, I check with my network on the ground to see if they are interested. It is not systematic to check in the Bank which co-financing agreement can fund this or that unless you know. They [FIRM/FIST] have been raising awareness, but sometimes, when you consider the time it would take, you would rather work with your own network."

2. A Trust Fund Manager

"When I came into the Bank, it took some few months for me to understand how it really works. When I needed help to understand some of the processes, the mailing list of fund managers was not very useful although it took months for me to be included. I had to patiently build my own network in the Bank and that is how people will share some particularly useful documents and tips with you."

3. A Co-Financing and Syndication Manager

"The Investment Officers find that I slowed them down, that I slowed down their work, because I want bankable transactions at my level. They only think to realize their KPI... I brought back a million dollars of revenue lately, but even a thank you I did not receive from any member of senior management."

Source: Stakeholder consultations (HQ and sample countries), 2019.

Box 12 presents some practices of benchmarked institutions.

Incentives. Lack of recognition and support by managers has been cited as one of the primary concerns of staff. Technical assistance, project preparation activities, policy dialogue and advisory support are supposed to support operational activities of the AfDB, paving the way for larger investment operations. However, staff working on partnerships do not feel sufficiently incentivized to conduct such support activities. The same applies to staff working on project preparation and technical assistance. These activities require a fair amount of heavy lifting for relatively small amounts. However, there is little recognition of these contributions, leading TMs to prioritize larger and more visible investments. Staff do not feel that partnerships issues received adequate attention from Management. They also believe that success is not rewarded, and problems not addressed unless they become critical to delivery. The evaluation could find no indication that performance contracts include a co-financing mobilization KPI. It also observed that a culture of "only big operations matter" is embedded in how the Bank's staff view partnerships. This culture reduces the level of attention given to operations of smaller amounts or co-financing.

Consultants. The use of consultants to manage partnerships is a critical issue. Most of the teams working on partnerships, especially TFs, are made up of consultants. This situation, coupled with inadequate filing and archiving, has caused the Bank to lose some institutional memory as well as documents when these consultants leave. As an illustration, SEFA has been managed for about eight years by only consultants. It has seen high turnover in the team, significant gaps between contracts, a heavy supervision burden on the coordinator, and much time spent on human resources administration, such as procurement and contract management. Consultants, from their side, report specific issues hampering their effectiveness, such as the lack of authority to communicate with external partners and an inability to access the Bank's systems on their own. Key disincentives for consultants were what they consider to be the Bank's culture of bias against consultants. They have limited latitude to innovate or voice their opinions, together with the

continuous stress of contract renewals and payment processing. While they consider these problems to be important, they did not see them as significant impediments to their performance. However, the issue of consultants leaving the Bank without going through a proper handover process and inadequate filing of documentation is a major concern.

Use of TF resources. Partnerships managers, especially of TFs, have indicated that the Bank's resources are not always able to provide them with the necessary support when needed to address the partnership's work plan. This ranges from documentary resources, assistance with procedures, and adequate training to recruitment. They have also expressed concern that the 5 percent TF management fees paid to the Bank go straight into the general budget without any specific share being devoted to providing partnerships with adequate resources to achieve their goals. The sector complexes in charge of managing TTFs do not have sight on these resources, effectively creating competitive tension in the administrative budgets between TF operations and regular Bank operations.

Box 12: Effective partnering skills in IFIs

1. At the InterAmerican Development Bank

The skills below are required from partnerships managers:

Professional level

- Predisposition to learn and understand the knowledge of the Bank's core business and procedures as well as these of key external stakeholders.
- Ability to connect and mediate among practitioners from different cultures and mindsets (e.g., public, and private sector, government, civil society, philanthropy, media, academic institutions).
- Flexibility and rapid execution of competing tasks, curiosity, and drive towards innovation.

Senior (management)

- Established global network of key players.
- Experience in partnership development and management, strategic business development, negotiation, and diplomacy.
- Effective and efficient problem-solving change management.
- Strong communication and public presentation skills.

2. At the World Bank

To be appointed as task team leader (TTL) of a trust fund, one must meet the following requirements:

- Be a staff member of at least Grade GF.
- Have a regular World Bank appointment and not be a consultant or have a temporary appointment.
- Have been accredited under the Trust Fund Learning and Accreditation Program.
- The candidate should have no decision-making authority to approve the allocation of trust fund resources to directly finance or benefit his/her position.

Source: Benchmarking exercise: Borrowed from A. Edmondson et al. (2015:7); BP 14.40 Annex B–Staff Eligibility to Administer Trust Funds accessible on https://policies.worldbank.org/sites

Information Systems, Monitoring, and Reporting

Information systems. Consecutives reviews, audits and assessments have flagged the issue of systems. The Bank's information systems and reporting have not improved significantly over the years, although they appear to have been more systematic and informative during the period 2008–2010. During the period 2011–2015, it appears that monitoring and reporting were weak or deprioritized. The later period of 2016–2019 saw some improvement but with significant efforts remaining to be made. Table 1, for example, shows how successive Bank Group Annual Reports reported on co-financing.

The evaluation was unable to conclude on the reasons for such poor performance. However, interviews and the various assessments point to factors such as lack of leadership, disruptive institutional changes, and weak implementation of the mandates of successive partnerships units.

Trust Funds Management System. The evaluation found that the Trust Funds Management System's (TFMS) functionalities were neither fully implemented nor integrated into the Bank systems, mainly the Bank-wide Program Processing Schedule (BPPS) and SAP. On the contrary, all TF teams and project teams have their own archiving systems of TF information and documentation. As a result, information collection is a daunting task for partnerships managers and resource-mobilization officers, when such information should be readily available for development partners and Bank staff alike. This lack of integration with BPPS and SAP also means that TF operations do not appear on management dashboards and there is no oversight from the top. Slow implementation and projects at risk are not being flagged to senior Management, and there is no accountability from the top for supporting technical teams to find solutions.

Co-financing monitoring. Co-financing has been poorly monitored over the period, as shown in Table 1. Although the situation has improved since 2016–2017 with the creation of FIST, the Bank's approach to co-financing data is still weak. Three linked factors explain such poor performance. First, at the preparation stage, the Bank is mainly focused on its lending target and prioritizes the Board's approval even when co-financing options have not been finalized. Second, once approved by the Board, there are fewer incentives for TMs to closely monitor the financial closure of the co-financing and report back. Third, real figures are clouded by a lack of transparency and absence of reporting in the Bank's systems. While data on approvals of the various CFs and TFs can be found, there is no central repository in the Bank's systems to store these data, which then requires manual effort to refer to each partnerships team for updated information. The situation is worse for ad-hoc co-financing. Any systematic effort requires searching through every project appraisal report for data on co-financing, which may not contain the final figures. These can vary according to final approval by the various organizations. The Bank itself relies on annual information from various Country Program Officers (CPOs) and portfolio reports, which may be

Table 1: Reporting of overall co-financing in Bank's Annual Reports 2008–2019 (UA bn.)

	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019
Projects (#)	28.00	31.00	28.00	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A
AfDB	1.46	3.89	1.28								7.40	
External	4.74	11.66	6.14								5.00	
Others	1.85	3.61	1.00									
Total	8.05	19.16	8.41							7.60	12.40	

Source: AfDB Annual reports 2008–2019. N/A=Not available in the report

contradictory. This may be explained by inadequate filing in SAP, as this information can be recorded in the system. Consequently, the extent to which the evaluation could assess the leveraging effect of co-financing partnerships was limited.

Partnership KPIs. Discussions on KPIs were central in interviews with staff and managers. KPIs were considered one of the top issues to tackle in order to address partnerships efficiency concerns. KPIs focused mainly on the level of resources mobilized, approved, and disbursed. These quantitative outputs tended to be drivers for compliance that did not create a strong incentive to use partnership resources for co-financing or trust funds. This situation has been improving as KPIs have been refined. However, they still lack the qualitative aspect that would bring greater focus on the quality of the delivery, the timeliness of the reporting, and the satisfaction of the partner and the beneficiaries.

The evaluation did not find any KPIs relating to reporting and accountability, which would empower FIRM to ensure the effectiveness of TFs and monitor closely how the mobilized resources are used. A good parallel could be made with the ADF replenishment process, where specific commitments are made and the Bank works as one to deliver on those commitments to ensure the success of each ADF, thus increasing the chances of a successful replenishment. No such mechanism exists for BTFs, TTFs and CFs.

Overall partnerships monitoring and reporting. The Bank has not put in place a partnerships performance monitoring system that would support a meaningful, quantitative cost-effectiveness analysis of partnerships. To date, the Bank's systems are unable to capture the potentially high volume of transaction costs, agency costs, and lost synergies that result from the Bank's partnership process. It would be challenging to determine whether the Bank's partnerships are cost-effective in adding value to the Bank's operations.

Also, the Bank does not yet have a fully operational and transparent information system that provides partners and shareholders with detailed reporting on partnerships. The existing corporate management and Trust Fund Management systems are not yet integrated to cover all types of partnerships. The reporting is still done at least semi-manually, and on a case-by-case basis. The reporting system reflects the fragmentation of the partnerships function and the gap between resource mobilization and partnership implementation. Weaknesses have deepened since the changes introduced by the DBDM, with FIRM struggling to have real-time information on the management and use of TTFs from operations complexes and sectors. Box 13 presents some useful comparisons from the benchmarking with sister IFIs.

Learning, Innovation, and Partnership Capacity Building

Knowledge database. The Bank has made some promising efforts to document its active partnerships and partners. Evidence of this can be found on the Bank's website with a partnership page and the Trust Fund Finder tools. However, these tools are still limited in their potential and do not connect to a comprehensive database. Overall, the evaluation found no evidence that the Bank maintains a profile database of confirmed and potential partners, including their interests, comparative advantages, and the Bank's and RMCs' experience in partnering with these stakeholders. Good practices from other organizations suggest that the most important pillar of such an integrated partnership knowledge includes documentation of good practices and lessons learned from partnership(s) implementation, monitoring, and evaluation activities inside and outside the Bank. Compared with good practices from other organizations and interviews, the evaluation found that the Bank lacks a dedicated partnership M&E system beyond the five partnership output indicators of the corporate Results Measurement Framework (RMF), and also fails to systematically incorporate lessons from the Bank's evaluations.[17]

Box 13: Effective information systems from benchmarked organizations

At the IDB

- The IDB uses Sales Force (a client relationship manager) as a business intelligence tool that tracks partners' interactions, with more than 300 partners in the United States, Europe, and Asia.
- The Trust Fund management platform keeps track of all active Trust Funds and coordinates all trust fund requests.

At the World Bank

- The Development Partner Center is a communication and reporting tool that provides partners with direct access to real-time information relating to their Trust Funds.
- The Trust Fund Management Systems provide exhaustive information to facilitate the creation of Trust Funds, report on the use, submit funding requests and track implementation

At the EIB

- The EIB is reforming its systems. The Mandate Management System is currently evolving to include functionalities on cost and risk reduction, processes, and people.
- An application, ASAp, has also been developed for the Bank's TA and advisory services. The app was rolled out in April 2019. It is expected at its final stages to include enhancing cost accounting, and performance management functionalities,

Exhaustivity and transparency must be compatible with existing Bank systems and represent real business management solutions. A well-performing application should provide real-time information that informs operations and partners reporting needs.

Source: Benchmarking exercise.

Partnership stakeholders who were consulted, including partnership TMs, were not always aware of these lessons.

Learning. The integration of partnership learning has been incremental in the Bank throughout the period. Learning has been embedded in some specific partnerships through various channels and initiatives. However, interviews with staff in general and partnership managers in particular indicated that there was little lateral learning and dissemination of best practices and management experience among partnerships teams. As a result, many TF and partnerships managers spend time resolving problems that may have already been solved in other initiatives. Solutions end up not being harmonized across the board. Platforms that create opportunities for knowledge-sharing, such as the TF managers email group, exist in the Bank systems, but they are poorly used and managed. Some TF managers indicated that they had spent months trying to be included in the mailing list and that, once they finally were included, they found that it was not useful either to obtain the information they needed or to have access to support from other TF managers when facing operational issues. All TMs indicated reliance on their own Bank networks to address specific issues, which could sometimes lead to significant delays. The need for a "community of practice" among partnerships managers, together with dedicated resources to document challenges and solutions and engage all partnerships stakeholders around common problems, was cited as an important issue to address.

To improve information sharing, FIVP developed in 2017 a partnership outreach strategy plan around three pillars, namely: (i) regular presentations of TFs, co-financing facilities, and individual financial products; (ii) financial products e-learning platform

and Trust Fund Accreditation; and (iii) the availability of both FIRM and FIST to engage on TFs, CFs, and financial products. This plan was intended to reinforce the awareness and use of the full menu of existing facilities and products among Bank staff and the Bank's clients.

In addition, FIRM has been providing a combination of well-attended internal and external knowledge events, Country and Relationship Briefs, Strategic Engagement Notes, Trust Fund Finder online tools, etc., allowing for information sharing both inside and outside the department. Since 2014, FIRM has carried out a yearly program of brown bag sessions that have been attended by over 2,100 staff. In 2020, it initiated a webinar series featuring more than 40 sessions on trust funds. Finally, the new Trust Fund Policy foreseen to be approved in 2021 prescribes that the AfDB Trust Fund Accreditation Course will become mandatory for both TF coordinators and those using TF resources. Continuous implementation of these activities is likely to improve the awareness of existing partnerships. ■

Group

Sustainability

The assessment of sustainability considered the extent to which partnerships have addressed risks during implementation and put in place mechanisms to ensure the continued flow of benefits after completion. It also evaluated risks to the sustainability of development outcomes, including resilience to exogenous factors and the continuation of a partnership's activities and funding.

This chapter discusses the overall performance and various aspects of sustainability, such as economic and financial, technical, institutional and capacity strengthening, ownership, and environmental and social aspects.

Overall Performance

The sustainability of a large majority of the partnerships reviewed (73.7 percent) is rated Satisfactory at the project level. Overall sustainability of both FPs and NFPs, as well as their respective sub-categories, is also rated Satisfactory. TFs are rated Satisfactory or higher (Highly Satisfactory or Satisfactory) on technical soundness (96 percent) and institutional sustainability and strengthening of capacities (81 percent). Co-financing is rated Satisfactory for institutional sustainability and strengthening of capacities (77.8 percent) and ownership (77.8 percent). NFPs are rated Satisfactory on ownership (71 percent).

The partnerships rated as satisfactory on different sub-criteria of sustainability have demonstrated various factors, including good integration of sustainability in the design, better integration of stakeholders' interests, attention to communication, promoting ownership as well as addressing social and environmental issues. Despite these positive ratings, some issues were also uncovered. Sustainability is deemed Unsatisfactory for specific partnerships, mainly when:

- The partnership has been managed as a standalone project and a temporary organization with few bankable projects in the pipeline;
- No, or only a weak, exit strategy was incorporated in the partnership design and implementation;
- Difficulties arose in establishing long-term contractual arrangements with potential partners, including governments, to honor their commitments;
- There was insufficient or a lack of built-in budget for capacity development of the implementing agencies, and maintenance in the case of infrastructure partnerships;
- Gender, youth mainstreaming, and environmental safeguards were not considered; and
- Competition for external resources and the lack of a results orientation prevented collaboration and mutual accountability between partners.

Economic and Financial Sustainability

The economic and financial sustainability criterion assessed the extent to which funding mechanisms and modalities have been put in place to ensure the continued flow of benefits after partnership/project completion, with particular emphasis on financial viability.

On technical soundness, partnerships that were rated as satisfactory and above have offset front-end project preparation costs to build-in bankable

projects, and mainstreamed into the partnership design and implementation plans regulatory and institutional arrangements that are friendly to their business as well as the interests of the actual and potential partners, both at program and project level. Proactive communication of achieved results to partners and other key stakeholders was used to maintain the interest of the partners and eventually secure continued resources from the actual partners or any other new donor/partner, as well as to use lessons learned from implementation to renew and/or scale-up the achieved results.

On the economic and financial fronts, the positive results of the projects financed from partnership resources could often not be capitalized upon without the continued support of external resources. When counterpart funds existed, in cash or in kind, at the Bank or in RMCs, they were often insufficient, or their release took too long to ensure any meaningful contribution. The perception, both internally and externally, is that the Bank lacked a clear demonstration of its cost-effective advantage in financing development in Africa to ensure self-sustaining growth of its partnership activities and results.

According to stakeholders, the Bank relies on the generosity of partners toward Africa. Its presence and knowledge on the ground, as well as its image as the first financier of Africa's development, are substantial assets. Nonetheless, the Bank is seen to face – and increasingly so – competition for partnership financing resources with the introduction of new players, such as the EIB and the EBRD, together with others from emerging markets. The EBRD, for instance, has already moved in recent years to cover North Africa, in particular Egypt, Tunisia, and Morocco, and is considering an expansion to Sub-Saharan Africa.

In the search for new markets and with Africa being considered the next development frontier, the Bank is perceived as set to face increased competition for partnership resources from these new actors. As an illustration, the joint MDB reports on private co-financing for 2017 and 2018 showed that, combined, the EIB and the EBRD have mobilized over US$4 billion for African countries, compared with just US$2.7 billion by the AfDB. Simultaneously this could also be an opportunity for collaboration and co-financing, with more resources accessible to African countries. However, practical cooperation and the capacity to mobilize new funding could be challenged in the coming years if the Bank fails to maintain its comparative advantage, knowledge of the market, and significant country presence.

Co-Financing Partnerships

For co-financing partnerships, the economic and financial viability issue relates more to bankable projects, the market, and technological risks. One key reported component of CF transaction costs is the time spent searching for suitable partners for an operation. Bankable projects require a sound, systematic analysis of technological, social, political, organizational, and market risks associated with a CF operation, in order to make it attractive to co-financiers. At the project implementation stage, the key transaction and agency costs are the procurement process and the regulatory framework.

In the most recent version of its procurement manual, the Bank has included several clauses that relate specifically to CF in SOs (international, bilateral, and multilateral) and CF in NSOs. However, according to interviews with Bank staff and beneficiaries, the Bank's procurement process and regulatory framework need to be more flexible and responsive to emerging trends if they are to promote significant growth and sustainability of the Bank's co-financing. In particular, the challenge lies in the adaptation of the processes and the regulatory framework to suit not only projects with significant amounts but also to smaller loan and grant projects.

The long delays and the complexity of the contracting and disbursement process were criticized by both partners and clients (RMCs). The Bank's CF agreements and processes also tend to exclude the participation of NGOs and micro, small and medium

enterprises (MSMEs), including executing agencies, because of their limited capacities to contribute co-financing.

Trust Funds

The evaluation concluded that the Bank is yet to strengthen its intended actions toward further diversification of the partnership's portfolio beyond ODA funds. However, it is urgent to consider this issue, given that the number of projects funded by TFs decreased during the evaluation period. Especially since 2013–2014, more TFs have been short of resources or have been closed. Nothing in the current and foreseeable dynamics of development cooperation suggests a reversal of this trend. The spirit of the Addis Ababa Agenda is instead to gradually use or replace ODA with more FDI and trade, toward a better balance between external and domestic resources.

The number of TFs that could close or run short of resources is likely to increase if no strategy is put in place to increase the Bank's attractiveness for partners in the short and medium term. The resources mobilized and available, as well as the number of projects funded by TFs, pose a vital question to understand if the Bank is currently gaining more than that it is investing in mobilizing and managing partnerships. The evaluation could not access the necessary data to fully analyze this issue.

Despite indications in various documents that the Bank will consider adopting a cost-recovery mechanism in managing TFs, there is no evidence of such a mechanism being realized, since TF costs are calculated neither ex-ante nor ex-post. They are also not subject to strict monitoring and control, including through the existing Activity Time Recording System (ATRS). The system does not capture all the TFs' incurred costs and therefore cannot serve as a basis for determining whether the 5 percent administrative fee is set at the right level.

The Bank therefore does not have sound knowledge of the administrative costs of the different types of partnerships. The 2013 IDEV evaluation of TF management in the Bank found that a serious information gap was the lack of cost data for the management of TFs and project implementation. Many alternative TF models are used by the Bank, involving a range of management structures. Some have extensive staffing and related support, while others are poorly resourced. The evaluation stressed the need for greater resources to be devoted to TF management and implementation, requiring a detailed cost analysis focusing on the cost of Bank staff and consultants involved in establishing a TF, administering the TF, and designing and implementing approved projects. This necessity remains valid to date.

Comparisons with other organizations have shown that, on average, a 5 percent fee on TFs is below what is usually necessary to cover all the costs of a TF, thus leading to these costs being partly subsidized. One specific exception is the practice by the World Bank whereby all costs related to the management of a TF and its subsequent activities were allocated to the said TF, especially staff time and missions.

At the AfDB, while the initial costs are covered by the 5 percent fee charged for TFs, situations may arise where the number of projects leads to additional costs that are then borne by the Bank. Another issue is that the 5 percent fee is only for the initial duration of TFs. However, in most cases, TF maturity is extended, but with no increase in the fee. In a context of stretched staff capacity, a full understanding of the costs of operating TFs could help the Bank to organize its internal resources more appropriately to better address their management and adopt more cost-efficient measures.

Cost recovery is strongly linked to the capabilities of the systems in place in the Bank and the ability to have a proper budgeting of partnership activities, especially on TFs. It should be noted that this issue is considered in the new Trust Fund Policy, whereby the Principle of Sustainability, and the importance of ensuring proper budgeting and administrative

fees, have been given prominence. However, the wider issue of the Bank's cost-accounting system is relevant here, as it would permit access to full information on the costs of all activities, including TF operations, to allow for a realistic cost-recovery policy. Adequate systems in general constitute an ongoing task for the Bank to ensure the cost-effectiveness of its day-to-day operations, especially in the case of partnerships.

Non-Financing Partnerships

The evaluation found that the mechanisms in place are too weak to ensure that NFPs (KASPs, C&Cs) are sustainable. Some NFPs are likely to receive less attention and priority, leading to their potential termination during the review of the Bank's priorities. While they could provide significant results, they were not always coupled with other partnerships or initiatives in the Bank that could enhance their success, since they were considered as stand-alone partnerships.

For example, the Governance Trust Fund (GTF) is part of the governance sector sub-portfolio and posted positive results. This sub-portfolio also includes other NFPs, such as APRM, EITI and VfM among others. However, there is no clear evidence that the potential synergies of these initiatives were systematically explored and promoted.

During interviews, staff and managers reported few cases of collaboration involving NFPs. This shortcoming is likely to negatively affect the sustainability of partnerships because of the stalled scaling-up of the NFPs' development outcomes.

Technical Sustainability

The Technical Sustainability criterion assessed the extent to which the partnership achievements relied on a sound and mastered technology using inputs efficiently and providing productivity gains. It includes organization and methods, facilitation, availability of recurrent funding and others.

While at the operational level the majority of partnerships were found to be technically sound, it was concluded by the evaluation that at the strategic level, the Bank's partnerships are operated on a need basis rather than a business basis. The Bank lacks the strategic business intelligence that would help it to enhance the contribution of partnerships. The risk of the Bank's partnerships becoming unsustainable is raised by this lack of business intelligence, together with the lack of exit strategies.

Some weaknesses were also found in the area of exit strategies of partnerships, leading to various outcomes depending on the partnership (see Box 14). However, the latest generation of the Bank's partnerships are more likely to incorporate a clause on the carry-over of the remaining funds into a possible next phase.

The scarcity of professionals with the necessary partnership skills at the Bank is well-acknowledged throughout existing individual partnership reviews and evaluation reports, as well as partnerships management discussions. While the Bank's consultants do possess these skills, their retention far from guarantees their availability throughout the lifecycle of the several partnerships they may work on.

Institutional Sustainability and Strengthening of Capacities

The Institutional Sustainability and Strengthening of Capacities criterion considered whether the partnership has contributed to strengthening institutional capacities that may ensure steady flow of benefits associated with the partnerships.

With respect to institutional sustainability and strengthening of capacities, partnerships that had satisfactory ratings have put in place a sound performance measurement system for monitoring and reporting of results that is aligned with the partner funding cycle. Capacity building including knowledge and technology transfer, trainings, workshops,

seminars, etc. were funded and/or co-funded for both the Bank staff and diverse stakeholders on the ground in RMCs.

Despite the institutional mechanisms in place at the Bank, the evaluation found at least two main threats to the institutional sustainability of the Bank's partnerships. First is the lack of a strategic framework for resource mobilization and partnership, including a sound M&E and knowledge-management system (generation, dissemination). Second is the weak coordination of the decentralization of the Bank's partnership function within the framework of an ongoing DBDM, whereby the Country/Regional Offices do not have partnership specialists. Until recently, institutional sustainability was also weakened by the absence of a certification program for partnership professionals and managers. Such a program merits to be part of a complete individual, institutional, and contextual capacity development program, including in the RMCs.

The evaluation considers that the certification program is essential for a sustainable growth of co-financing, but without being the exclusive remedy. Another key challenge to address would be the high turnover of the consultants who dominate the implementation of the Bank's partnerships. According to interviews with staff, the heavy reliance on consultants to manage partnerships is a short-term and sub-optimal solution, especially when there is a lack of formal knowledge-transfer between permanent staff and consultants, or between generations of partnerships.

Box 14: Last-minute exit strategy yielded different outcomes for GTF, AfCoP, and CBFF

1. The Governance Trust Fund (GTF) was closed in 2016 with a poor implementation of its exit strategy. After the 2014 evaluation of the fund, the final report 2015–2016 indicated that "a strategy to guide a second phase of the GTF was developed, based on the Bank's own research on governance priorities and recent discussions on the global development agenda as well as on the successes and lessons learned of the first phase." Accordingly, the strategy was focused on domestic resource mobilization to "serve as a basis to mobilize required resources for its financing" while "the future of GTF and the use of the remaining funds under GTF Phase 1, needed to be discussed with donors."

2. The African Community of Practice on Managing for Development Results (AfCoP) had a more effective exit strategy. The AfCoP was mainly financed from the ADF grant envelope for regional operations (90.2 percent) and implemented in partnership with ACBF (African Capacity Building Foundation) and the regional economic communities of the Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA) and the West African Economic and Monetary Union (WAEMU). After the evaluation of 2017, a strategic plan including a resource mobilization strategy toward empowering the AfCoP was developed in 2018–2019 and the extension of the AfCoP was obtained. The presence of MfDR champions Switzerland and Finland worked in favor of AfCoP.

3. As for the CBFF, the final evaluation of the fund concluded that it had neither a sustainability strategy for its project results, nor a phase-out strategy. "The CBFF Secretariat has been reduced to a minimum without a plan for capturing results and lessons for sustaining impacts achieved. This does not allow for a proper completion phase of the CBFF, which negatively impacts effectiveness and the capacity to capitalize and spread lessons learned and innovations." The project grantees, the CBFF Secretariat and the Governing Council had initially expected a second phase to consolidate (scale up and replicate) successful CBFF innovations, but funding was not approved.

Source: Document review and stakeholder consultations (2019).

Interviewed consultants highlighted the lack of partnership business continuity, pointing out that "when someone leaves a job, they leave with all their knowledge, and there is no information or data management system." As foreseen in the theory and practice of partnerships, particularly in IFIs, interpersonal relationships are a determining factor in the success and sustainability of partnerships. In the absence of mutual adjustment between the Bank and its partners through their staff, it becomes even more challenging to reduce the transaction and agency costs of partnerships. In the meantime, the lack of control over these costs is a significant threat to the sustainability of the Bank's partnerships.

Ownership

The ownership criterion assessed the extent to which partnerships have effectively involved relevant stakeholders and promoted a sense of ownership amongst the beneficiaries. It was found that the Bank's partnerships rated as satisfactory have managed to collaboratively involve relevant stakeholders, and promoted a sense of ownership amongst the beneficiaries, including fair distribution of the benefits the partnership created.

While the partnership reviews found that the individual partnerships have a satisfactory level of ownership, interviews with Bank staff revealed some concerns regarding the ownership of partnerships in general. Notwithstanding the issues of selectivity discussed earlier, the Bank's supply-driven partnership delivery model has proved to be useful for the initiation of partnerships. The Bank's partnership stakeholders recognize the need for partnerships to fill the considerable gap in resources for development financing in Africa. At the same time, once funds are obtained, confusion over the ownership of partnerships may arise when translating the resources into development projects and results. Box 15 presents different stakeholders' statements that reflect the ownership concerns over DPs in the Bank.

The evaluation found no evidence that mechanisms had been put in place to strengthen the development of a partnership culture at the Bank. The mobilization of partners, the negotiation of partnerships and their implementation needs the whole ecosystem to devote its attention and appropriate resources. The evaluation found that this has not been systematically the case over the years thus leading to the conclusion that there is a need for an increased ownership by all internal stakeholders.

Another concern highlighted by interviewees in the Bank was about the support received from the Legal Department. Specifically, staff members responsible for resource mobilization argued that the department's response time was too long due to limited staffing.

Environmental and Social Sustainability

Partnerships that recorded a satisfactory rating had environmental and social impact assessments (ESIAs) as one of the key outputs financed by the partnership resources. This has allowed the mainstreaming of Integrated Safeguards Systems (ISS) in the beneficiary future operations while leveraging financing.

The Bank's partnerships, particularly those of the latest generation (TYS period), have become increasingly sensitive to socially and environmentally sustainable development principles. Overall, these partnerships have strived to mainstream crosscutting issues of climate change and green growth, gender and youth, job creation and income generation, as well as fragility and community livelihood in suburban, rural and remote areas.

Some partnership projects in the infrastructure sector have secured small-scale investment projects that support innovative strategies for adaptation to climate change by facilitating the exchange of technologies, skills, and creative ideas between African countries and development partners.

Box 15: Partnerships for whom? Quotes from different key stakeholders.

Executive Directors

- "We have funds, which are disguised bilateralism, and the donors impose that the Bank uses these funds to finance the country projects chosen by themselves. What is the client's place in the partnership linked to political dialogue?"
- "When we set up a BTF, it's because we want to see a specific issue being addressed by the Bank. I agree this comes with constraints as we have our conditions but that is the reason why the country gives this funding. Otherwise, I don't see the point."

Senior Management Officers

- "The potential and the impact of the Bank, as well as the policy direction, depend on the level of resources and the relevance of the subject at hand for all interested stakeholders"
- "The donors sometimes want to see their priorities addressed at the expense of some Bank rules. It might take some time and long discussions to reconcile their requests and our mandate."

Partnership Managers

- "Once an agreement is signed, you see the donor now imposing new conditions that weren't in the original deal. It is very tough because you know it goes against Bank rules, and no task manager is going to implement this, and you have to start negotiating again."
- "We agreed with the donor that we will be sending periodic reports. Management agreed to this. But I have to spend my time running after each task manager to submit their reports, and this poses a severe credibility issue."

Source: Stakeholder consultations (HQ and sample countries), 2019.

The evaluation found that plans and actions for the mitigation of environmental and social risks are generally incorporated into the design and implementation stages at the project level and tailored to the country context. ■

Conclusion

Key Takeaways

This evaluation sought to assess the results of partnerships at the AfDB and how these results were achieved through different forms of partnerships. While the quality of the AfDB's partnerships matters, the mix of partnership types is essential to create synergies and achieve greater complementarity of results.

Relevance is deemed Satisfactory. The AfDB's approach to partnership is, to a great extent, consistent with international, regional, and national contexts, the Bank's strategies, and the objectives of other partners.

Effectiveness is deemed Satisfactory. To a large extent, the Bank has been effective in using its various partnerships to mobilize additional resources and deliver better results through the operations funded by these partnerships. However, the resources mobilized were to some extent underutilized.

Efficiency is deemed Unsatisfactory. Only to a limited extent have the Bank's partnerships been managed with optimal resources to ensure that results delivery was undertaken by the most cost-efficient/effective means.

The Bank's partnerships and their effects were sustainable to some extent. The evaluation concluded that overall, both FPs and NFPs were considered to be Satisfactory on all the five sustainability dimensions: technical soundness; economic and financial sustainability; institutional sustainability; ownership; and social and environmental sustainability.

The DBDM has strengthened the operations complexes' capacity to originate, design and implement partnerships It is however too early to appreciate all the outcomes of the reforms. Moreover, some weaknesses were also observed. Partnerships in the Bank today are faced with several challenges, including weakened internal coordination, leadership, and ownership issues, which are likely to affect strategic planning and operational effectiveness in the medium term.

Lessons

At the Strategic level

A more precise definition of strategic direction contributes to the successful mainstreaming of partnerships. Partnerships should be created and managed based on clear high-level priorities. They were found effective when well-coordinated and in line with the Bank's core strengths. Comparative advantages of the Bank matter in partnerships, but they should be analyzed rather than assumed, and used as a basis for exploring synergies and potential partnerships with other development partners.

Clarification of roles and coordination from Senior Management are essential to achieve efficiency. Defining and delineating clear mandates and ensuring sector complexes receive smooth coordination reinforces the Bank's capacity to deliver the strategic objectives and improves its image.

Decentralizing partnership management strengthens the Bank's capacity to mobilize additional resources. However, it can only achieve optimal effectiveness if adequately supervised and coordinated at the central level.

Formalized and mainstreamed partnerships are likely to be more successful. Partnerships that are an integral part of the Bank's core program are likely to be more effective than non-formalized partnership initiatives, or ones that involve smaller resources. Also, when signed with a clear results framework and commitments, MoUs have a higher chance of being integrated and executed.

At the Operational Level

Dedicated resources are an essential contributing factor to the success of partnerships. Partnerships with dedicated teams are more likely to achieve results and communicate better, while partnerships with fewer staff struggle. Integration of these partnerships in operations complexes is likely to ensure adequate staffing and the use of systems. Finally, resources to support TFs (in the form of shared services, or otherwise) and other partnerships remain an issue and have featured prominently in several past evaluations and audits. A greater consideration of fee recapture for TFs would assist in generating dedicated resources.

Investing in adequate systems will have a crosscutting impact of partnerships and attract more TFs. Inadequacy of systems are a central issue in the Bank. Developing the right systems can potentially have positive ripple effects on the implementation of all partnerships and contribute toward greatly incentivizing performance through the definition of more accurate and appropriate KPIs to ensure not only delivery but also quality and impact.

Effective M&E, transparency, and accountability promote strong alliances. Partnerships are strategic alliances that affect the Bank's attractiveness and relationships with its development partners, including their confidence, especially in the context of the ADF. To ensure that relationships are sustained, complementary and fair, partnerships necessitate close tracking of the alliance and country presence, together with adequate systems and resources. Effective M&E is the firsthand source of enabling knowledge and mutual accountability that will promote teamwork, partnership skills development, and intensive collaboration.

Recommendations

The Bank is advised to further reform its partnerships governance framework. Resource mobilization and partnership initiatives should be selected, designed, and implemented in alignment with the expected development results of the Bank and the RMCs. This approach will help the Bank, the partners, and RMCs to maximize synergies and demonstrate value addition and value for money of the various partnerships, while holding organizational units and staff accountable for the achievement of the results assigned to each Bank complex.

Among the top challenges to address to improve the management of partnerships in the Bank, attention should be given to an adequate institutional setup, clear strategic framework and division of roles, and effective management systems and incentives. Thanks to the collaboration during this evaluation, the findings of the evaluation have already informed the work done by FIRM on the new Trust Fund Policy, which will address to some extent the issues raised, such as implementation, systems, accreditation of fund managers, cost recovery and others. However, the policy applies mainly to Trust Funds and the whole ecosystem of partnerships still needs further attention.

The evaluation makes the following recommendations:

1. Define and set out the strategic directions for partnerships and resource mobilization, clarifying priorities and ensuring coherence.

It is crucial to strategically rethink the Bank's relationships with partners in order to be more

effective and develop more win-win partnerships. The Bank could consider:

- Developing a Bank-wide action plan to better coordinate partnership and resource mobilization efforts for the achievement of the High 5s.
- Applying a more coherent programmatic approach to the partnerships portfolio, building on their potential synergies.

2. Review the current partnerships framework and institutional arrangements with a view to achieving strong coordination, greater efficiency, and better results.

It is suggested that the Bank consider:

- Affirming the coordinating role of FIRM and strengthening the SCP's role.
- Conducting an organizational study to identify the best options that would fit the Bank's structure and ensure the success of partnership management in the Bank, to inform a possible finetuning of the partnership framework.
- Assessing and establishing a shared platform of services for partnerships, with adequate human resources and harmonized tools, processes, and information systems.

3. Provide adequate resources, KPIs and incentives for the management of partnerships.

A strong resource management should back up any reform and proper attention should be given to efficient management of resources. The following additional measures could be considered.

- Ensure that regional directorates are sufficiently equipped to perform resource mobilization, coordination, partnership management, and advisory services tasks.
- Establish adequate incentives (such as rewards, compensation, individual partnership KPIs) for staff and complexes, targeting the quality of partnership activities and accountability for their results.
- Ensure, through the implementation of the new Trust Fund Policy, that the management fees charged for TFs reflect the Bank's costs associated with these TFs. ■

Annexes

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Annex 1: Key Concepts

- **Co-financing (CF) partnerships:** These are agreements whereby partners agree to finance programs, sectors, themes, or projects jointly. They involve bringing together partners' comparative advantages, such as leveraging funding, knowledge, and technical expertise. A co-financing agreement is a strategic financing mechanism to leverage additional resources from sovereign and non-sovereign actors to complement the organization's statutory resources. Co-financing allows the Bank to execute larger projects, provide preferential conditions for investment projects, and optimize projects' and programs' cost effectiveness and development.

  Co-financing can either be joint or parallel. Under parallel co-financing, each partner funds a share of the total cost of the project using its own rules and processes. Under joint co-financing, partners agree to support their share of the project using the rules and procedures of only one partner. Co-financing is developed as an ad-hoc process in the daily operations in the field or organized under specific framework agreements with regulations and processes agreed between the partners. The opportunities to blend resources created by joint or parallel co-financing reduce the risks associated with projects and optimize their ability to achieve an impact on the ground.

- **Trust Funds (TFs),** in the context of the AfDB, constitute special partnership instruments with development partners. They are financing vehicles between the Bank and a partner designed to achieve mutually agreed development objectives. TFs crowd in resources (financial and technical) from various partners or partnerships interested in a specific development outcome. According to the Bank's Trust Fund Policy approved in 2006, *"Trust Funds are established with contributions entrusted to the Bank for a specific purpose or theme contributing to the implementation of the Bank's strategy. They are subject to the Bank Group Policy on Technical Cooperation Fund Reform and typically finance technical assistance activities (studies, training, etc.) via grants. They are created by the signature of technical cooperation agreements."* Bilateral Trust Funds (BTFs) are funds administered by the Bank on behalf of one development partner. They provide a vehicle for channeling funding into agreed priority areas. Thematic Trust Funds (TTFs) are eligible for funding from multiple development partners and support themes or priority areas.

- **Coordination and cooperation (C&C) partnerships:** The objective of C&C partnerships is to support the coordination of development efforts at the national, (sub-)regional, and international levels. In the case of the AfDB, C&C supports business delivery with other development partners. It is also useful to generate links across countries, sectors, and partners to identify complementarities and produce synergies.

- **Inter-agency coordination partnership:** This partnership, usually informal, consists of collaboration activities with other development partners. It involves the harmonization of policies and activities of the partners to increase the effectiveness or efficiency of their development work on the ground. This harmonization may happen at different levels or stages, from analysis to programming and implementation. The activities range from the exchange of information to joint work plans, funding, and undertaking collective policy dialogue with governments.

- **Initiatives (or other partnerships)** are Bank-led interventions (usually at the Presidential level) that mobilize various partners. They focus on emerging themes for which the Bank intends to mobilize more resources and partners. They can either function as a collaboration platform or evolve into a specific partnership (non-)financial instrument (co-financing, trust fund, among others). Initiatives are also useful to strengthen resource mobilization or focus on a development topic of interest.

- **Knowledge, Advisory Services, and Policy Dialogue Partnerships (KASPs):** These are alliances and networks (platforms) that focus on sharing knowledge and innovations within a sector, using this knowledge in operations and harmonized approaches.

- **Memorandums of Understanding (MoUs):** In general, MoUs are agreements signed between two or more parties to indicate the interest of the parties to collaborate. They are instrumental to the long-standing cooperation with countries, development organizations, and private entities. MoUs are signed on various subjects, including coordinating interventions, sharing information, and contributing to funding instruments. While some are the starting point for negotiations, others serve as a roadmap for various forms of concerted action. MoUs are not binding for the Bank, but they represent commitments and opportunities for the Bank.

- **Partnership or Partners:** Collaborative relationships toward mutually agreed objectives, with different degrees of intensity and formality: these are the individuals and organizations that collaborate to achieve mutually agreed-upon objectives (shared goals, joint responsibility for outcomes, distinct accountability, and reciprocal obligations) and may include governments, civil society actors, non-governmental organizations, universities, professional and business associations, multilateral organizations, and private companies.

Endnotes

1 Climate Investment Fund (CIF), the Green Climate Fund (GCF), and the Global Environment Facility (GEF)

2 ORRU was already in existence in 2008. ORMU was set up in 2010. Source AfDB Annual Report 2010.

3 REPORT: Bank-wide Progress Review of Partnership Agreements 2005–2009. Partnerships and Cooperation Unit Draft – May 7, 2010.

4 The Bank carries out other activities of the Bank through NSOs such as Lines of Credit (LoC) that do not fall under partnerships as defined in this evaluation.

5 From Billions to Trillions: Transforming Development Finance Post-2015 Financing for Development: Multilateral Development Finance" http://pubdocs.worldbank.org/en/622841485963735448/DC2015-0002-E-FinancingforDevelopment.pdf

6 The sharp increase could also be linked to how co-financing was calculated during those years. The calculation methods and indicators have changed over time. Distinction was not always made between direct and indirect co-financing.

7 The World Bank and AfDB were co-financing the Kariba Energy project (parallel co-financing), as well as other Water and Climate Resilience Projects, and the dialogue between them was very productive and contributed to the delivery of consensual messages to the government. However, of late, the influence of the Cooperating Partner Group on the Government of Zambia has declined considerably following the decrease in support to the national budget from a peak of 65 percent to less than 10 percent. The Bank has also secured co-financing from emerging donors, including India Exim Bank, the Development Bank of Southern Africa, and the OPEC Fund for International Development.

8 Zambia: Evaluation of the Bank's Country Strategy and Program 2004–2013. Summary Report, 2016.

9 See the discussion on the use of trust funds in the efficiency section.

10 This evaluation was designed "to assess the effectiveness and efficiency of trust funds with a particular focus on disbursements and fiduciary factors."

11 See the recent IDEV evaluation of the Bank's Engagement with Civil Society, ADB/BD/WP/2020/313

12 IDEV Evaluation of the Bank's public-private partnership mechanism (2019).

13 Support functions such as the Legal Department, Procurement, and Environmental and Social Safeguards (ESS) have a backlog of transactions and as a result the timelines for their contributions were not always met.

14 These include the 2009 Mid-Term Review of the Trust Fund Policy, the 2013 BDEV Evaluation of the Management of Trust Funds, and the 2019 Review and Benchmarking of the Trust Fund Policy.

15 Review and Benchmarking of the Bank's Trust Fund Policy (2019).

16 An accreditation system is now operational in the Bank from 2020.

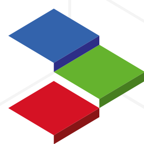
17 Almost all the AfDB's evaluation reports contain a section on the Bank's performance in partnership management.

Technical Annexes

The Technical Annexes can be found on the following page:

https://idev.afdb.org/en/document/evaluation-partnerships-african-development-bank-group-2008-2019

1. Mapping the bank's Partnerships
2. Tables of issues and emerging suggestions
3. Institutional evolution of the partnership function
4. Mission/responsibilities of different partnership units at the AfDB in 2018
5. Evaluation Matrix
6. Theory of Change and expected partnership output and outcomes tracked in the evaluation
7. Rating criteria
8. Lessons learned from the AfDB's 2019 Evaluation Synthesis on Partnerships
9. List of people met
10. References



IDEV

Independent Development Evaluation

African Development Bank

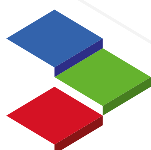
An IDEV **Thematic Evaluation**

About this evaluation

This evaluation presents a summary of the work carried out to assess the AfDB's Development Partnerships over the period 2008–2019. The evaluation covers 75 active partnerships, including Financing Partnerships like Trust Funds and Co-financing agreements and Non-Financing Partnerships such as Coordination & Cooperation and Knowledge, Advisory Services and Policy Dialogue partnerships and the operations they funded, with a comparative analysis between 2008–2012 and 2013–2019, before and after adopting the Bank's Ten-Year Strategy. It provides the Board of Directors and Management with lessons and recommendations to improve the effectiveness of present and future development partnerships. Its findings are based on a reconstructed theory of change and information from different sources.

The evaluation found that the relevance, effectiveness, and sustainability of the Bank's partnerships were satisfactory. Partnerships aligned with the Bank's strategies and were consistent with international development agendas and continental initiatives. Sustainability was achieved due to good integration in the design, stakeholders' interests, attention to communication, promoting ownership, and addressing social and environmental issues. However, the efficiency of the Bank's partnerships was rated unsatisfactory at the institutional and operational level due to weaknesses in organizational performance. In addition, the Bank's partnerships have not been managed with optimal resources to ensure results delivery in the most cost-effective manner.

Three main recommendations were made to improve the management of partnerships in the Bank: 1) Define and set out the strategic directions for partnerships and resource mobilization, clarifying priorities and ensuring coherence; 2) Review the current partnerships framework and institutional arrangements to achieve strong coordination, greater efficiency, and better results; and 3) Provide adequate resources, Key Performance Indicators, and incentives for the management of partnerships.



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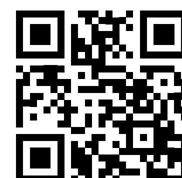

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