

# IDEV

Independent Development Evaluation  
African Development Bank

*From experience to knowledge...*

*From knowledge to action...*

*From action to impact*

## Eswatini: Evaluation of the Bank's Country Strategy and Program (2009-2018)

### What did IDEV evaluate?

IDEV evaluated the Country Strategy and Program for the Kingdom of Eswatini (formerly Swaziland) over the period from 2009 to 2018. The Bank's portfolio comprised 16 interventions for a total of UA 179.4 million, of which five were approved during the 2009-2013 period and the remaining during the 2014-2018 period. The water supply and sanitation sector took the largest share in terms of volume, followed by the transport and agriculture sectors. The objective of the evaluation was two-fold: (i) to assess the assistance of the Bank to the country through an analysis of development results from key interventions and the reasons underlying such results; and (ii) to learn from challenges and successes in order to provide lessons and recommendations to inform the design of the next Country Strategy Paper.

### What did IDEV find?

#### Relevance

The relevance of AfDB activities in Eswatini was satisfactory because the Bank's interventions addressed priority sectors, were responsive to the needs of beneficiaries and were aligned to country policies. The portfolio was also well aligned to the Bank's High 5 priorities.

#### Effectiveness

The 2009-2013 CSP cycle was assessed unsatisfactory in terms of effectiveness while the second program cycle (2014-2018) was not rated by the evaluation, as all the

major investment projects are still being implemented. However, the Bank's interventions in this second program cycle appear likely to deliver most expected outputs and outcomes.

#### Efficiency

The level of efficiency of AfDB action in Eswatini was rated unsatisfactory due to implementation delays. Most projects appeared to suffer considerable startup delays, indicating deficiencies in quality at entry. A key lesson was that many of these delays could have been avoided by conducting capacity building on AfDB rules and procedures before projects are launched.

#### Partnership and Managing for Development Results

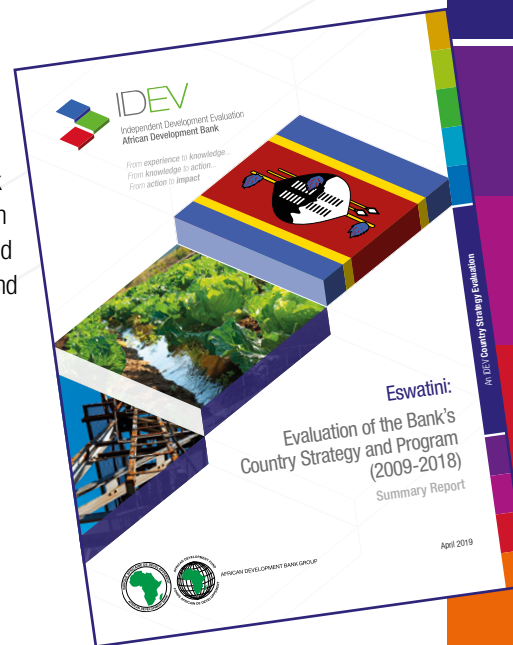
The evaluation found considerable room for improvement in terms of coordination and joint Monitoring and Evaluation (M&E) with other Development Partners. Despite weak coordination, the Bank's interventions leveraged additional resources and brought in partners in support of development actions, at least in some sectors.

#### Policy Dialogue

between the Bank and Eswatini authorities was very limited, and analytical work largely focused on technical issues related to infrastructure (and pipeline) development.



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### Crosscutting issues

AfDB interventions exhibit a positive **gender** mainstreaming in terms of gender indicators, although they did not address the root causes of gender inequality. Performance on **environmental impact** was mixed. Bank support in the energy and water and sanitation sectors had potential to have a positive effect on the environment. However, the outcomes of one of the Bank's largest sectors of support, agriculture, were of particular concern in terms of water management. Operations could have been more **inclusive**, for example if: (i) high value and labor intensive cropping systems were promoted in irrigation projects; and (ii) agricultural product marketing were supported to promote off-farm jobs and help develop markets for alternative crops.

### Sustainability

The sustainability of AfDB support to Eswatini was assessed as unsatisfactory. The infrastructure-related operations were considered technically and institutionally sound, yet, infrastructure maintenance and certain environmental issues were noted as areas which pose a risk to sustainability and where further attention is needed.

### What did IDEV recommend for the next strategy?

- An enhanced selectivity and portfolio design would allow the Bank to contribute to more effective and sustainable results in Eswatini.
- Capacity building and institutional strengthening needs should be assessed before investments are undertaken. This will improve quality at entry.
- Strengthen the focus on managing for development results: More efforts should be made to monitor and evaluate outputs, outcomes and impacts, and assist project coordination through sustained dialogue with other stakeholders.
- Operation and maintenance systems should be examined carefully and improved for all infrastructure interventions, in order to safeguard their development benefits.
- The Bank should improve its policy dialogue and knowledge management in the country assistance framework, to enhance its influence on the reform agenda and its catalytic potential.

### About IDEV

Independent Development Evaluation (IDEV) at the African Development Bank carries out independent evaluations of Bank operations, policies and strategies, working across projects, sectors, themes, regions, and countries. By conducting independent evaluations and proactively sharing best practice, IDEV ensures that the Bank and its stakeholders learn from past experience and plan and deliver development results to the highest possible standards.

### What did Management respond?

Management welcomed the IDEV report on the evaluation of the Bank's operations in Eswatini over the period 2009-18 and its contribution to the Kingdom's development. The evaluation provided a timely assessment on the relevance and congruence of the objectives set in the CSPs in supporting the country's developments efforts during the period. It also articulated invaluable lessons and findings from the performance of the two CSPs that will be useful in informing the design, implementation and management of the Bank's new CSP (2019-23) for Eswatini. In general, Management agreed with the findings of this report and noted the progressive improvements and flexibility in implementing Bank programs in Eswatini, a Middle Income Country.

Evaluation Task Manager: Girma Earo Kumbi, Principal Evaluation Officer, IDEV 2  
Publication coordinated by: Magdaline Nkando, Knowledge Management Consultant; Marc Bappa Se, Junior Consultant, IDEV3  
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IDEV

Independent Development Evaluation  
African Development Bank

African Development Bank Group  
Avenue Joseph Anoma, 01 BP 1387, Abidjan 01, Côte d'Ivoire  
Phone: +225 20 26 28 41  
E-mail: [idevhelpdesk@afdb.org](mailto:idevhelpdesk@afdb.org)

