

▶ African Development Bank

Operations Evaluation Department (OPEV)

Mandate

The primary role of OPEV is to provide a comprehensive and objective assessment of the development effectiveness of the bank assistance strategies, policies, operations, processes and procedures. Monitoring and self-evaluation work, including project completion reports (PCRs), are conducted by operations units, while OPEV independently validates PCRs and carries out independent project performance evaluations. OPEV also conducts sector and country assistance evaluations, as well as thematic, process, and policy evaluations. OPEV is also charged with conducting synthesis studies of evaluation results at the sector and country level, and produces an annual review of evaluation results.

Independence

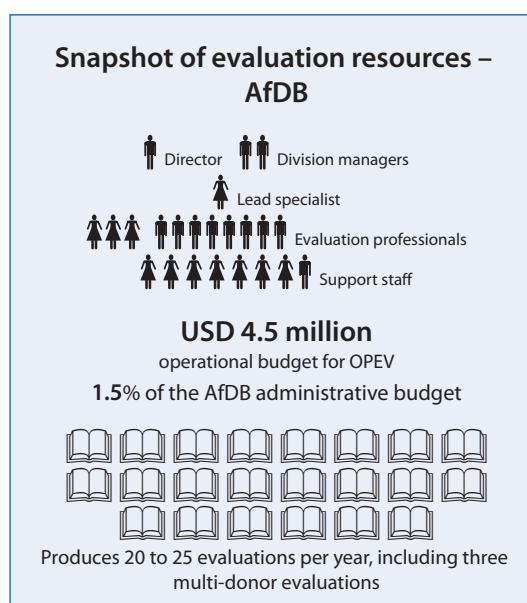
OPEV is a separate entity reporting directly to the bank's board and administratively to the president. The budget is ring-fenced and the evaluation staff has full access to Bank staff and records. There is no direct involvement in operational and policy work. The head of OPEV is a director, at the same level of seniority as the heads of most operations departments. The OPEV director and staff selectively attend senior management operations and policy committee meetings.

The work of external consultants represents about 35 to 40% of total staff time. Consultants are employed to complement internal expertise and may be engaged to assist in drafting approach papers, develop methodologies and tools, undertake field surveys and analyses, and assist in drafting evaluation reports and in undertaking communication and dissemination activities.

Quality

OPEV has a set of evaluation guidelines to inform their work. Evaluation reports are subject to internal and external peer reviews to check quality.

At the decentralised level, a quality assurance system is being put in place to ensure good quality and timely preparation of project completion reports. In 2009, project completion reports were completed for over 90% of completed bank-funded projects. The ultimate objective is 100% coverage. All PCRs are subject to independent desk review. Overall, 15-20% of completed projects are subject to independent performance evaluation (with field mission). Selection criteria include the quality of the available PCR and lessons to be learned, importance for country or sector for future reviews or cross-cutting issues, and relevance to the Bank's corporate strategic priorities.



Co-ordination, planning and stakeholder involvement

OPEV operates on a three-year rolling work programme. The work programme and outputs are under the oversight of the Committee of Operations and Development Effectiveness of the board. OPEV prepares its three-year rolling work programme on the basis of wide consultation with operations departments and other stakeholders. Priority areas, sector or themes proposed by board members are also included in the work programme, which is reviewed and approved by the board's Committee on Operations and Development Effectiveness (CODE).

Collaboration with other donors is sought for country assistance evaluations, and for thematic or sector reviews. Partner countries are consulted at the start up of the evaluation, during the evaluation and at the submission of the reports. There is at present no significant involvement of partners in the design, implementation or follow-up of the evaluation.

While there is no specific bank policy on evaluation capacity development (ECD), the evaluation department is involved in ECD activities with other partners to support evaluation associations and networks, including support for training activities.

Reporting and use

Formal management responses are provided by senior management and published along with evaluation reports. Key evaluation reports on country, sectoral or thematic topics are discussed by CODE. Evaluation reports are published and results are communicated to bank staff and to external stakeholders in summary form and through feedback workshops.