

**AFRICAN DEVELOPMENT BANK GROUP  
INDEPENDENT DEVELOPMENT EVALUATION**



**Opening Remarks by Dr. Rufael Fassil**

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**gLOCAL Evaluation Week 2025**

**Panel:** Advancing Gender Inclusion in Transport for Sustainable Development

**Date and time:** 5 June 2025, 2pm GMT

Dear moderator, presenters and panelists

Dear participants

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Good morning, good afternoon, and good evening to all of you joining us today, It is my great honor to welcome you to this important session of the gLOCAL Evaluation Week 2025, focused on gender in evaluation, particularly in the context of the transport sector. I would like to begin by expressing my sincere appreciation to all our partners, participants, and stakeholders whose support and presence make this conversation possible. I would like to particularly thank our colleagues from the World Bank for their valuable contribution in preparing this session. We share a dedication to building more inclusive, evidence-informed systems, policies, strategies, and operations through evaluation.

Advancing gender inclusion in transport is not only a matter of equity, but a vital step toward building more sustainable and inclusive societies that offer economic and social opportunities to all. gLOCAL provides the global-local bridge we need to share evidence, scale innovations, and spark transformative policy dialogue.

Transport is not just about roads, railways, or mobility infrastructure. It is about access to opportunities, to markets, to education, and to health services. And yet, the design, implementation, and evaluation of transport systems have historically been gender-blind. Too often, women's mobility needs, safety concerns, and economic and social roles have been overlooked in transport policy, planning, and investment decisions.

This is why incorporating gender into transport evaluations is not simply a matter of equity. It is a matter of effectiveness and impact. When we evaluate with a gender lens, we begin to understand how policies and projects affect men and women differently. A poorly lit bus stop can deter a girl from attending evening classes. A lack of access to affordable transport can prevent women from seeking employment outside their immediate communities. And unsafe transport systems can increase vulnerabilities to harassment and gender-based violence.

These insights have profound implications. They tell us not only how inclusive or exclusive our infrastructure really is, but also where the gaps lie and what we can do to close them. Evaluation plays a key role in this space. Through well-designed gender-sensitive evaluations, we can gather disaggregated data, consult diverse users, and assess outcomes that matter to different segments of the population. We can shape evidence that guides policymakers, engineers, and urban planners to design systems that serve everyone.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

At the African Development Bank, we are committed to promoting gender equality as a cross-cutting priority in all our operations. At IDEV, we ensure that our evaluations systematically consider gender issues, not only as part of social inclusion but as integral to the sustainability and effectiveness of development outcomes. That is why in our recent evaluation of the AfDB's Support for the Transport Sector, we undertook a thematic case study of interventions' impacts on women, which my colleague Joseph will soon present to you.

Let me emphasize that gender-responsive evaluations are not optional. They are essential. They help us answer critical questions: Who benefits from our investments, and how? Who is left behind, and why? And how can we design for impact, not just for output? The answers to these questions can then inform future policies, strategies, and operations.

We must also recognize the importance of partnerships in driving this agenda forward. Policy- and decision-makers must be willing to take evaluative evidence on board. Today's conversation reflects a strong coalition of evaluators, government officials, civil society representatives, and development partners who understand the power of evaluation to promote accountability and transformation.

As we proceed, I invite us all to consider how we can strengthen our collective efforts to build evaluation systems that are not only technically sound but also support economic and social progress. Let us continue to challenge assumptions, amplify marginalized voices, and ensure that our data tells the full story.

In closing, I want to thank each of you once again for your presence, your insights, and your ongoing commitment to gender-responsive evaluation. Together, we can shape transport systems and broader development policies that work better for everyone.

Thank you.